

Research Paper

## A Correlation Study of Aggressive Behavior among Juveniles at Different Observation Home of Gujarat State

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### ABSTRACT

Over the years it has been seen that the number, variety and nature of crimes committed by juveniles are increased. Juvenile criminals between 14 and 18 years accounted for more than 60% of the crimes registered against minors in India last year 2016. Recently released figures of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) have revealed out of the 43,506 crimes registered against minors under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and the Special Local Law (SLL) by juveniles, 28,830 had been committed by those between the ages of 16 to 18. Society has seen an increase in the incidents of aggression/violence among juveniles which includes behaviors such as slapping, hitting, rape, recklessness, driving and shooting in school, truancy, road rage and other high-risk behaviors. This study focuses on the different types of aggression and its magnitude among juveniles at different observation home of Gujarat state. To examine the study a self-report questionnaire was filled by juveniles and for that a sample of 30 male juveniles (10 from Ahmedabad, 10 from Surat, 10 from Vadodara) who are in conflict with the law and living in a state observation home are approached. A questionnaire examining aggressive behavior was classified in four types – Physical aggression, Verbal Aggression, Hostility and Anger. To interpret the data the t-test and correlational method was employed.

**Keywords:** *Aggressive Behavior, Juvenile Delinquency, Juvenile Delinquent, Juvenile Observation Home.*

Over the years it has been seen that the number, variety and nature of crimes committed by juveniles are increased. Juvenile delinquency is participation in illegal behavior by minors or juveniles i.e. individuals younger than the statutory age of majority. A juvenile delinquent, in India, According to Juvenile justice act (2015) juvenile is- (i) Section 2 (12) child means a

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person who has not completed eighteen years of age.(ii) Section 2(13)“child in conflict with law means a child who is alleged or found to have committed an offence and who has not completed eighteen years of age on the date of commission of such offence.”(iii) Section 2 (21) child care institution means Children Home, open shelter, observation home, special home, place of safety, Specialized Adoption Agency and a fit facility recognized under this Act for providing care and protection to children, who are in need of such services. But depending on the type and severity of the offense committed, it is possible for people under 18 to be charged and treated as adults. Juvenile offending can be considered to be normative adolescent behavior. This is because most teens tend to offend by committing non-violent crimes, only once or a few times, and only during adolescence. Repeated and/or violent offending is likely to lead to later and more violent offenses. From India’s total population children represent about 38 to 40%. Juvenile criminals between the ages of 14 to 18 years accounted for more than 60% of the crimes registered against minors in India last year 2016. Recently released figures of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) have revealed out of the 43,506 crimes registered against minors under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and the Special Local Law (SLL) by juveniles, 28,830 had been committed by those between the ages of 16 to 18. Society has seen an increase in the incidents of aggression/violence among juveniles which includes behaviors such as slapping, hitting, rape, recklessness, driving and shooting in school, truancy, road rage and other high-risk behaviors. When this happens, the offender often displayed antisocial behavior even before reaching adolescence. The causal factors which result into the delinquent behavior are mainly classified into two categories. The factors are explained as follow: (i) Individual factors are personality traits like submissiveness, deviance, hostility, impulsiveness, feeling of insecurity, fear, lack of self-control and emotional conflicts.(ii) Situational factors are family, companions, media, school environment; work environment factors may turn a child to a delinquent. In India, juvenile delinquency is one of social problems affecting not only children with conflict in law but it affects families, communities, and society.

There are a multitude of different theories on the causes of crime and are applicable to the causes of juvenile delinquency. The first theory is Rational Choice Theory(RCT) which explains that classical criminology stresses that causes of crime lie within the individual offender, rather than in their external environment. For classicists, offenders are motivated by rational self-interest, and the importance of free will and personal responsibility is emphasized. Rational choice theory is the clearest example of this idea. Delinquency is one of the major factors motivated by rational choice. The second theory is theory of social disorganization which emphasis that current positivist generally focus on the culture. A type of criminological theory attributing variation in crime and delinquency over time and among territories to the absence or breakdown of communal institutions which includes family, school, church and social groups and communal relationships that traditionally encouraged cooperative relationships among people. The third theory is proposed by psychologist Strain and Strain theory is associated mainly with the work of Robert Merton. He felt that there are institutionalized paths to success in society. Strain theory holds that crime is caused by the difficulty those in poverty have in achieving socially valued goals by legitimate means and

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for instance, poor educational attainment have difficulty achieving wealth and status by securing well paid employment, they are more likely to use criminal means to obtain these goals. Psychologist Merton's suggests five adaptations to this dilemma and (I) Innovation which refers to the individuals who accept socially approved goals, but not necessarily the socially approved means. (II) Retreatism which refers to those who reject socially approved goals and the means for acquiring them. (III) Ritualism which refers to those who buy into a system of socially approved means, but loses sight of the goals. Merton believed that drug users are in this category. (IV) Conformity which refers to those who conform to the system's means and goals. (V) Rebellion which refers to people who negate socially approved goals and means by creating a new system of acceptable goals and means. But the difficulty with strain theory is that it does not explore why children of low-income families would have poor educational attainment in the first place. More importantly is the fact that much youth crime does not have an economic motivation. And hence, Strain theory fails to explain violent crime, the type of youth crime that causes most anxiety to the public. The fourth theory is differential association and also deals with young people in a group context, and looks at how peer pressure and the existence of gangs could lead them into crime. It also suggests that young people are motivated to commit crimes by delinquent peers, and learn criminal skills from them. However it may be the case that offenders prefer to associate with one another, rather than delinquent peers causing someone to start offending. Furthermore there is the question of how the delinquent peer group became delinquent initially. The fifth theory is labeling and according to labeling theory it is a concept within Criminology that aims to explain deviant behavior from the social context rather than looking at the individual themselves. It is part of Interactionism criminology that states that once young people have been labeled as criminal they are more likely to offend. The idea is that once labeled as deviant a young person may accept that role and be more likely to associate with others who have been similarly labeled. Labeling theorists say that male children from poor families are more likely to be labeled deviant, and that this may partially explain why there are more working class young male offenders. The last theory is theory of social control and it proposes that exploiting the process of socialization and social learning builds self-control and can reduce the inclination to indulge in behavior recognized as antisocial. The four types of control can help prevent juvenile delinquency are (I) Direct approach by which punishment is threatened or applied for wrongful behavior, and compliance is rewarded by parents, family, and authority figures. (II) Internal approach by which a youth refrains from delinquency through the conscience or superego. (III) Indirect approach by identification with those who influence behavior, say because his or her delinquent act might cause pain and disappointment to parents and others with whom he or she has close relationships. (IV) Control on needs satisfaction, i.e. if all an individual's needs are met, there is no point in criminal activity.

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### ***Objectives of the study***

1. To study the presence of various dimensions of aggressive behaviour.
2. To study the correlation between the different dimensions of aggressive behaviour.

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### ***Sample***

To examine the objective a self-report questionnaire was filled by juveniles and for that a sample of 30 male juveniles (10 from Ahmedabad, 10 from Surat, 10 from Vadodara) who are in conflict with the law and living in a state observation home were selected. The name of the subject is kept confidential.

### ***Hypothesis***

- There will be positive correlation between the various dimensions of aggressive behavior.

### ***Questionnaire***

The Buss- Perry Questionnaire was used and total 20 items were formulated and translated into vernacular language (i.e. in Gujarati) by the Expert translator. To measure the Aggressive Behavior, The Buss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire which was designed by Arnold Buss and Mark Perry, professors from the University of Texas at Austin in a 1992 article for the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology was employed. It is a 29 item questionnaire where participants rank certain statements along a 5-point continuum from "extremely uncharacteristic of me" to "extremely characteristic of me." The scores are normalized on a scale of 0 to 5, with 5 being the highest level of aggression. The questionnaire returns scores for four dimensions of aggression. (I) Physical Aggression which is behavior causing or threatening physical harm towards others. It includes hitting, kicking, biting, using weapons, and breaking toys or other possessions. (II) Verbal Aggression which is an assault on another's self-concept, rather than one's position. (III) Anger which is an emotion characterized by antagonism toward someone or something and/or a way to express negative feelings. (IV) Hostility which is an occasion when someone shows that they do not like something and perceive it in negative manner.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The study focuses on the different types of aggression and its magnitude among juveniles at different observation homes of Gujarat state which includes juvenile homes at Ahmedabad, Surat and Vadodara. The research methodology was classified into three phases. The Phase-1 was to obtain permission from Superintendent of Juvenile Home and for that a requesting letter was prepared by the Head of Department. The Phase-2 was to obtain consent from the juvenile under the supervision of the Superintendent and Socio-Demographic details were obtained from subject during rapport establishment. The Phase-3 was to ask each question from the questionnaire to juvenile in the sequence and in a vernacular language (i.e. Gujarati). For each question three choices were given to subject which were (i) Highly correlates with subject (ii) Moderately correlates with the subject (iii) No correlation.

Individually each of the type of aggression was significant. To interpret the data the Karl Person correlational method was employed at 0.05 level of significance. But the correlation

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was found between- (i) Physical aggression and Anger (0.0447) and (ii) Verbal aggression and Hostility (0.0419).

**Table A: Table showing correlation score of various dimensions.**

		Physical	Verbal	Anger	Hostility
Physical	Pearson Correlation	1	0.238	0.135	0.192
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.176	0.447	0.277
	N	30	30	30	30
Verbal	Pearson Correlation	0.238	1	0.23	.419*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.176		0.191	0.014
	N	30	30	30	30
Anger	Pearson Correlation	0.135	0.23	1	0.275
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.447*	0.191		0.116
	N	30	30	30	30
Hostility	Pearson Correlation	0.192	.419*	0.275	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.277	0.014	0.116	
	N	30	30	30	30

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The table shows that amongst all the possible correlation between all the types of aggression the correlation is observed between anger and physical aggression.

The aim of the study was to find presence of each type of aggression in juvenile but this study gave us the opportunity to be the part of the whole system concerned with a child caught and convicted as delinquent; been in the observation home and sent back to the society. In this process, the problems which juveniles were facing, were exchanged with us and they are-irregular presence of lawyer, no proper counseling, labeling and ill-treatment, no significant and proper measures for reformation, unawareness of provisions made by government for them. The steps government has taken are provision of academic education and sports activities, implementation of the designed time-table to make delinquent occupied in that constrained environment as well as to develop regularity, punctuality and discipline, collaboration with NGOs for the betterment of delinquents. With this, Reformative programs, we Forensic Psychologists could design and apply on juveniles could be-

1. For anger – meditation, therapeutic intervention for anger management
2. For verbal aggression-soft skill development and moral development
3. For physical aggression-vocational training and work ethics
4. For hostility-principle of reinforcement, music therapy.

Moreover, we should provide Parent counseling and design an intervention program for released delinquent not to repeat the delinquency.

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### CONCLUSION

It was found that there is a positive correlation between physical aggression and hostility and there is also a positive correlation between verbal aggression and anger which draws attention of forensic psychologists to plan a reformatory module for juveniles. For which further forensic psychological reformatory measures need to be implemented by the juvenile homes by passing certain laws mandatory for all juveniles for their betterment.

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