



A multiple linear regression analysis of parental social lifestyle on youth crime against property in Mwanza, Tanzania

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ABSTRACT

Teenager engagements in crime against properties remain a debate in urban areas in Tanzania, particularly in growing cities like Mwanza Tanzania. This study tends to examine the contribution of parental social lifestyle on crimes against properties among youth in Mwanza City, Tanzania, specifically investigates four dimension that are parental marital status, parental responsibilities, authoritarian and neglecting behaviours how do they influence youth to involve in crime against properties. The study adopted purposive sampling technique in order to obtain the right respondents aged from 18 to 35. Data were collected by using questionnaires were used to obtain primary data from a sample size of 316. The collected data were analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 20. A multiple linear regression was used to determine the relationship between parental social lifestyle and crime against properties. The results revealed that parental marital status had a negative and statistically significant effect on youth involvement in crime against properties ($\beta = -0.102$, $p = 0.037$), indicating that stable family structures reduce offending behaviour. The authoritarian parenting style produced mixed results harsh parental rules reduced youth involvement in crime against properties ($\beta = -0.193$, $p < 0.001$), whereas harsh disciplinary practices significantly increased offending behaviour ($\beta = 0.163$, $p = 0.001$). Parental responsibilities were not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.001$, $p = 0.892$), while neglecting parenting had a strong positive and statistically significant encouragement on youth involvement in property crime ($\beta = 0.443$, $p < 0.001$). From the findings the study concludes that inconsistent parent authoritarian and neglecting parenting are significantly increasing youth involvement in crime against properties while on other side stable marital status serve as the protective factor. The study recommends that parental accountability and expanding community-based youth support programmes to reduce youth crime against properties in Mwanza City. Further study should adopt longitudinal designs and extend the investigation to other urban areas in Tanzania. Additionally, Tanzania police force has to promote community-based crime preventions programs targeting the youth.

Key Words: Parental social lifestyle; parenting styles; parental marital status; parental responsibilities; parental neglect; youth involvement; property crime; Mwanza City; Tanzania.

I. INTRODUCTION

The involvement of youth in crime increased rapidly mostly in growing cities such as Mwanza city, since there is higher number of teenagers from rural areas to urban for searching for better life due to this most of teenager found themselves engaged in vulnerable to criminal behaviour. As experienced parents are serve as the key for youth behaviours based on marital stabilities, parental responsibilities, supervision and emotional support. Failure of these may lead youth to engage in criminal behaviours. In Mwanza city the involvement of youth in crime against properties became a problem, this is due to the increasing of high number of people, from the report of Legal Human Right Center (2023), shows that parental behaviours such as neglect, weak family, poverty and in adequate supervision has higher contribution for the increasing the number of street children and youth involvement in crime against properties.

Specifically, Nyumayo et al. (2022) reveal that poverty, speedy urbanization, family disintegration, divorce, population growth, and challenges involving parents or guardians are related with the increasing vulnerability of children to street life. An offence against properties among youth, it has been an obstacle for many societies to develop. Heiman (2021) discussed parental socio-economic status as family economic position within the society measured by using dimensions such as income, employment, occupation and financial stability. Nevertheless, Crime against property mostly are offences committed by individuals within the society such as youth and others (Ramakulukusha et al., 2021; Silas and Ebebuwa-Okoh, 2023). The offences included burglary, robbery, trespassing, theft and vandalism. The action of these acts generally involves the application of physical force or authority, either threatened or actual, against an individual, another person, or a collective group or community, these activities either lead to or are highly likely to lead

to injury, death, or psychological harm (Akinola and Ohonba, 2023).

In Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, about 150,000 cases on average cases were burglary that is crime against properties such as serious theft, car part theft and robbery (Ramakulukusha et al., 2021). Also in Nigeria, there were factors that lead youth to engage in crime against properties some those factors are unemployment, poverty, lack of emphasize on human security. These factors lead youth to engage in crime against property in Ibadan metropolis city (Ezemenaka, 2021; Uzuegbu and Ogbofa, 2020). Nonetheless, the majority of respondents perpetrated property crimes, with 40% originating from single-mother homes (Ntoimo et al., 2021).

In East Africa countries, for example in Nairobi Kenya, lack of active support from local leaders lead to the emerge of criminal gangs such as Gaza, Mungiki and Bagdad boys that were based on theft, stealing properties (Kenechukwu Nwakego Anugwom, 2023). Furthermore, low economic position of households, authoritarian parenting significantly contributes to the emergence of criminal behaviors in youth (Onsando et al., 2021).

Dar es salaam in Tanzania, the study done by (Idarous (2022) showed that 70% strongly agreed that the growth of unemployment youth associated to crime such as burglary, drug abuse, pickpocketing, robbery and cybercrime due to economic difficulties (poverty), family conflicts, joblessness and health problem. Despite of the existing contribution of different studies that mostly focused on social economic factors that lead youth to engage in criminal issues, but most of them did not specifically indicate how parental social lifestyle can influence youth to involve in crime against properties in growing cities like Mwanza.

Therefore, this study tends to address this gap by examining the influence of parental lifestyle in youth on crime against properties in Mwanza City, Tanzania.

1.1 Research Objectives

- i. To determine the influence of parental marital status on youth involvement in property crime in Mwanza City.
- ii. To assess the influence of parental responsibilities on youth involvement in property crime in Mwanza City.
- iii. To examine the influence of authoritarian parenting on youth involvement in property crime in Mwanza City.
- iv. To determine the influence of neglecting parenting on youth involvement in property crime in Mwanza City

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Routine Activity Theory

Routine Activity Theory was developed by Cohen and Felson (1979) to explain the occurrence of crime through the interaction of three essential elements: a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian. A motivated offender is an individual willing and able to commit a crime, while a suitable target may be a person, object, or place perceived as vulnerable and valuable. A capable guardian refers to a person or system that can prevent criminal activity. According to the theory, crime is more likely to occur when these three elements converge in the same place and time.

The theory is relevant to this study because parental social lifestyle may influence the supervision, guidance, and protection provided to young people. Inadequate parental supervision and neglect may expose youth to situations that increase opportunities for property crime, whereas effective parental monitoring can serve as a form of capable guardianship. The theory therefore provides a useful framework for examining how parental marital status, parental responsibilities, authoritarian parenting, and neglectful parenting may be associated with youth involvement in property crime in Mwanza City, Tanzania. Nevertheless, parental factors should be considered alongside other influences, such as peer relationships and environmental opportunities (Cohen & Felson, 1979).

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Parental Marital Status and Youth Involvement in Property Crime

Family structure has been widely known as an important element of youth behaviour. Kroese et al. (2021) reported that teenagers raised in stable two parent families are generally less likely to involve in criminal behaviour than those raised in single parent or unstable family environments. Likewise, Ntoimo et al. (2021) found that marital instability was significantly associated with youth involvement in crime against properties in Nigeria, with a substantial proportion of offenders originating from single-parent households. In Tanzania, Jesse (2021) reported that parental separation, weak family supervision, and child neglect contributed significantly to juvenile delinquency in Nyamagana Municipality. These findings suggest that stable parental relationships strengthen supervision and emotional support, thereby reducing opportunities for youth involvement in property crime.

2.2.2 Parental Responsibilities and Youth Involvement in Property Crime

Parental responsibility includes monitoring children's daily activities, providing emotional support, meeting basic needs, and guiding appropriate behaviour. Studies have consistently demonstrated that responsible parenting reduces delinquent behaviour among adolescents. Lee et al. (2023) observed that parental responsiveness and involvement improve children's behavioural outcomes by strengthening family relationships and promoting positive social development. Likewise, Anderson et al. (2022) concluded that active parental involvement reduces behavioural problems among adolescents by enhancing emotional stability and resilience. These findings indicate that responsible parenting acts as a protective factor against youth involvement in criminal activities.

2.2.3 Authoritarian Parenting and Youth Involvement in Property Crime

Authoritarian parenting is characterized by strict rules, rigid discipline, and high parental control with limited emotional warmth. Previous studies have reported mixed findings regarding its influence on youth behaviour. Climent-Galarza et al. (2022) found that parenting styles characterized by warmth reduced adolescent delinquency, whereas authoritarian parenting increased behavioural problems. Similarly, Onsando et al. (2021) identified authoritarian parenting as one of the significant predictors of juvenile delinquency among young people. Buliva et al. (2019) found a statistically significant positive relationship between authoritarian parenting and forms of delinquent behaviour among secondary school students in Butere Sub-County, Kenya. These studies suggest that although discipline is necessary, excessively harsh parenting may increase resentment and encourage delinquent behaviour.

2.2.4 Neglecting Parenting and Youth Involvement in Property Crime

Neglectful parenting refers to the failure of parents to provide adequate supervision, emotional support, guidance, and care to their children. Previous research consistently identifies parental neglect as one of the strongest predictors of juvenile delinquency. Ramakulukusha et al. (2021) reported that family conflict, poor parental care, and neglect significantly contributed to violent and criminal behaviour among youth in South Africa. Likewise, Mlay and Mpeti (2023) found that inadequate parental supervision and weak family relationships increased juvenile delinquency among youth in Tanzania. In Mwanza City, Nyumayo et al. (2022) further highlighted that many children living in Mwanza's informal settlements experience neglect, poor supervision, and social exclusion, conditions that expose them to street life and property crime. These findings support the argument that neglectful parenting weakens parental guardianship and increases youths' vulnerability to criminal activities.

2.3 Conceptual framework

According (Leavy, 2022) stated that conceptual framework designates the logical development of an event or phenomenon that is being studied furthermore. Based on Routine Activity Theory and previous empirical studies, this study conceptualizes parental social lifestyle as the independent variable influencing youth involvement in crime against properties. The study specifically examines four dimensions of parental social lifestyle, parental marital status, parental responsibilities, authoritarian parenting, and neglecting parenting. These dimensions are expected to influence the dependent variable, namely youth involvement in crime against properties, measured through offences such as burglary, theft, and robbery.

Independent variables

Dependent variable

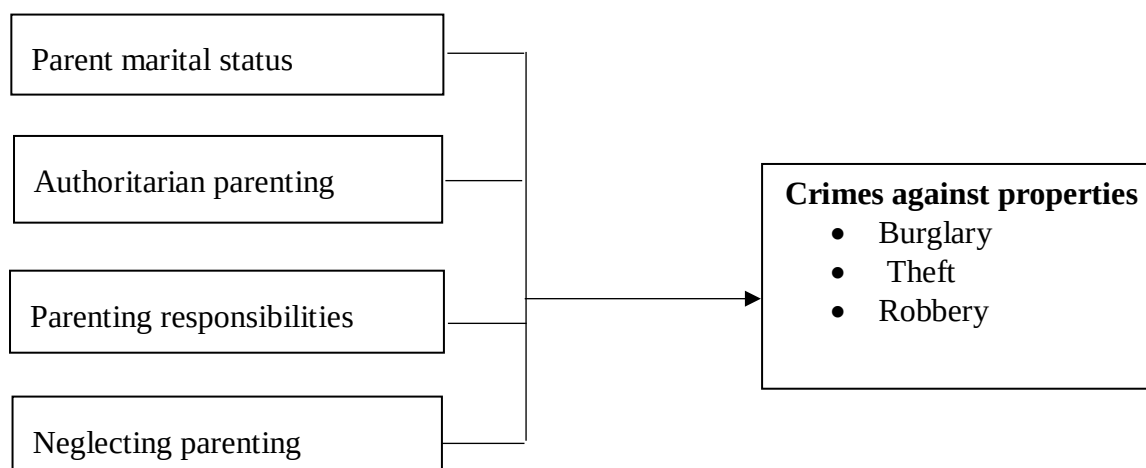


Figure 1
Parental Social Lifestyle

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative research design to examine the influence of parental social lifestyle on youth involvement in property crime in Mwanza City, Tanzania. The quantitative approach was considered appropriate because it enables the collection of numerical data that can be statistically analyzed to determine the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The study specifically employed multiple linear regression analysis to determine the extent to which parental marital status, parental responsibilities, authoritarian parenting, and neglecting parenting influence youth involvement in property crime.

3.2 Study area

The study was conducted in Mwanza City, located on the southern shores of Lake Victoria in northwestern Tanzania. Mwanza is the second-largest city in the country and serves as an important commercial, industrial, and transportation centre. According to the 2022 Population and Housing Census, Mwanza has experienced rapid population growth accompanied by increasing urbanization, informal settlements, unemployment, and poverty. These socio-economic conditions have contributed to increasing youth vulnerability and property-related crimes such as burglary, theft, and robbery. The city comprises two administrative municipalities, Nyamagana and Ilemela, both of which were included in the study because they experience relatively high levels of youth-related property crime.

3.3 Target Population

The target population comprised youth aged 18 to 35 years residing in Mwanza City. This age group was selected because it falls within the definition of youth provided by the National Youth Development Policy of Tanzania and represents the population most frequently associated with both offending and victimization in property-related crimes. Respondents were selected from Nyamagana and Ilemela municipalities.

3.4 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The study employed a stratified sampling technique to obtain representative respondents from the study population. The strata were formed based on age groups and categories of property crime, namely burglary, theft, and robbery. Stratified sampling was considered appropriate because it ensured adequate representation of respondents from different groups while minimizing sampling bias. The study included 316 respondents. The sample size was determined using the procedure described in the manuscript, resulting in a final sample of 316 respondents. Data were collected from all selected respondents, yielding a response rate of 100%. The sample size (n) was the number of participants or observations that were included in the study or survey (Rahman, 2023), since the study had unknown population therefore formula for finding sample size for unknown population was applied in this paper the sample size was 316.

$$n = \frac{Z^2 s(1-s)}{c^2}$$

Where by,

n = survey sample size for infinite (required)

z = value that correspond to the level of confidence (z=2.58)

s = percent of occurrence of a condition/state (p = 0.5%)

c = the maximum percent of error required (e=1%)

$$n = \frac{2.58^2 \times 0.05(1-0.05)}{0.01^2}$$

$$n = 316.17$$

$$n = 316.17$$

Therefore, the sample size of approximately 316 was used for the study.

Stratified sampling technique was used to obtain the data for the study (Kalton, 2023). A stratum of age group and type of crime (robbery, theft, and burglary) was used to obtain the right respondents.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire directed to youth respondents in Mwanza City. The questionnaire contained closed ended questions intended to measure parental marital status, parental responsibilities, authoritarian parenting, neglecting parenting, and youth involvement in property crime. Prior to data collection, respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and their voluntary participation. Completed questionnaires were checked for completeness before coding and entry into the statistical software for analysis.

3.6 Data Analysis

The collected data were coded, entered, and analyzed using IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 20. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, were used to summarize respondents' demographic characteristics. Before conducting regression analysis, the assumptions of multiple linear regression were assessed. The study examined multicollinearity using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), and variables exhibiting unacceptable multicollinearity were handled appropriately before fitting the final regression model.

Thereafter, multiple linear regression analysis was performed to determine the influence of parental marital status, parental responsibilities, authoritarian parenting, and neglecting parenting on youth involvement in property crime.

$$L(CAP) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \times X_1 + \beta_2 \times X_2 + \beta_3 \times X_3 + \beta_4 \times X_4 + \varepsilon$$

That is

$$L(CAP) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \times \text{Parenting Responsibilities} + \beta_2 \times \text{Authoritarian Parenting} + \beta_3 \times \text{Parent Marital Status} + \beta_4 \times \text{Neglecting Parenting} + \text{Error term}$$

where by

β_0 is the intercept (constant term).

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ and β_4 are the coefficients that represent the effect of each independent variable on the log-odds of committing a property crime.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were observed throughout the study. Participation was entirely voluntary, and respondents were informed about the objectives of the research before data collection commenced. Participants were assured that the information they provided would be treated confidentially and used solely for academic purposes. No personal identifiers were disclosed during data analysis or reporting, thereby protecting respondents' privacy and anonymity.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

4.1 Respond rate

Out of the 316 questionnaires were distributed and 316 were able to return that make the rate of 100% as the required number of respondents of the study. The higher the respondent rate the higher the reliability of the study.

4.2 Demographic information of the respondents

This section presents findings based on respondents' demographic information's such as gender, age and marital status.

Table1

Gender of the respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	234	74.1
Female	82	25.9
Total	316	100

Source: Authors Compilation from SPSS 20 Output

Table 1 shows the gender of the respondent's, the results indicated 234 male which is equal to 74.1% and 82 female which is equal to 25.9%. This implies that the majority of the respondents. This implies that most of the respondent were male compared to female.

Table 2

Age of the respondent

Age	Frequency	Percent
18 – 22	164	51.9
23 – 27	35	11.1
28 – 32	33	10.4
33 – 35	84	26.6
Total	316	100

Source: Authors Compilation from SPSS 20 Output

Table 2 above show the age in years of the respondents and it's appeared that most of the respondents were 164 aged from 18 to 22 years which is equal to 51.9% while respondents relied between 23 – 27 years were 35 which is equal to 11.1%, 28 – 32 were 33 which is equal to 10.4% and the remaining respondents about 84 were relied on 33 – 35 years old. This implies that the majority of the respondents were based on 18 to 22 years were most of them still leaves under care of their parents or guardian.

Table 3

The marital status of the respondent parents

	Frequency	Percent
Married	72	22.8
Divorced	6	1.9
Separated	29	9.2
Single Parent	209	66.1
Total	316	100

Source: Authors Compilation from SPSS 20 Output

From table 3 shows that most of the respondents live with single parent about 209 out of 316 respondents which is equal to 66.1%, they have single parent this may lead to have lack of good manners and may lead the young one to engage in criminal issues. On other hand 72 respondents which is equal to 22.8% their parents are married.

To test the assumption of the linear regression

4.3 Assumption Tests

4.3.1 Normality of Residuals

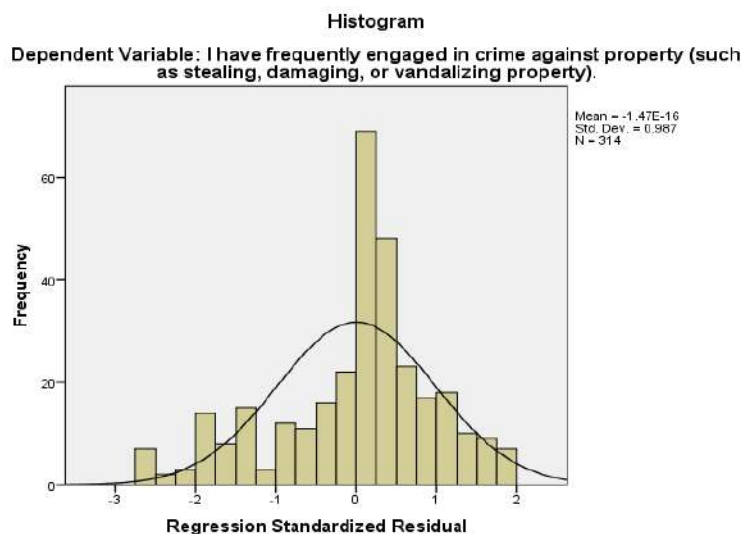


Figure 1

Normality Test

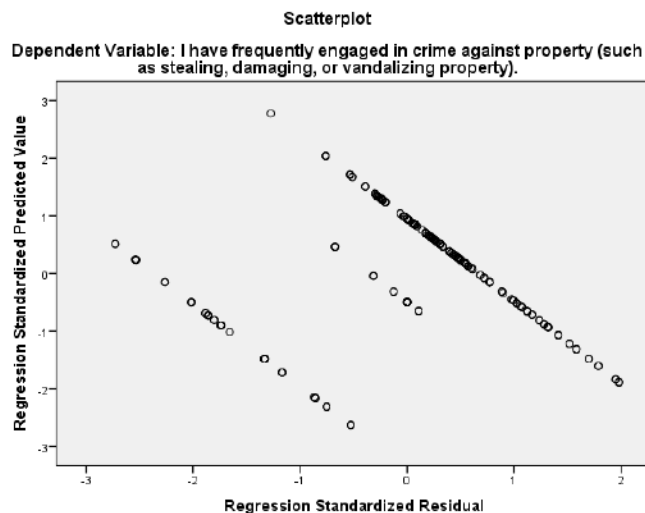


Figure 2
Multicollinearity

Table 4
Multicollinearity

Model	Variable	VIF BEFORE	VIF AFTER
1	(Constant)		
2	What best describes your parents' marital status during your upbringing?	85.663	1.16
3	My parents had strict rules that I was expected to follow.	1.37	1.37
4	When I made mistakes, my parents disciplined me firmly.	1.473	1.469
5	During my upbringing, my parents regularly monitored my activities (e.g., school, friends).	1.479	1.465
6	My parents were involved in supporting me with personal or school-related problems.	85.233	Removed
7	I often felt my parents were not attentive to my needs.	1.053	1.047
8	My parents were often unavailable or absent when I needed them.	1.098	1.093

Source: Authors Compilation from SPSS 20 Output

The preliminary regression analysis presented in Table 4 revealed multicollinearity between two independent variables, as indicated by their VIF values exceeding the threshold of 10. To address this issue, the variable “*My parents were involved in supporting me with personal or school-related problems*” was removed from the regression model because it appeared to overlap with the variable measuring parental marital status. The remaining variables were retained for further analysis. Future studies may consider reviewing the conceptual and measurement relationship between these two variables and, where theoretically justified, combining or redefining them to minimise multicollinearity while preserving their distinct meanings.

Now after run the assumptions of linear regression now let run the linear regression

Table 5
Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.562a	0.316	0.303	1

Source: Authors Compilation from SPSS 20 Output

The results presented in Table 5 indicate that the multiple correlation coefficients (r) is 0.562, this indicates that there is moderate positive relationship between independent variables and dependent variable, this implies for each variable of independent when it increases tends to increase for dependent variable. For the value of r that is 0.562 shows that relationship between independent and dependent are not strong or weak and its moderate.

However, the value of coefficient of determination (R square) is 0.316 this is equal to 31.6% which implies that

approximately 32% of the variation in dependent variable is expressed by independent variables. On the other side the remaining percent approximately 68% is due to the other factors that do not include in the model. From these results is good enough to show the model moderate fit.

Furthermore, the value for standard error is 0.0303 this shows the average distance between dependent and independent variable from that value means that the dependent variable deviate from the actual one by 0.303 which is very small, then the model predictions is accurate.

Table 6

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	141.72	6	23.62	23.634	.000b
	Residual	306.818	307	0.999		
	Total	448.538	313			

Source: Authors Compilation from SPSS 20 Output

The ANOVA results show that the value of F is 23.634 and p value is 0.000 this indicates that the model is statistically significant, and implies that independents variable is statistically significant predict the dependent variable. That the independents variables have significant effects on the dependent variable

Table 7

Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		β	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.769	0.318		5.569	0.000
	What best describes your parents' marital status during your upbringing?	-0.102	0.049	-0.106	-2.092	0.037
	My parents had strict rules that I was expected to follow.	-0.193	0.049	-0.218	-3.949	0.000
	When I made mistakes, my parents disciplined me firmly.	0.163	0.05	0.185	3.24	0.001
	During my upbringing, my parents regularly monitored my activities (e.g., school, friends).	0.007	0.051	0.008	0.136	0.892
	I often felt my parents were not attentive to my needs.	0.443	0.047	0.454	9.412	0.000
	My parents were often unavailable or absent when I needed them.	0.125	0.058	0.106	2.154	0.032

Source: Authors Compilation from SPSS 20 Output

Table 7 presents the multiple regression coefficients showing the influence of parental social lifestyle on youth involvement in property crime in Mwanza City, Tanzania. The independent variables comprised parental marital status, parental responsibilities, authoritarian parenting, and neglectful parenting. The results indicate that parental marital status had a negative and statistically significant relationship with youth involvement in property crime ($\beta = -0.106$, $p = 0.037$). Regarding authoritarian parenting, strict parental rules had a negative and statistically significant relationship with property crime ($\beta = -0.218$, $p < 0.001$), whereas firm disciplinary practices had a positive and statistically significant relationship ($\beta = 0.185$, $p = 0.001$). Parental monitoring, representing parental responsibilities, was not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.008$, $p = 0.892$). In contrast, parental inattention to youths' needs had a strong positive and statistically significant relationship with property crime ($\beta = 0.454$, $p < 0.001$), while parental absence was also positively and significantly associated with property crime ($\beta = 0.106$, $p = 0.032$). Overall, the findings suggest that different dimensions of parental social lifestyle have varying relationships with youth involvement in property crime.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

4.3.1 Parental Marital Status and Youth Involvement in Property Crime

The regression analysis revealed that parental marital status had a negative and statistically significant influence on youth involvement in property crime ($\beta = -0.102$, $p = 0.037$). This result suggests that stable parental marital relations reduce the possibility of youth engaging in property related crimes. Stable families are more likely to provide emotional support, effective supervision, and steady discipline, all of which discourage offending behaviour. This finding is

consistent with Kroese et al. (2021), who reported that youths raised in stable two parent families are less likely to become involved in criminal activities than those from dislocated family environments. Similarly, Ntoimo et al. (2021) found that family instability significantly increased youth involvement in criminal behaviour. In Tanzania, Jesse (2021) also observed that parental separation and weak family supervision contributed to juvenile delinquency. These findings support the suggestion of Routine Activity Theory that effective parental guardianship reduces opportunities for criminal behaviour.

4.3.2 Parental Responsibilities and Youth Involvement in Property Crime

The findings indicate that parental responsibilities did not have a statistically significant influence on youth involvement in property crime ($\beta = 0.001$, $p = 0.892$). This implies that the level of parental responsibility measured in this study was insufficient to independently predict youth involvement in property crime after controlling for other parental factors. Although this finding differs from previous studies, it does not necessarily imply that parental responsibility is unimportant. Lee et al. (2023) reported that active parental involvement positively influences children's behavioural development. The difference may reflect variations in the socio-economic conditions, family structures, and cultural contexts between Mwanza City and the settings where previous studies were conducted. It is also possible that the influence of parental responsibility operates indirectly through other parenting dimensions examined in this study.

4.3.3 Authoritarian Parenting and Youth Involvement in Property Crime

The study found that authoritarian parenting produced mixed effects on youth involvement in property crime. While strict parental rules were associated with a reduction in youth involvement in property crime, harsh disciplinary practices significantly increased delinquent behaviour. These findings suggest that discipline alone is not detrimental; rather, the manner in which discipline is exercised determines its effectiveness. This finding supports the work of Climent-Galarza et al. (2022), who found that supportive parenting reduced adolescent delinquency, whereas harsh authoritarian parenting increased behavioural problems. Similarly, Buliva (2019) reported that excessive parental control and punitive disciplinary practices contribute to antisocial behaviour among adolescents. These findings emphasize that balanced parenting, characterized by discipline combined with emotional support and effective communication is more likely to reduce youth involvement in criminal activities than harsh punishment alone.

4.3.4 Neglecting Parenting and Youth Involvement in Property Crime

Neglecting parenting emerged as the strongest predictor of youth involvement in property crime, with a positive and statistically significant regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.443$, $p < 0.001$). This finding indicates that parental neglect substantially increases the likelihood of youth engaging in property-related offences. The finding is consistent with Ramakulukusha et al. (2021), who identified parental neglect as a significant contributor to violent and criminal behaviour among young people. Likewise, Mlay and Mpeti (2023) found that inadequate parental supervision and weak family relationships increased juvenile delinquency in Tanzania. Nyumayo et al. (2022) also highlighted that children experiencing neglect and limited parental care are more vulnerable to street life and criminal involvement. From the perspective of Routine Activity Theory, parental neglect weakens capable guardianship, thereby increasing opportunities for youth involvement in property crime.

4.4 Implications of the Findings

The results reveal that parental social lifestyle plays an important role in influencing youth contribution in property crime in Mwanza City. Stable family relationships and effective parenting practices reinforce parental supervision and reduce offending behaviour, whereas parental neglect and harsh parenting practices increase youths' vulnerability to criminal activities. These findings underscore the importance of family centred interventions, parenting education programmes, and community initiatives that promote positive parenting and strengthen family support systems as strategies for reducing youth involvement in property crime.

V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

This study examined the influence of parental social lifestyle on youth engagement in crime against property in Mwanza City, Tanzania. Specifically, it evaluated the impact of parental marital status, parental responsibilities, authoritarian parenting and neglecting parenting on youth involvement in crime against property by using multiple linear regression analysis. The findings revealed that parental marital status had a significant negative influence on youth involvement in crime against property, suggesting that stable family structures enhance parental supervision, emotional support, and social control, thereby reducing the likelihood of offending behaviour. Parental responsibilities, however, did not have a statistically significant influence, indicating that the measures of parental responsibility examined in this

study were insufficient to independently predict youth involvement in property crime when other parental factors were considered. The study further established that authoritarian parenting produced mixed effects. While appropriate parental discipline and clear behavioural expectations were associated with reduced youth involvement in property crime, harsh and disciplinary parenting practices were linked to increased delinquent behaviour. In divergence, neglecting parenting emerged as the strongest predictor of youth involvement in property crime, demonstrating that inadequate parental supervision, weak emotional support, and poor parent child relationships substantially increase the likelihood of youth participation in property related offences.

Overall, the study concludes that parental social lifestyle is a significant determinant of youth involvement in property crime in Mwanza City. The findings support the propositions of Routine Activity Theory by demonstrating that effective parental guardianship reduces opportunities for criminal behaviour, whereas weakened parental guardianship increases youths' vulnerability to property crime. These findings contribute to the growing body of knowledge on youth crime prevention and provide empirical evidence to inform policies and interventions aimed at strengthening family support systems in Tanzania.

5.2 Recommendations

Parents should strengthen family interconnection by providing consistent supervision, emotional support, and effective communication with their children, parenting practices should balance discipline with warmth and guidance rather than relying on harsh punitive measures that may encourage offending behaviour, on the otherhand, Government of Tanzania, through the Ministry responsible for Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups, should develop and strengthen parenting education programmes that promote positive parenting skills and family stability. Community based initiatives targeting vulnerable families should also be expanded to reduce youth exposure to criminal environments. Finally Local government authorities in Mwanza City should collaborate with community leaders, schools, religious institutions, and civil society organizations to establish youth mentorship programmes, recreational activities, and awareness campaigns aimed at preventing youth involvement in property crime.

5.3 Study Limitations

Although the study achieved its objectives, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study relied on self-reported data, which may be subject to response bias or social desirability bias. Second, the study was conducted only in Mwanza City; therefore, the findings may not be fully generalizable to other regions of Tanzania with different socio-economic and cultural contexts. Third, the regression model explained 31.6% of the variation in youth involvement in property crime, suggesting that other important determinants not included in the study also influence youth offending. These limitations provide opportunities for future research to expand the scope of investigation.

Declaration of Interest

The authors declare that they do not have any known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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