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## Family, Meaning and Expressions of Juvenile Delinquency. A Case Study in Abidjan, Côte D'ivoire

Ismaila BAKAYOKO<sup>1</sup>, Massandje TRAORE<sup>2</sup>, Patrice M'BÉTIEN KONÉ<sup>3</sup>

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### **Abstract**

This study deals with the question of the motivational meaning of acting out and the expression of violence perpetrated by adolescents in Abidjan. Our hypothesis postulates that concerning their experiences, the violent physical and psychological behaviours adopted by adolescents are variously the expression of desired intentions such as the search for a means for survival, to prove the ability of success and acceptance by others as well as the revenge of his parents. The objective for us is to understand the ends, the means of the marginal activities according to the lived social contexts. We opted for the quantitative and qualitative approach with a sample of 45 teenagers aged between 12 and 18 years old. It turns out that the quality of the relationship with the parents and the type of peer group, especially the experience of this relationship is a factor that informs the reasons for their deviations. These reasons also called “motivational factors”, constitute a behavioural response with a communication aim. The types of actions that adolescents take are thus a well-directed interpellation and are expressed according to the social context experienced in terms of manifest physical violence (VPM), clandestine physical violence (VPC) and psychological violence (VP).

**Keywords:** family, the meaning of violence, delinquency, teens, parent-child relationship, poverty.

### **Résumé**

Cette étude traite de la question du sens motivationnel du passage à l'acte et l'expression de la violence exercée par des adolescents à Abidjan. Notre hypothèse postule qu'en rapport avec leurs vécus, les conduites violentes physiques et psychologiques adoptées par les adolescents sont diversement l'expression d'intentions recherchées comme la recherche de moyen pour la survie, prouver la capacité de réussite et l'acceptation par autrui ainsi que la vengeance de ses parents. L'objectif pour nous est d'appréhender les fins, les moyens des activités marginales selon les contextes sociaux vécus. Nous avons opté pour une démarche quantitative et qualitative avec un échantillon composé de 45 adolescents dont l'âge part de 12 à 18 ans. Il s'avère que la qualité de la relation avec les parents et le

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type du groupe de pairs, surtout le vécu de cette liaison est un facteur qui renseigne sur les raisons de leurs déviations. Ces raisons, appelées également « facteurs de motivations », constituent une réaction comportementale à visée communicationnelle. Les types d'actes que posent ces adolescents sont donc une interpellation bien orientée et sont exprimés en fonction du contexte social vécu en termes de violence physique manifeste (VPM), la violence physique clandestine (VPC) et la violence psychologique (VP).

**Mots-clés:** famille, sens de la violence, délinquance, adolescents, relation parent-enfant, pauvreté.

### **Rezumat**

Acest studiu tratează problema semnificației motivaționale de a acționa și a exprimării violenței comise de adolescenți din Abidjan. Ipoteza noastră postulează că, în raport cu experiențele lor, conduitele violente fizice și psihice adoptate de adolescenți sunt, în mod diferit, expresia intențiilor căutate ca fiind căutarea unui mijloc de supraviețuire, pentru a demonstra capacitatea de succes, acceptare de către ceilalți precum și răzbunarea părinților. Obiectivul pentru noi este să înțelegem scopurile, mijloacele activităților marginale în funcție de contextele sociale trăite. Am optat pentru o abordare cantitativă și calitativă pe un eșantion de 45 de adolescenți cu vârste cuprinse între 12 și 18 ani. Se dovedește că calitatea relației cu părinții și tipul de grup de egali, în special experiența acestei relații este un factor care poate explica motivele abaterilor acestora. Aceste motive, numite și „factori motivaționali”, constituie un răspuns comportamental cu un scop comunicațional. Tipurile de acte puse de adolescenți în scenă sunt astfel o interpelare bine direcționată și sunt exprimate în funcție de contextul social trăit în termeni de violență fizică manifestă (VPM), violență fizică clandestină (VPC) și violență psihologică (VP).

**Cuvinte-cheie:** familie, semnificația violenței, delincvență, adolescenți, relația părinte-copil, sărăcie.

## **1. Introduction: Some theoretical references**

Youth crime in developing countries like Côte d'Ivoire is a reality that cannot be ignored. In this regard, developmental criminology and micro-criminology over the last fifteen years have made enormous progress in studying the changes that occur in deviant behaviour and allow analysis in terms of trajectory and management (Leblanc 2010). The representativeness of this form of deviance in crime remains prominent in acts of violence recorded. The factors explaining these behaviours have also been the subject of several research projects as well as the types of delinquency, but less documented taking into account the motivation, the meaning, the expression of the type of delinquency chosen or what the teenager aims at by opting for such conduct. Thus, some correlates deserve to be examined to better understand the meaning of the orientation of this violence in adolescence. Most studies that attempt to explain adolescent delinquency use not only terms like family, peers, environment and self-image. Research findings on family and social self-image explain adolescent

deviance focus on parents' struggles to adjust to the pace of life, their inability to effectively mentor their children, and negative identification (Bakayoko 2009; Koudou 2009). The economic difficulties faced by parents weaken the capacity for holistic care (satisfaction of primary needs, control of children's activities, etc.) that would participate in the psychosocial development of young people. A disproportionate number of antisocial children are from families of low socioeconomic status (Farrington 2002). However, the link between low socioeconomic status and juvenile delinquency is non-existent in the White and Coll research (2001) [*apud* Day and Wanklyn 2013]. However, being from a family of low socioeconomic status is considered as a risk factor for delinquency (Hay *et al.* 2006). It must be remembered that this factor becomes more revealing when it encounters others.

Children and adolescents exposed to several risk factors will be considered to be at high risk of adopting a delinquency-oriented life course. This is not only because risk factors add to their effects, but also because they interact with one another, the effects of one amplifying the manifestations of the other. For M. Leblanc and G. Ouimet (1988), low socioeconomic status and economic dependency are the first groups of factors of disadvantage. In fact, in isolation, risk factors related to family characteristics have less obvious effects on the adoption of delinquent behaviour among youth. Negative effects sometimes result from other factors; sometimes a combination of several risk factors (Mucchielli 2000). Parental control has also been the subject of many studies in efforts to explain antisocial behaviour. According to an International Youth Survey, the results of which are recorded in the journal of the National Crime Prevention Centre of Canada, 56% of youth who reported that their parents never knew with whom they were always, adopted delinquent behaviour. In the last 12 months, compared to 5% among youth whose parents did not know who they were dating with and 12% among youth whose parents always knew who they were dating. This inconsistency prevents the adolescent from controlling the limit of his action and the type of danger to which he is exposed (see Savignac 2009). Belonging or engagement with peer groups has also been of interest in understanding youth delinquency. The main factors in the peer domain are: antisocial/delinquent persons accompany; gang membership; and peer exclusion. Literature suggests that spending much free time with a group of friends is a risk factor (Lucia *et al.* 2009). For violence against gang-affiliated children, Fournier *et al.* (2004) and Cario (2004) note that these adolescents can become aggressive because of their belonging and the patterns of violence they experience and are subject to. On the other hand, if the adolescent adheres to a group of deviant peers, his or her antisocial activities are numerous. Also, teenagers who are members of a gang are highly exposed to deviant models and practice activities that do not promote social conformity. Lanctôt, Leblanc (1997), Artz (1997) mention that violence for these minors was sometimes a way to avoid revictimization. Other researches have also led to this result; for example,

delinquent behaviour in antisocial groups may be a way to gain respect, popularity, or avoid ridicule (Ness, 2004 *apud* Day and Wanklyn 2012).

On the one hand, these different results contributed to the understanding of delinquency among adolescents as well as the type of behaviour adopted. Nevertheless, they do not question the meaning of these misconducts or the goal that these young people aim at by orienting themselves in this type of delinquency. On the political aspect, Côte d'Ivoire, like many African countries, has ratified the Child's Rights Conventions (UN CRC 1989 and ACERW 1990), which obligate all states to ensure the protection of vulnerable children and the assistance of families in social difficulty, for which the application seems to be a failure. Unfortunately there is no real protection for children and no assistance for families in difficulty. Thus, to deal with this problem, we asked ourselves the question of whether the types of violence adopted by young people express, apart from their lived social conditions, their intentions manifested. To this question, we formulated the hypothesis that concerning their experience, the physical and psychological violent behaviours adopted by adolescents are variously the expression of intentions sought as the search for means for survival, to prove the capacity of success and acceptance by others and the attitude against the parents. Our goal is to understand the ends, the means and the types of marginal activities according to the social contexts experienced.

The adoption of deviant behaviour is an intention, the desired action. For actionist theory, we first ask ourselves about the goals of the actor (his objectives) and the means at his disposal to reach them in the situation in which he finds himself (Fillieulle 2001). In the case of an offender, one will wonder why, in what sense, what purpose, he has done an act of delinquency.

## **2. Research Methodology**

### *2.1. Field of study and survey population*

Among the many cities of Côte d'Ivoire, Abidjan is full of young adolescents who are at the perpetrators of violence, this space is a large agglomeration that has experienced the convergence of a large population because of the socio-political and military crisis our country experienced. In this overcrowded city, teenagers involved in robberies, assaults have become frequent. The study area is made up of the Observation Centre for Minors (COM) housed at the Abidjan Detention and Correctional Centre (in Yopougon commune), the juvenile brigade (in Cocody) and the Marie Dominique Centre where we take care of the adolescents.

The study population is made up of young adolescents aged 12 to 18 who have already perpetrated violence. The choice of this age group is based not only on the Ivorian civil code which considers the minority at 18 but also on the biologic age of adolescence which is around 12 years marking the end of childhood. The adolescents selected for the study should all be volunteers, and

therefore, give their consent to participate in the study. Thus, our sample was composed of 45 adolescents.

### *2.2. Research Methods, Collection Techniques and Methods of Data Analysis*

In this study, we use the phenomenological approach. The theoreticians of phenomenology like Edmund Husserl quoted by N'da P. (2002) argues that social phenomena do not appear to actors, they are experienced by them. In a study aimed at collecting young people's understanding of their deviant trajectory, the phenomenological approach is interesting because it gives more importance to the social actor's interpretation of the situations that concern him. To understand the meaning of behaviour, we have tried to bring out the frame of reference of the subject insofar as the subject, in his actions, always tries to reach what appears to him as the best solution to conflicts he is experiencing (Digneffe 1998, 197). The phenomenological study allowed us to identify the goal that motivated violent behaviour concerning social dysfunctions. In this research, we relied on two data collection techniques including documentary research and interview survey. The respondent expresses himself on his motivations, his resentments and perceptions concerning his experience. All this allowed us to establish a link between their experiences, the actions of adolescents and to scrutinize the meaning of behavioural choice.

To meet the objectives of the research, we opted for a mixed methodology combining the quantitative and qualitative approach and content analysis. In the quantitative analysis, we used a correlation test. We exploit for this purpose the Pearson Chi-square test and the contingency coefficients. In some situation we used Fisher Exact Test in the case of tables in which there are cells with expected values less than 5.

The SPSS 23.0 software is the tool used for the statistical input and processing of questionnaires carried out after coding the various response modes. As for the qualitative method, it allowed through interviews and personal files, to raise the meaning of the speeches, the meaning that the teenager gives to the different points of his life. After coding the speeches, we introduced the clues and their associated snippets into a (Microsoft Excel) spreadsheet and transferred to (SPSS) statistic software for analysis.

### *2.3. Characterization of the variables*

The independent variable is the intention sought and the dependent variable is violent behaviour. The intentions sought relate to the purpose, the meaning that the adolescent will give to his type of act: the search for a means for survival, the capacity for success and acceptance by others as well as the revenge against the parents. These goals are related to the different antisocial activities, types of responses to obsolete life situations. The dependent variable aspect is based on physical violence (VPM), clandestine physical violence (VPC) and psychological violence (VP). In the physical violence aspect, we have as an indicator the fights, assaults, burglaries, robberies. For the clandestine physical

violence, we retain the simple theft and swindling. Finally, we define psychological abuse as insults, intimidation, blackmail or threat by adolescents.

### 3. Results of the research

#### 3.1. Characteristics of delinquent adolescents

##### 3.1.1. Socio-professional conditions (SOC) of the offender family

**Table 1:** Delinquency according to the father's socio-professional condition

Father occupation \ DELINQUENCY	Worker/ Driver	Mechanic/ Trader/ Tailor	Employee/ Civil servant/ missionary	Unemployed	Farmer	TOTAL
VPM	45.5% (5)	100% (4)	20% (1)	16.7% (1)	50.0% (2)	43.3% (13)
No VPM	54.5% (6)	0.0% (0)	80% (4)	83.3% (5)	50.0% (2)	56.7% (17)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100% (11)</b>	<b>100% (4)</b>	<b>100% (5)</b>	<b>100% (6)</b>	<b>100% (4)</b>	<b>100% (30)</b>
VPC	45.5% (5)	60% (3)	50% (3)	50.0% (3)	50.0% (2)	50% (16)
No VPC	54.5% (6)	40% (2)	50% (3)	50.0% (3)	50.0% (2)	50% (16)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100% (11)</b>	<b>100% (5)</b>	<b>100% (6)</b>	<b>100% (6)</b>	<b>100% (4)</b>	<b>100% (32)</b>
VP	18.2% (2)	50% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	63.7% (2)	20.7% (6)
No VP	81.8% (9)	50% (2)	100% (5)	100% (6)	33.3% (1)	79.3% (23)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100% (11)</b>	<b>100% (4)</b>	<b>100% (5)</b>	<b>100% (6)</b>	<b>100% (3)</b>	<b>100% (29)</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 1 shows that teenage violence is very present in employees or drivers' family (45.5%), as well as mechanics, tradesmen, and tailor's family (100%). The acts identified here are overt violence. This proportion is still noted in the context of clandestine behaviour among teenagers whose fathers are either employees or drivers and in a family whose fathers are mechanics/traders/tailors (60%). This is the case of the teenager Essoh R. (male, 22 years) met at the COM who said: "My father was a worker in the industrial estate of Yopougon, and we had financial problems so that we didn't eat at home because of the debts my father incurred and when he received money everything went into debt repayments and that's how we finally moved from Yopougon to Abobo and that's here that I got in touch with a group of comrades who took me to the lorry park and I started living in the street and started assault and robbery." It should be noted that unsuitable adolescents are most often from families whose fathers have low socio-economic status.

**Table 2:** Delinquency by mother's socio-occupational status

DELINQUENCY	TRADER/ TAILOR	UNEMPLOYED	TOTAL
VPM	40% (8)	41.7% (5)	40.6% (13)
No VPM	60% (12)	58.3% (7)	59.4% (19)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100% (20)</b>	<b>100% (12)</b>	<b>100% (32)</b>



DELINQUENCY	TRADER/ TAILOR	UNEMPLOYED	TOTAL
VPC	42.9% (9)	69.2% (9)	52.9% (18)
No VPC	57.1% (12)	30.8% (4)	47.1% (16)
TOTAL	100% (21)	100% (13)	100% (34)
VP	15% (3)	36.4% (4)	22.6% (7)
No VP	75% (17)	63.6% (7)	77.4% (24)
TOTAL	100% (20)	100% (11)	100% (31)

Source: Field Survey 2019

We find that adolescents involved in clandestine violence (69.2%) come from the family where the mother is unemployed. It also appears that teenagers whose mothers are either seamstresses or traders don't get involved in juvenile delinquency. In general, young adolescents turn away from overt violence (59.4%) and psychological violence (77.4%). Meanwhile, they are more oriented towards clandestine violence (52.9%).

In this section on parents' socio-professional conditions, we can highlight that adolescents engaging in antisocial actions come from a family living in precarious situations.

### 3.2. Economic difficulties and relationship with the father

**Table 3:** Father-daughter relationship by the economic situation

Relation with the father	Economic situation		TOTAL
	Financial difficulties	No financial difficulties	
Harmony	26.7% (4)	88.8% (8)	50% (12)
No harmony	73.3% (11)	11.1% (1)	50% (12)
TOTAL	100% (15)	100% (9)	100% (24)
Fisher Exact's Test (p=0.009) Significant			

Source: Field Survey 2019

The analysis in *Table 3* above tells us that the existence of economic problems undermines the relationship between the father and the young person. This complicity is less appreciated (26.7%) when there are no financial means. The atmosphere between father and son becomes gloomy when economic problems appear. This situation worsens (73.3%) when this condition is accentuated. The teenagers who point to this lack of means complain about the disagreement between them and their father. On the other hand, minors who say they do not have economic problems in their family appreciate the good agreement with their fathers (88.8%). Poverty is an important element of relationship degradation between father and minor. This social condition does not guarantee a harmonious exchange between them. There is a significant association between the father's economic difficulties and the quality of the relationship with his son.

Given this climate, is the father able to control his son's activities? Economic realities seem decisive in the father's capacity for authority or supervision over his son's habits. From the analysis in *Table 4* adolescents living

in precarious situations report that their father does not follow what they do (73.3%). On the other hand, those who do not experience this inconvenience claim that their parent looks at their activities and gives them advice (75%). The result ( $\chi^2 = 9.91$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) shows that the economic situation is significantly associated with paternal control. The contingency coefficient  $\phi = 0.42$  confirms the link established between these two variables.

**Table 4:** Parental Control by Economic Situation

PARENTAL CONTROL	ECONOMIC SITUATION		TOTAL
	Financial problems	No financial problems	
Control over my activities and gives advice	26.7% (8)	75% (12)	43.5% (20)
No control over my activities	73.3% (22)	25% (4)	56.5% (26)
TOTAL	100% (30)	100% (16)	100% (46)
Strongly significant: $\chi^2 = 9.91$ , $df = 1$ , $p < 0.05$			

Source: Field Survey 2019

### 3.3. Economic difficulty and relationship with the mother

For adolescents, financial problems are a real condition that contributes to weakening (58.3%) links with their mothers. However, these difficulties do not always affect this relationship because a proportion of young people (41.7%) are in good terms with their mothers. On the other hand, when there is no financial problem, adolescents have a perfect relationship (100%) with their parent. By checking this relationship, we find that these variables are associated (Fisher Exact's Test,  $p = 0.007$ ). Therefore, the economic difficulty is a degrading factor of the attachment of the child to his mother. This environment can be a blow to mother-son communication. But, is this atmosphere enough for the adoption of deviant behaviour?

**Table 5:** Mother-son relationship by the economic situation

RELATIONSHIP WITH MOTHER (Relation avec la mere)	Economic situation		TOTAL
	Financial problem	No financial problem	
Harmony	41.7% (5)	100% (9)	66.7% (14)
No harmony	58.3% (7)	0.0% (0)	33.3% (7)
TOTAL	100% (12)	100% (9)	100% (21)
Fisher Exact's Test ( $p = 0.007$ ) Significant			

Source: Field Survey 2019

### 3.4. Priority and experience of offenders

#### 3.4.1. In the context of economic difficulties

According to the table below, the preference for money is for young people who are experiencing economic difficulties (69.2%). We should mention that a no

less important number (30.8%) makes a priority from family. Good financial condition create harmony in the family (100%).

**Table 6:** Priority according to the economic situation

PRIORITY IN LIFE	Financial problem	No financial problem	TOTAL
Family	30.8% (4)	100% (5)	50% (9)
Money	69.2% (9)	0.0% (0)	50% (9)
TOTAL	100% (13)	100% (5)	100% (18)
Fisher Exact's Test (p=0.029) Significant Strongly significant: $\chi^2 = 6.92$ , df = 1, p<0.05			

Source: Field Survey 2019

The priorities that arise among adolescents are influenced by their economic situation (Fisher Exact's Test; p=0.029). Thus, the economic difficulty becomes a facilitator of a type of choice for the money.

### 3.4.2. The context of relations with the parents

The priority for adolescents is the things that concern the harmony with their father and the family (86.7%) [see on Table 7]. When the bond between father-daughter weakens, the latter is focused rather on the search for money (90.9%) that could recreate support. From what follows, we can affirm that father-daughter correspondence contributes to the consolidation of what is primordial in this population ( $\chi^2 = 15.37$ , df = 1, p<0.05).

**Table 7:** Priority in life-based on relationships with parents

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FATHER	PRIORITY OF LIFE		TOTAL
	Family	Money	
Harmony	86.7% (13)	9.1% (1)	53.8% (14)
No harmony	13.3% (2)	90.9% (10)	46.2% (12)
TOTAL	100% (15)	100% (11)	100% (26)
Strongly significant: $\chi^2 = 15.37$ , df = 1, p<0.05			
RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MOTHER	Family	Money	TOTAL
Harmony	100% (17)	85.7% (6)	95.8% (23)
No harmony	0.0% (0)	14.3% (1)	4.2% (1)
TOTAL	100% (17)	100% (7)	100% (24)
Not significant: Fisher Exact's Test; p=0.292			

Source: Field Survey 2019

Table 7 tells us that neither those who prefer money (85.7%) nor those who focus on the family (100%) avoid contact with their mother. It should be recognized that this link is not sufficient to determine what seems important to these adolescents (Fisher Exact's Test; p=0.292, Not significant).

### 3.5. Goal and choice of the type of delinquent act

The choice of an act, the goal and the meaning given to violence are the elements that are discussed in this section. Concerning the deviant activities and the lived experience, the intentions are communicated.

#### 3.5.1. Sense of delinquent behaviour of adolescents

**Table 8:** Intention Expressed by Offending Behaviour

COMPORTEMENT DES ADOLESCENTS	SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ACTIONS			TOTAL
	Finding a way to survive	To prove the ability to succeed and to be accepted by others	Revenge against parents	
Adolescent violence	100% (5)	94.7% (18)	62.5% (5)	87.5% (28)
No adolescent violence	0.0% (0)	5.3% (1)	37.5% (3)	12.5% (4)
TOTAL	100% (5)	100% (19)	100% (8)	100% (32)

Non Significant: Fisher Exact's Test=4.623, p>0.05

Source: Field Survey 2019

Adolescents actions are a warning and they are expressed in terms of the social context experienced. Indeed, young boys adopting a manifest physical violent attitude aim at taking revenge on their parents but also to make themselves accepted in a place. It appears in this *Table 8* we try to identify a link between the behaviour that adolescents adopt and the meanings attributed to their act, but the association is non significant. However we note that adolescents engaged in manifest delinquency have the intention of valuing acceptance by others (94.7%) but also the desire to take revenge against their parents (62.5%).

This factor justifies the choice of this deviance (Fisher Exact's Test=14.088, p<0.01). These values confirm the very strong connection between the two elements. Teenagers who are fight, mug or hit others want to inflict pain on their parents or an adult in charge of their education because they did not give them love. The answer of Ibrahim S. (male, 17 years) confirms this: "All my wishes is that the same things to happen to others (his aunt's children) and we'll see how their parents will react. So, sometimes, I will mug passers-by, I'm also going take off the wallet or people's belongings by force) and all this to be able to manage, dress but especially to take my revenge on my parents who refused to take care of me. Sometimes I would beat people and my aunt would be arrested and I would do it repeatedly to make my aunt suffer." This is what those who seek other people's acceptance say: "I fight to make my friends listen to me," [Essoh R.]; "When you beat your friends, they respect you. When you pass by, you call Dean. It's our grade, it's important for us [Moussa, male, 20 years].

The orientation towards clandestine violence is characteristic of the search for ways for survival (100%) as well as the vengeance against the parents (62.5%). It should be noted that this group of young people adopting these behaviours (the simple theft) need primary needs (Fisher Exact's Test=13.402, p<0.01). The link

between the expressed need and the adoption of violent behaviour is verified. Getting involved in clandestine violence (theft) deviant for adolescents, the best way to have their daily bread since some of these young people are experiencing economic difficulties in the family or on the street. In this regard, Idani (male, 23 years) is more precise “life is hard at home it’s hard, so my friends with whom I live to come to see me and together we go and rob people. These are the young people like us and the women selling at night. When we get something, we eat and we keep a little part of it“.

All the deviant behaviours adopted by adolescents do not make it possible to know the meaning they attribute to their actions. Indeed, young people engaged in psychological violence express weakly the search for means for their survival (9.1%) or the desire to succeed or to be accepted by the others (18.2%). However, these marginalized people show a common desire, that of taking revenge on their parents (50%). There is no link with the justification that they give to the acts committed (Fisher Exact’s Test=4.038, p>0.05). All these marginal activities respond to a priority that has been consolidated during their teenage lives. Indeed, the primary interest that develops in these adolescents will lead them or motivate their action. This is a necessity that needs to be met, a gap that needs to be filled.

**Table 9:** Justification of the act according to the type of delinquency

DELINQUENCY	SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ACTIONS			TOTAL
	Finding a way to survive	To prove the ability to succeed and to be accepted by others	Revenge against parents	
VPM	15.4% (2)	91.7% (11)	62.5% (5)	56.3% (18)
No VPM	83.3% (10)	8.3% (1)	37.5%(3)	43.7% (14)
TOTAL	100% (12)	100% (12)	100% (8)	100% (32)
Strongly significant: Fisher Exact’s Test=14.088, p<0.01 $\chi^2 =13.88$ , df =2, p<0.05				
VPC	100% (13)	33.3%(4)	62.5%(5)	66.7% (22)
No VPC	0.0% (0)	66.7% (8)	37.5% (3)	33.3% (11)
TOTAL	100% (13)	100% (12)	100%(8)	100% (33)
Strongly significant: Fisher Exact’s Test=13.402, p<0.01 $\chi^2 =12.56$ , df =2, p<0.05				
VP	9.1% (1)	18.2% (2)	50.0% (4)	23.3% (7)
No VP	90.9% (10)	81.8% (9)	50.0% (4)	76.7% (23)
TOTAL	100% (11)	100% (11)	100% (8)	100% (30)
Not significant Fisher Exact’s Test=4.038, p>0.05, p>0.05				

Source: Field Survey 2019

The indicators presented here relate their economic situations and their relations with parents.

### 3.5.2. Priority and deviance of the juvenile population

Table 10 tells us that, in general, adolescents who focus mostly on money seeking to adopt violent behaviour (85.7%). Those who refer to conventional social norms, on the other hand, make the family their priority (64.7%). However, some girls making family the major element of their lives have a deviant attitude (35.3%). From that, we can indicate that the adoption of violent behaviour is associated ( $X^2 = 8, 02$ ; TS) with a priority in life. The value of the contingency coefficient  $\Phi = 0, 45$  confirms this association. What meaning can be attributed to this choice?

**Table 10:** Offending Activities by Priority

	PRIORITY OF LIFE		TOTAL
	Family	Money	
Violent behaviour	35.3% (6)	85.7% (12)	58.1% (18)
No violent behaviour	64.7% (11)	14.3% (2)	41.9% (13)
TOTAL	100% (17)	100% (14)	100% (31)

Strongly significant:  $\chi^2 = 8.02$ ;  $df = 1$ ,  $p < 0.05$

Source: Field Survey 2019

Two elements are important and constitute a primacy in the lives of teenagers. Most of them focus on family or money. Those who are concerned about the family feel that they are rejected. Therefore, they want to succeed to be accepted (83.3%) by others. Those who justify criminal acts also give importance to money (33.3%). Money (41.7%) is a means for teenagers survival. At the end of this analysis, we must note a real link between the meaning that this youth gives to his delinquent activities and what deviates their concerns (Fisher Exact's Test=7.61,  $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 11:** Justification of the act according to priorities

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ACTIONS	PRIORITY OF LIFE		TOTAL
	Family	Money	
Finding a way to survive	0.0% (0)	41.7% (5)	20.8% (5)
To prove the ability to succeed and to be accepted by others	83.3% (10)	33.3% (4)	58.4% (14)
Revenge against parents	14.7% (2)	25% (3)	20.8% (5)
TOTAL	100% (12)	100% (12)	100% (24)

Significant Fisher Exact's Test=7.61,  $p < 0.05$   
 $\chi^2 = 7.77$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p < 0.05$

Source: Field Survey 2019

## 4. Discussion and conclusion

This study of adolescent deviance focused on the characteristics of families, the meaning and expression of violence by giving them the floor to tell their experiences, feelings and behaviours. In this regard, we have formulated the hypothesis concerning their experience, delinquent behaviour adopted by teenagers, the expression of desired intentions such as the search for means for

survival, the capacity for success and acceptance by others as well as the revenge against their parents. In the data presented, the meaning of these violent acts lies in the social contexts experienced by them. In this study, we dealt with the phenomenological approach and the actionist theory. These results validate Leblanc's conclusions (2010) regarding the attitude teenagers members of a marginal group. Indeed, the acquisition of clandestine violent behaviour is an element that is adopted by teenagers who live in difficult socio-economic conditions. The teenagers involved in constantly theft and swindling want to ensure their survival, satisfy or fill the lack of means they facing. Theft and violence among youth are characterized by its instrumental and utilitarian function. In this, our results complement those already existing. Our result confirms what Adler (1982) specified [quoted by Koudou 2002]: for him, a lost affection, that of the mother object of obtaining the social sentiment is attributed like a factor of expression of a theft. It is important to note, however, that Koudou's results, (2002) whatever fixes the meaning of the action, do not specify the type of action for to signify the message conveyed according to the context. The goals formulated by these youths in committing anti-social acts are also based on priorities. Adolescents who seek acceptance from others indicate that the family is the major element in their lives. They feel that the family, whatever the problem, must be there to support them. Speaking of family, it is a safe environment able to meet his expectations, meet his needs, so composed of adults with protective presence. That's why most acts are a call, a cry of distress. For them, it is a means of seeking the attention of others. The search for money is a way for survival and success for acceptance by others. The type of delinquent act committed provides information on the reasons for their deviation. These reasons also called "motivational factors", are a reaction or behaviours that have a communicational purpose. Through these behaviours, adolescents draw the attention of their parents or the adult in charge of their protection on the suffering they experienced. Overall, it should be noted that our results complement previous research through the investigation of the choice of the type of deviant activity and purpose or intent expressed by adolescents. To effectively fight juvenile delinquency, in addition to a policy of prevention and protection targeting the poorest and most vulnerable, implement the fundamental principles of the conventions of the rights of the children. It is a question of applying the principles of life, survival and development (Article 6), the principles of participation (Article 2), the principles of the best interests of the child (Article 3) and the principles of non- discrimination (Article 12) of the CRC (1989).

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