



# **Personality, Group Thinking and Cohesiveness as Predictor of Criminal Behavior among Adolescents**

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## **Authors' contributions**

*This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.*

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of Group thinking, cohesiveness and Personality characteristics as predictors of Criminal Behaviour. The population comprises of Three Hundred (300) students through stratified sampling technique from institutions in Ekiti State was used. A questionnaire was designed using a descriptive research design for data collection. The data was collected using questionnaire. Three hypotheses were tested in total and they are: there will be a significant relationship between group thinking, cohesiveness, personality characteristics and criminal behavior; Personality Characteristics will significantly predict criminal behavior; Group thinking and cohesiveness will have main and interaction influence on criminal behaviour; the first hypothesis was tested using regression analysis and found that there is a positive and significant relationship between criminal behaviour and group thinking with  $r = .194$ ,  $p < 0.05$  and there is a negative but significant relationship between personality characteristics and group cohesiveness with  $r = -.123$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . the second hypothesis was tested using linear regression analysis and found that that  $F(299) = .000$ ,  $p > 0.05$  significant level and the hypothesis rejected. The third hypothesis was tested using one way ANOVA analysis showed that group thinking has an influence on criminal behaviour among adolescents,  $F(299) = 5.768$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , group cohesiveness

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does not have a significant influence on criminal behaviour of adolescents,  $F(299) = 2.124, p > 0.05$ . The results were discussed in line with relevant empirical literature, conclusion and recommendation. The study concluded that group thinking is a major predictor of criminal behaviour among adolescents, while group cohesiveness and personality characteristics do not influence criminal behaviour among adolescents. It was recommended that there is need of adequate sensitization of adolescents on the negative consequences criminal behavior and how it can affect their future if not curtailed, Government should organize empowerment for the youth, so that it can reduce criminal act and the government introduces or organize seminar to the adolescents, to teach them how to behave in the society.

*Keywords: Personality; group thinking; cohesiveness; criminal behavior and adolescents.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the Study

#### 1.1.1 Criminal behaviour

Legally, crimes usually are defined as acts or omissions forbidden by law that can be punished by imprisonment and/or fine. Murder, robbery, burglary, rape, drunken driving, child neglect, and failure to pay your taxes all are common examples. However, as several eminent criminologists recently have noted (e.g. [1], Gottfredson and Hirschi 2019), the key to understanding crime is to focus on fundamental attributes of all criminal behaviors rather than on specific criminal acts. Instead of trying to separately understand crimes such as homicide, robbery, rape, burglary, embezzlement, and heroin use, we need to identify what it is they all have in common. Much past research on crime has been confounded by its focus on these politico-legal rather than behavioral definitions [2-6].

The behavioral definitions of crime focuses on, criminality i.e. a certain personality profile that causes the most alarming sorts of crimes. All criminal behaviors involve the use of force, fraud, or stealth to obtain material or symbolic resources. As Gottfredson and Hirschi [7] noted, criminality is a style of strategic behavior characterized by self-centeredness, indifference to the suffering and needs of others, and low self-control. More impulsive individuals are more likely to find criminality an attractive style of behavior because it can provide immediate gratification through relatively easy or simple strategies. These strategies frequently are risky and thrilling, usually requiring little skill or planning. They often result in pain or discomfort for victims and offer few or meager long-term benefits because they interfere with careers,

family, and friendships [8-11]. Gottfredson and Hirschi assert that this means the “within-person causes of truancy are the same as the within-person causes of drug use, aggravated assault, and auto accidents (2019).” Criminality in this sense bears a problematic relationship with legal crimes. Some drug dealers, tax cheats, prostitutes and other legal criminals may simply be business-people whose business activity happens to be illegal. Psychologically, they might not differ from ordinary citizens. Almost all ordinary citizens commit at least small legal crimes during their lives [12,13-15]. Nevertheless, Gottfredson’s and Hirschi’s hypothesis is that the vast majority of legal crime is committed by individuals a general strategy of criminal activity.

Criminal behavior is the product of a systematic process that involves complex inter-actions between individual, societal, and ecological factors over the course of our lives [16-18]. In other words, from conception onward the intellectual, emotional, and physical attributes individuals develop are strongly influenced by our personal behaviors and physical processes, interactions with the physical environment, and interactions with other people, groups and institutions. These systematic processes affect the transmission from generation to generation of traits associated with increased involvement in crime [19-21]

Also, children of poor parents beset by economic difficulties and of wealthy parents whose extreme focus on social and career concerns leads them to nurture their children irregularly may be vulnerable to this dynamic. The parent/child bond affects how strongly a child values parental approval. Weakly bonded children tend to be much more impulsive and difficult to control. This can initiate a vicious cycle in which a child receives less affection and nurturance because of mis-behavior and therefore seeks less and

less to please. Over time, the child develops a strategic style in a setting where rewards often are unpredictable as parents struggle with alternating resentment and desire to nurture [22,23]. Because rewards are perceived as undependable, the child learns to immediately grasp opportunities for short-term gratification rather than learning to defer them for future rewards. In this setting a child also is less likely to acquire conventional moral beliefs. And the risk of physical and emotional child abuse which further tends to fuel this vicious spiral toward criminality (Widom 1992) also may be greater.

### **1.1.2 Group thinking**

Group thinking behavior is associated with people retaining the status quo by minimizing their conflicts without critical assessment, analysis and evaluation. Motives may vary but essentially those involved seek to avoid standing out in the crowd and any risk of embarrassment. Essentially, groupthink developed in high-level policy situations where it was commonly observed. Not so grand but nonetheless important, are the various connections made between groupthink and temporary organizations (projects). Bourgeon (2007) associates the phenomenon with the beginning of the project and with staffing approaches; Bresnen [24] with the breakdown of partnerships between organizations; and McElhinney and Proctor [25] with entrapment and decision making in projects. The studies mainly contribute to aspects of project management and focus more upon groupthink than on understanding organizational structures and groupthink behavior within them. Chapman [26] argues that organizational structure has received limited interest and suggests that groupthink behavior is facilitated by emotions where people engage in control-denial-escape behavior. Emotions are commonly a vital part of a crisis. With regard to structure, Lindkvist (2005) notes that the temporary organization may be protected from groupthink by its very setup. He argues that the difference between the team members' knowledge bases contributes to flexibility and creativity whereas stability and being uninventive (features commonly associated with bureaucracies and permanent organizations [27] contribute to groupthink. Similarly, associating groupthink with structure, Snook and Connor [28] argue that groupthink contributes to what they call structurally induced inaction.

Groupthink occurs when people strive for unanimity over the realistic appraisal of

alternative courses of action. Few empirical tests of the entire groupthink phenomenon have been conducted, but a meta-analysis of the relationship between cohesion and quality of group decisions suggested that cohesion has a negative effect on decision quality when the antecedent conditions of groupthink are present, although it has a positive effect on decision quality when conditions designed to thwart groupthink are present (Mullen, Anthony, Salas. & Driskell. 2014).

### **1.2 Group Cohesiveness**

The concept of cohesion has been around as long as people have been interested in collective processes and effectiveness. Cohesion refers to the concept of bonding or adhesion among members of a collective entity. Over 2,400 years ago Sun Tzu made multiple references to the concepts of collective harmony and morale in his treatise entitled *The Art of War* [29]. The earliest empirical work of the twentieth century was conducted by French (1941), who found that cohesion was related to a variety of internal group processes; however, consistent empirical work did not begin until the early 1950s, when researchers became increasingly aware of the effects of group processes on human behavior, cognition, affect, and performance. The most widely cited definition of cohesion is the "total field of forces which act on members to remain in the group" (Festinger, Schachter, & Back, 2009). In their original formulation, cohesiveness was thought to arise from interpersonal attraction, liking, or commitment to the group task, and group prestige or pride. Despite the implied multidimensionality, early theorists tended to focus on cohesion as a unitary construct with a primary emphasis on the interpersonal and social aspects of member bonds to the group. Additionally, the original definition proved difficult to operationalize and created confusion in the interpretation of the construct. More recently, cohesion has been treated as a multidimensional construct. Three potential components have been identified: social-task, individual-group, and vertical-horizontal dimensions. The most consistent theoretical and empirical support exists for the differentiation between task and social components of cohesion (Tziner, 2008; Zaccaro, 2015). Task cohesion is the degree to which members are attracted to the collective because of its task and its accomplishments. Social cohesion is the degree of interpersonal attraction among members. The distinction between individual and group attraction has also

received some empirical support. but individual attraction is conceptually distinct from a shared bond among group members, and it is more strongly related to the concept of individual commitment.

### **1.3 Personality Characteristics**

The characteristics or blend of characteristics that make a person unique.” (Weinberg & Gould, 1999). An individual’s personality is the complex of mental characteristics that makes them unique from other people. It includes all of the patterns of thought and emotions that cause us to do and say things in particular ways. At a basic level, personality is expressed through our temperament or emotional tone. However personality also colors our values, beliefs, and expectations. There are many potential factors that are involved in shaping a personality. Research by psychologists over the last several decades has increasingly pointed to hereditary factors being more important, specially for basic personality traits such as emotional tone. However, the acquisition of values, beliefs, and expectations seem to be due more to socialization and unique experiences, especially during childhood.

Hereditary factors may be summed as constitutional biological and physiological factors. The constitution of an individual is an effective factor in determining the type of his personality. There are be three types of personality; short and stout, tall and thin, and muscular and well proportioned. Height, weight, physical defects, health and strength affect personality and contribute to personality development do so as a result of interactions with the particular social environment in which people live. For instance, your genetically inherited physical has an impact on how others see you and subsequently, how you see yourself. These largely hereditary factors are likely to cause you to feel that you are nice-looking, ugly, or just adequate.

Biological factors refer to the working of the nervous system, glands, and blood chemistry that determines our characteristics and habitual modes of behaviour. Adrenal gland, thyroid gland, pituitary gland and endocrine gland affect personality. Adler points out that personality defects lead to the development of inferiority complex and the mental mechanism of compensation. This aspect also includes the mental ability of the child. It is this ability which

enables him to mould the social environment according to his requirements.

Intelligence is mainly hereditary. Persons who are very intelligent can make better adjustment in home, school, and society than who are less intelligent.

Sex differences play a vital role in the development of personality of individual. Boys are generally more assertive and vigorous. Girls are quieter and more injured by personal, emotional and social problems.

Psychological factors these include our motives, acquired interests, our attitudes, our will and character, our intellectual capacities such as intelligence, for examples, the ability to perceive, to observe, to imagine, to think and to reason. These factors determine our reactions in various situations and thus affect our personality, growth and direction. An individual with a considerable amount of will power will be able to make decisions more quickly than others.

In environmental factors some scientists are biologically oriented, while others stress on environment and experiences. Today, many developmental scientists see heredity and environment as fundamentally intertwined (Parke, 2004) and also constantly interacting to mould the developing person (Hetherington et al., 2006). They see both as part of a complex development system [30]. It is the social environment that he comes to have moral ideas, social attitudes and interests. The important aspects of the environment are as follows:

#### **i. Physical Environment.**

It includes the influence of climatic conditions of a particular area or country on man and his living.

#### **ii. Social Environment.**

The child has his birth in the society. He learns and lives there. Hence, the social environment has an important say in the personality development of the child.

#### **iii. Family Environment.**

The family is the first context for a child entering the physical world. Within the family, the child learns language, skills, social and moral values of their culture (Berk, 2005). Bronfenbrenner’s

Ecological theory viewed the family as a network of interdependent relationships where each member influencing the behaviour of the other, in direct and indirect ways. Within this network, the children themselves have a significant influence. This perspective looks beyond the ages and stages of child development to the large context in which children grow (Gordon & Browne, 2004). Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934) described learning as the construction of knowledge within a social context and development could not be separated from its social context. The type of training and early childhood experiences received from the family play an important role in the development of personality.

iv. Cultural Environment. The cultural environment refers to certain cultural traditions, ideas, and values which are accepted in a particular society. For example, in a culture where a sport such football is played early and very competitively, a parent's assessment of a child's physical abilities may be linked to performance on the football field. Thus latter all these factors leave a permanent impression on the child's personality.

v. School Environment. School play an important role in molding the personality of the children because a significant part of a child's life is spent in school between the ages of six and twenty years. In the school, the teacher substitutes the parents. The school poses new problems to be solved, new taboos to be accepted into the superego and new models for imitation and identification, all of which contribute their share in molding personality.

#### **1.4 Statement of the Problem**

Adolescent behaviour cannot be considered by keeping it apart from social reality. Social segregation by the society increase of adolescent delinquency, the emergence of juvenile, sub-culture and suggesting that the juvenile has been subjected to malnourishment. If the dominant culture of society fails to accommodate all the children sufficiently, the deprived young folks will stand up with their sub-culture. Moreover, the problem of juvenile delinquency is becoming more complicated nowadays in Nigeria context along with other countries, and universal delinquency crime behavioural programs prevention are either unequipped to deal with the present realities or do not exist at all.

The problem is also based on the parent or guardian that doesn't take care of their students and don't gibe attention to the children, this is process whereby the adolescent will start to mingle with bad friends then start to do unacceptable behaviour. This kind of unacceptable behaviour affects their thinking, the ways they behave in the society and in their academic performance.

#### **1.5 Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to examine the influence of Group thinking, cohesiveness and Personality characteristics as predictors of Criminal Behaviour.

Other study include specifically to;

- explore the relationship between group thinking, cohesiveness, personality characteristics and criminal behaviour.
- examine the dimension of Personality characteristics as predictors of criminal behaviour
- find out whether differences in group thinking, cohesiveness influences criminal behaviour

#### **1.6 Relevant of the Study**

The findings of this study provides an updated empirical statistics of the widespread incidence of criminal behaviour among youths in Nigeria which can be of great benefit to the government, counselling psychologists and other helping professions, stakeholders, youths, researchers and body of knowledge at large.

The findings of this study can be used in decision making process concerning the prevalence and pattern of criminal behaviour among youths in Nigeria. It will help the government to be aware of the pattern of gambling behaviour exhibited by her youths. This study will also help the government in proper regulation of criminal act and will be useful in formulation of appropriate policy that can curb the menace of criminal behaviour among youths in Nigeria.

This study will help counselling psychologist and other helping professions to be cognisant of the determinants of criminal behaviour among youths which will in turn help them in guiding youths in making right decision about criminal behaviour. It will also help them to better understand

criminal behaviour which is necessary for its modification.

### 1.7 Hypotheses

- There will be a significant relationship between group thinking, cohesiveness, personality characteristics and criminal behaviour
- Personality Characteristics will significantly predict criminal behaviour
- Group thinking and cohesiveness will have main and interaction influence on criminal behaviour

### 1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

**Group Cohesiveness:** as the tendency for a group to be unity while working towards a goal Kelly (1951).

**Group Thinking:** it implies to entirely possible that group goals may be sufficiently strong to hold the group together to act as one. Thomas (1986).

**Personality characteristics:** it implies consistency and stability someone scores high on a specific trait like Extraversion is expected to be sociable in different situation and over time John O.P (2007).

**Criminal Behaviour:** refers to conduct of an offender that leads to and including the commission of unlawful act Taylor (1968).

## 2. METHODS

### 2.1 Research Method

This research is a survey method of research which attempt to investigates, measure and sample adolescent's opinion on personality, group thinking and cohesiveness' as predictor of criminal behavior among adolescents in Ekiti State. This chapter deals with the processes of research, research participants used, sample and sampling techniques, measures, procedures for data collection and statistical analysis.

### 2.3 Research Design

The research design utilized in this research work is an expo facto design, because the variables have had their influences prior to the commencement of the research, there is no

manipulation on the side of the researcher, the researcher collected the required data on the personality, group thinking and cohesiveness as predictor of criminal behavior among adolescent.

### 2.4 Research Participants

The participants used in this research work are 100 level students of Ekiti State University.

### 2.5 Sample and Sampling Technique

A total of Three Hundred (300) samples were selected for the purpose of this research work. The samples were selected using stratified sampling technique. The samples were selected from Ekiti State University. Three Hundred (300) samples were randomly selected from the university.

### 2.6 Measure

Questionnaire comprising of three sections was used for this study. Section A of the scale measured the demographic characteristics (i.e. Sex, age, religion) of the respondents. Section B comprises of scale measuring conformity with 10 questions was conducted, Section C comprises scale measuring group thinking with 20 questions was formed, Section D comprises of a scale measuring personality characteristics with 10 questions while Section E comprises scale measuring group cohesiveness and it has 5 questions conducted.

**Criminal Behavior Scale** is a 2 point liker scale developed by A.J Taylor (2015). It contains 10 items. Respondents were asked to indicate how accurate each statement described their, responses vary 1- true to 2 – false.

**Scoring** items 4, 5,7,10 are reversed scored. Give False= 1, True= 2. For other items, True= 1, False= 2. Sum scores for all 10 items. Keep scores on a continuous scale. Higher scores indicate higher criminal behaviour.

**Reliability** This scale has an internal consistency of 0.83 and research has shown that the scale was valid initially. The criminal attitude scale was then administered to a wide range of sample group of both sexes in an attempt to assess its validity more extensively. The items contained in the questionnaire was scrutinized and tested.

**Group Thinking Scale** is a scaled developed by Thomas (1986). It consists of 21 items. Respondents were asked to indicate how accurate each statement described them, responses vary 0- True to 2 - False.

## 2.7 Scoring Format

Items 11, 13,15,17,19 are reversed scored. Give "False" 0point, Sort of True= 1point, and True= 2points. For other questions True = 0, Sort of True= 1 and False= 2. Sum scores for all 21 items. Keep scores on a continuous scale. Higher numeric response to an item indicate that groupthink was more likely.

## 2.8 Reliability

This scale has a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.82 and to validate the research instrument, face and content validity was deployed. This was done by giving sample of the questionnaire to experts in psychology. The items contained in the questionnaire was scrutinized and tested.

## 2.9 Personality Characteristics Scale

Big Five inventory (BFI-10) is a standardized and validated scale by Rammstedt and John (2007). The BFI-10 was designed to measure personality within a short period of time. Responses are coded on a 5 -point scale, ranging from 0="strongly disagree" to 4="strongly agree. The BFI-10 is scored by scoring each item from 1 to 5, reverse-score items 1,3,4,5 and 17, summing its score gotten on each sub-scale.

Extraversion sub scale is 1 and 6. The Cronbach's alpha is .89. A pilot study was conducted in order to test its validity and the Cronbach's alpha was .364 and the Spearman-Brown coefficient was .370.

Neuroticism sub scale is 4 and 9. The Cronbach's alpha is .86.

Conscientiousness sub scale is 3 and 8. The Cronbach's alpha is .82. A pilot study was conducted in order to test its validity and the Cronbach's alpha was .275 and the Spearman-Brown coefficient was .282.

Agreeableness subscale is 2 and 7. The Cronbach's alpha is .74. A pilot study was conducted in order to test its validity and the Cronbach's alpha was .004 and the spearman-Brown coefficient was .005.

Openness subscale is 5 and 10. The Cronbach's alpha is .79. A pilot study was conducted in order to test its validity and the Cronbach's alpha was .051 and the spearman-Brown coefficient was .073.

**Group Cohesiveness Scale** was modified from Kumar (1999). It is a two point liker scale (True and False). It consists of 5 items.

**Scoring Format:** For items 1, 2, 3, 5 True= 1, False = 2. For other questions False = 1, True= 2

## 2.10 Reliability

A test-retest reliability method was used to obtain a correlation coefficient of 0.73 and research has shown that the scale was valid initially. The group cohesiveness scale was then administered to a wide range of sample group of both sexes in an attempt to assess its validity more extensively. The items contained in the questionnaire was scrutinized and tested.

## 2.11 Procedure for Data Collection

The researcher administered copies of questionnaires to the (100 level) students in Ekiti State University. A total number of 300 respondents was used in this research work and their opinions were sampled through the use of standardized questionnaires by explaining the meaning of each item to certified clarity. The questionnaires was subsequently retrieved after few minutes of administration from those that filled the questionnaire.

## 2.12 Statistical Analysis

Data collected from this research was analyzed vis-a-vis the testable hypotheses using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient (PPMCC), ANOVA and regression analysis. The results was presented in tables.

## 3. RESULTS

This chapter presents the result and discussion in this study.

### 3.1 Results

#### 3.1.1 Hypothesis 1

There will be a significant relationship between group thinking, cohesiveness, personality characteristics and criminal behaviour.

**Table 1. Correlation between group thinking, cohesiveness, personality characteristics and criminal behaviour**

		Group Thinking	Personality Characteristics	Group Cohesiveness	Criminal Behaviour
Group Cohesiveness	<b>R</b>	.106	-.123		.001
	<b>Sig.</b>	.068	.033		.075
	<b>N</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>300</b>		<b>300</b>
Criminal Behaviour	<b>R</b>	.194	.001	.001	
	<b>Sig.</b>	.001	.987	.075	
	<b>N</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>300</b>	
Group Thinking	<b>R</b>		.105	.106	.194
	<b>Sig.</b>		.069	.068	.001
	<b>N</b>		<b>300</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>300</b>
Personality Characteristics	<b>R</b>	.105		-.123	.001
	<b>Sig.</b>	.069		.033	.987
	<b>N</b>	<b>300</b>		<b>300</b>	<b>300</b>

Result presented in Table 1 revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between criminal behaviour and group thinking with  $r = .194, p < 0.05$  and there is a negative but significant relationship between personality characteristics and group cohesiveness with  $r = -.123, p < 0.05$ . However, there is no significant relationship between criminal behaviour and personality characteristics  $r = .001, p > 0.05$ , criminal behaviour and group cohesiveness  $r = .103, p > 0.05$ , group thinking and personality characteristics  $r = .105, p > 0.05$ , group thinking and group cohesiveness  $r = .106, p > 0.05$ . It therefore implies that there is possibility that criminal behaviour will be influenced by group thinking and personality characteristics and group cohesiveness while on the other hand, there is no likelihood that criminal behaviour can be influenced by group cohesiveness and personality characteristics.

**3.1.2 Hypothesis 2**

Personality Characteristics will significantly predict criminal behaviour.

Table 2 shows the simple linear regression analysis on personality characteristics as a predictor of criminal behaviour. It was revealed that  $F(299) = .000, p > 0.05$  significant level. Hence, the hypothesis rejected. Therefore,

personality characteristic does not significantly predict criminal behaviour. The value of the coefficient of determination ( $R^2 = 0.000$ ) indicates that personality characteristics does not in any way contribute to criminal behaviour among adolescents.

**3.1.3 Hypothesis 3**

Group thinking and cohesiveness will have main and interaction influence on criminal behaviour.

Result presented in Table 3 showed that group thinking has an influence on criminal behaviour among adolescents,  $F(299) = 5.768, p < 0.05$ , group cohesiveness does not have a significant influence on criminal behaviour among adolescents,  $F(299) = 2.124, p > 0.05$ .

It was also revealed that Group thinking and group cohesiveness have interaction influence on criminal behaviour among adolescents in Ekiti state,  $F(299) = 3.334, p < 0.05$ . It therefore implies from the results obtained that Group thinking has a positive and significant effect on criminal behaviour among adolescents while group cohesiveness does not significantly influence criminal behaviour of adolescents. However, group thinking and group cohesiveness have interaction influence on criminal behaviour among adolescents.

**Table 2. regression table showing how personality characteristic predicts criminal behaviour**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	13.818	.343		40.255	.000
T.Comfort	.000	.014	.001	.016	.987

$R^2 = .000, Adjusted R^2 = -.003, df = 299, F = .000, Dependent Variable = Criminal Behaviour$   
 Predictor = Personality Characteristics,  $p < 0.05$



**Table 3. ANOVA showing the main and interaction influence of group thinking and cohesiveness on criminal behavior**

Tests of Between- Subjects Effect					
Dependent Variable: Criminal Behaviour					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	350.153 <sup>a</sup>	55	6.366	4.370	.000
Intercept	16060.976	1	16060.976	11024.058	.000
Group Thinking	159.676	19	8.404	5.768	.000
Group Cohesiveness	15.474	5	3.095	2.124	.063
Group Thinking * Group Cohesiveness	150.598	31	4.858	3.334	.000
Error	355.484	244	1.457		
Total	58031.000	300			
Corrected Total	705.637	299			

a. R Squared = .496 (Adjusted R Squared = .383)

**4. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**4.1 Discussion**

The main purpose of this study is to examine the influence of Group thinking, cohesiveness and Personality characteristics as predictors of Criminal Behaviour among adolescents.

The first hypothesis which can be seen in table 1, examined the influence of group thinking, cohesiveness and personality characteristics on criminal behaviour. Specifically the study explored the relationship between the variables and examined the dimension of personality characteristics of criminal behaviour. Result presented in Table 1 revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between criminal behaviour and group thinking with  $r = .194$ ,  $p < 0.05$  and there is a negative but significant relationship between personality characteristics and group cohesiveness with  $r = -.123$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . However, there is no significant relationship between criminal behaviour and personality characteristics  $r = .001$ ,  $p > 0.05$ , criminal behaviour and group cohesiveness  $r = .103$ ,  $p > 0.05$ , group thinking and personality characteristics  $r = .105$ ,  $p > 0.05$ , group thinking and group cohesiveness  $r = -.106$ ,  $p > 0.05$ . It therefore implies that there is possibility that criminal behaviour will be influenced by group thinking and personality characteristics and group cohesiveness while on the other hand, there is no likelihood that criminal behaviour can be influenced by group cohesiveness and personality characteristics. According to cognitive theory, criminal acts can be related to an

automatic information processing (Beck, 1995), which takes place spontaneously on the basis of cognitive schemata. This is habitual thinking that functions with little or no critical thinking. According to cognitive theory, thinking patterns are assumed to influence how the individual views him/herself and existence and reacts in different situations. Groupthink requires individuals to avoid raising controversial issues or alternative solutions, and there is loss of individual creativity, uniqueness and independent thinking.

William H. Whyte (1952) found that Cohesiveness, or the desire for cohesiveness, in a group may produce a tendency among its members to agree at all costs in engaging in criminal behavior which contradicts the result of the hypothesis that group cohesiveness does not have a significant relationship on criminal behavior.

The second hypothesis which can be seen in table 2, tested that personality characteristics will significantly predict criminal behavior. It was revealed that  $F(299) = .000$ ,  $p > 0.05$  significant level. Hence, the hypothesis rejected. Therefore, personality characteristic does not significantly predict criminal behaviour. The value of the coefficient of determination ( $R^2 = 0.000$ ) indicates that personality characteristics does not in any way contribute to criminal behaviour among adolescents.

According to Eysenck & Eysenck (1985) found that individuals who score at the ends of either domain of extraversion and neuroticism are more likely to be self-destructive and criminal. Moreover, neuroticism is associated with self-destructive behavior (e.g., abusing drugs and

alcohol and committing crimes) this however contradict the hypothesis.

The third hypothesis which can be seen in table 3, tested that Group thinking and cohesiveness will have main and interaction influence on criminal behaviour. Result presented in Table 3 showed that group thinking has an influence on criminal behaviour among adolescents,  $F(299) = 5.768$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , group cohesiveness does not have a significant influence on criminal behaviour among adolescents,  $F(299) = 2.124$ ,  $p > 0.05$ .

It was also revealed that Group thinking and group cohesiveness have interaction influence on criminal behaviour among adolescents in Ekiti state,  $F(299) = 3.334$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . It therefore implies from the results obtained that Group thinking has a positive and significant effect on criminal behaviour among adolescents while group cohesiveness does not significantly influence criminal behaviour of adolescents. However, group thinking and group cohesiveness have interaction influence on criminal behaviour among adolescents. According to McCord et al (2001) did not only observe that the presence of group cohesiveness is a major determinant of criminal behaviour among children of 12-14 years old but also pointed out that among factors that have been found to be associated with adolescent deviant behaviour are peer delinquent behaviour involving peer approval of delinquent behaviour, attachment or allegiance to peers, association with peers pressure for deviance. Concerning peer group influence and age and gender.

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have a significant relationship on criminal behavior.

## **4.2 Conclusion**

From the findings obtained, the study concludes that group thinking is a major predictor of criminal behaviour among adolescents while group cohesiveness and personality characteristics do not influence criminal behaviour among adolescents. Bad friends get together to talk about the "bad" things they've done, and it is received by their peers in a positive reinforcing light, promoting the behaviour among them. As mentioned before, peer groups, particularly an association with antisocial peer groups, is one of the biggest predictors of delinquency, and life-course- persistent delinquency. The most efficient interventions are those that not only separate at-risk teens from anti-social peers, and place them instead with pro-social ones, but also simultaneously improve their home environment by training parents with appropriate parenting styles.

## **4.3 Recommendations**

- That there is need of adequate sensitization of adolescents on the negative consequences criminal behavior and how it can affect their future if not curtailed
- Government should organize empowerment for the youth, so that it can reduce criminal act.
- Government should introduce or organize seminar to the adolescents, to teach them how to behave in the society.
- Parents should also monitor the movement or the behavior of their children, they should give them proper care and concern.
- Parent should adopt a democratic group cohesiveness in the upbringing of their children. This should involve discussing problems with children and set rules that will guide the behavior of their children.
- Parent should carefully explain to their children reasons they want their children to carry out the instruction to avoid autocratic group cohesiveness as this has direct significant relationship between autocratic style and criminal behavior and it breeds delinquency among students.
- Parents should be involve in most of their children activities and decisions.

- Students should be guided in making good friends to reduce groupthink resulting from keeping bad friends as groupthink has direct influence on criminal behavior.

## CONSENT

As per international standard or university standard, respondents' written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

## COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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