

Research Paper

Parenting Style and Malevolent Creativity Among Delinquents and Non – Delinquents

Riti Chaudhary^{1*}, Prof Manju Khokhar²

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present research investigation was to find out the comparison of parenting styles and malevolent creativity among delinquents and non-delinquents (normal adolescents). For this purpose, sample of the study has been selected from juvenile home (Bal Sudhar Griha) and from regular school students of the NCR region, Delhi. The present researcher used purposive sampling technique. The age range was 14-17 years. The data was collected by using two structures questionnaire – Children Perception of Parenting Scale (CPPS), developed by Anand Pyari and Raj Kumari Kalra (2013) and the Malevolent Creativity Behaviour Scale (MCBS), developed by Hao and Tang, et all (2016). The results were analyzed with the help of descriptive statistics and t test. The results obtained by t test showed that autocratic, rejecting, and overprotective, parenting styles are significantly associated with higher delinquent tendencies in adolescents, while accepting parenting correlates with normal behavior among adolescents. Additionally, delinquents were found to exhibit higher levels of malevolent creativity than non-delinquents. The finding of the present study suggested that parents should adopt more positive and democratic style while rearing their children. They should spend more time with their children. In this respect, the findings have applied applications and is valuable for families, policy makers and researchers for fostering more creativity and positive approach among children so as to prevent delinquent behavior among adolescents.

Keywords: Parenting Styles, Malevolent Creativity, Delinquents, Adolescents, Policy Making

Parenting styles and malevolent creativity play a crucial role in shaping adolescent behavior, especially in relation to delinquency. Parenting styles, including authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful, influence on child's development, while malevolent creativity involves harmful or rule-breaking actions aimed at causing harm. This research compares parenting styles and malevolent creativity between delinquents and non-delinquents to better understand how family dynamics and creative thinking contribute to criminal behavior. The study addresses concerns about rising delinquency and seeks to inform interventions that promote healthier parenting strategies, reducing the risk of malevolent creativity leading to delinquent behavior in adolescents.

¹Research Scholar, Department of Psychology, Meerut College, Meerut, India

²Professor, Department of Psychology, Meerut College, Meerut, India

*Corresponding Author

Received: April 18, 2025; Revision Received: September 05, 2025; Accepted: September 09, 2025

Parenting styles and delinquency

Recent research has emphasized the crucial role of parenting styles in influencing juvenile delinquency. Githuka (2023) examined boys at the Kabete Rehabilitation School and found that fatherly responsiveness was pivotal in reducing delinquent behaviors such as petty theft, violent crime, and sexual offenses. Specifically, fatherly responsiveness led to a 11.1% reduction in theft, 24.4% in violent crime, and 12.2% in sexual offenses. However, maternal responsiveness had mixed results, increasing petty theft and violent crime while slightly reducing sexual offenses, highlighting the complex dynamics between different parental figures in shaping delinquent outcomes. Devi and Bhuvanewari (2023) also found that several factors, including victimization, peer pressure, and parenting, influence juvenile delinquency. Their study emphasized that authoritarian parenting, particularly from fathers, was the most significant predictor of delinquency. Similarly, Amran and Basr (2020) argued that high-control, authoritarian parenting led to increased delinquent behaviors, including verbal, physical, and antisocial actions, while authoritative and permissive parenting styles had little impact on reducing delinquency. Simons and Sutton (2021) expanded on this by showing that parenting styles low in demandingness but high in responsiveness, or those involving corporal punishment, significantly increased the risk of adult criminality. They noted that this increased risk was mediated by criminogenic schemas and deviant peer affiliations, demonstrating that early family dynamics have long-lasting effects on criminal behavior. Lee, Gerber, and Cochran (2020) confirmed that authoritative parenting—characterized by warmth, support, and consistent boundaries—was associated with reduced delinquency. Their research also emphasized the reciprocal relationship between parents and children, noting the influence of parental sex. Finally, Biswal and Mishra (2020) found that a lack of parental guidance and supervision contributed to delinquency, with maternal emotional support playing a key role in preventing delinquency in girls and paternal involvement being crucial for boys. These studies collectively reinforce that authoritative parenting reduces delinquency, while authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful parenting styles increase the risk, with fatherly involvement being particularly influential.

Malevolent creativity and delinquency

Recent research on malevolent creativity highlights its potential to foster delinquent and criminal behaviors, with a clear connection to dark personality traits. Mitchell and Reiter-Palmon (2023) explored malevolent creativity in relation to traits like Machiavellianism and psychopathy, finding that individuals with these traits were more likely to engage in harmful creative acts, such as deception and aggression. Their study emphasizes the significant role personality plays in shaping creativity, particularly when the intent is destructive. Similarly, Rajeevan, Jain, and Parihar (2022) found that lower concern for moral values—like loyalty and authority—was linked to increased creativity in both ethical and unethical tasks. They specifically identified trait deceptiveness as a key mediator, suggesting that moral disengagement fuels harmful creativity. K.S. Mitchell (2020) further examined malevolent creativity, focusing on individuals with low honesty-humility traits. The study concluded that such individuals may be creative but often use their abilities for manipulative or harmful purposes due to a lack of empathy. Szabó, Körmendi, Kurucz, and Croypley (2022) also explored malevolent creativity, noting that Machiavellianism and self-efficacy were strong predictors of harmful creative ideas, especially in the context of lying. Their findings suggested that criminal experience can enhance one's ability to engage in malevolent creativity. Meshkova and Enikolopov (2020) reviewed the relationship between creativity and deviant behavior, proposing that resistance to negative innovations and difficulty in evaluating their impact are key factors. These studies collectively demonstrate that malevolent creativity is shaped by personality traits, moral disengagement, and life

Parenting Style and Malevolent Creativity Among Delinquents and Non – Delinquents

experiences, emphasizing the need for ethical guidance and preventive measures to mitigate its destructive potential.

METHODOLOGY

Objectives

- To compare the parenting style of delinquents and non-delinquents.
- To compare the malevolent creativity of delinquents and non-delinquents.

Hypotheses

1. Delinquents and Non-delinquents would be significantly differed with respect to different parenting styles
2. Delinquents and Non-delinquents would be significantly differed in their malevolent creativity.

Research Design and Variable

In the present research investigation parenting style dimensions and malevolent creativity were considered the dependent variables, while delinquency status was the independent variable. For analyzing the data, a cross- comparative research design was employed.

Study Area and Sample

The sample of the study has been selected from juvenile home (Bal Sudhar Griha) and from regular school students of the NCR region, Delhi. The age range was 14-17 years. The sample consisted of 60 respondents, comprising 30 delinquents and 30 non-delinquents, selected through purposive sampling.

Instruments

The data was collected by using two structures questionnaire – Children Perception of Parenting Scale (CPPS), developed by Pyari and Kalra (2013) and the Malevolent Creativity Behavior Scale (MCBS), developed by Hao and Tang et al (2016).

Statistical Analysis

The selection of the statistical technique depends upon the type of data, the nature of variables, and research design used in the research investigation. Therefore, the results were analyzed with the help of descriptive statistics and t test (one tailed). For results obtained by t-test are given with following tables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table No. 1 Comparison of Parenting Styles Between Delinquents and Non- Delinquents Adolescents

Group		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t- value (df=58)
Democratic	DEL	30	28.4667	3.02556	.55239	0.762 (NS)
	ND	30	27.7000	4.60996	.84166	
Autocratic	DEL	30	25.2000	5.88628	1.07468	2.360*
	ND	30	21.5667	6.03829	1.10244	
Accepting	DEL	30	29.2000	6.21169	1.13409	3.072*
	ND	30	34.000	3.61987	.66089	
Rejecting	DEL	30	19.8667	3.43143	.62649	2.366*
	ND	30	17.1333	5.31578	.97052	

Parenting Style and Malevolent Creativity Among Delinquents and Non – Delinquents

Over Protective	DEL	30	26.7000	3.39523	.61988	5.180*
	ND	30	20.7667	5.27638	.96333	
Over Demanding	DEL	30	24.5667	3.69233	.67412	1.774 (NS)
	ND	30	22.6667	4.55869	.83230	

* = significant at p value 0.05 (Table t value = 1.96)

Based on the Table 1 results, the analysis of parenting styles between delinquent (DEL) and non-delinquent (ND) groups revealed significant differences across four out of six parenting dimensions, highlighting the influence of specific parenting approaches on adolescent behaviour. No significant differences were found for democratic and over-demanding parenting styles. The t-values for these styles (0.762 and 1.774, respectively) were below the critical value of 1.97 at the 0.05 significance level, indicating comparable levels of democratic (DEL: M = 28.47, SD = 3.03; ND: M = 27.70, SD = 4.60) and over-demanding parenting behaviours (DEL: M = 24.56, SD = 3.69; ND: M = 22.66, SD = 4.55) across the two groups. These results suggest that these styles do not significantly influence adolescents' tendencies toward delinquency. However, significant differences were observed for autocratic, rejecting, overprotective, and accepting parenting styles. For autocratic parenting, the t-value (2.360) exceeded the critical value, with DEL parents (M = 25.20, SD = 5.88) scoring higher than ND parents (M = 21.56, SD = 6.03), indicating its association with delinquency. A similar pattern was observed for rejecting parenting (t= 2.366), where DEL parents (M = 19.86, SD = 3.43) exhibited higher scores than ND parents (M = 17.13, SD = 5.31). The most pronounced difference was found in overprotective parenting (t = 5.180), with DEL parents (M = 26.70, SD = 3.39) scoring significantly higher than ND parents (M = 20.78, SD = 5.27), highlighting its strong connection to delinquent behaviour. In contrast, accepting parenting showed a protective influence, with the ND group (M = 34.00, SD = 3.61) scoring significantly higher than the DEL group (M = 29.20, SD = 6.21; t = 3.073), indicating lower rates of delinquency among adolescents raised in an accepting environment. These findings underscore the critical role of specific parenting dimensions in shaping youth behaviour. While nurturing and accepting parenting styles appear to reduce delinquent tendencies, autocratic, rejecting, and overprotective styles are significantly associated with higher rates of delinquent behaviour. These parenting styles are more involved in delinquent behaviours than democratic and over demanding parenting styles. It may be due to lack of parental supervision, parental rejection, and parent-child involvement. Parental Discipline appeared to be weaker predictor than other family variables. The behaviours of parents as rejecting, autocratic sometimes intentionally or not, may create a fear of intimacy, distrust, anxiety and depression and a lack of parental supervision over their children disturbed child's overall personality development.

Table No. 2 Comparison of Malevolent Creativity Among Delinquents and Non-Delinquents Adolescents

Group		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t value (df = 58)
Malevolent Creativity	DEL	30	20.6333	8.69991	1.58838	1.851 (NS)
	ND	30	16.5333	8.45570	1.54379	

* = significant at p value 0.05 (Table t value = 1.96)

Another dependent variable in the present research investigation was to find out significant difference between malevolent creativity of delinquents and non – delinquents adolescents. Above table depicted that value 1.851 is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. Results

Parenting Style and Malevolent Creativity Among Delinquents and Non – Delinquents

showed no significant difference in malevolent creativity between delinquents and non-delinquents. However, delinquents had a higher mean for malevolent creativity score ($M = 20.63$; $SD = 8.86$) as compared to non-delinquents ($M = 16.53$; $SD = 8.45$), suggesting that delinquents tend to show higher levels of malevolent creativity.

CONCLUSION

This study examined how parenting styles and malevolent creativity influence adolescent involvement in crime. It was found that accepting (authoritative) parenting reduces criminal tendencies, while authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful parenting styles increase such tendencies. The study aligns with previous researches showing that lack of parental supervision and affection correlates with delinquency. Hendrix (2018) concluded that authoritative parenting reduces the risk of deviant and criminal behaviours, while authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful styles are linked to higher rates of delinquency. This study underscores the protective impact of warmth and structure in parenting, contrasting with the risks of stricter or less involved approaches. Additionally, malevolent creativity—using creativity to harm others—was observed more in delinquents. This supports findings of Cropley, D. H. (2010) that individuals may use creativity for unethical purposes, such as lying or manipulation, particularly in ambiguous situations. Overall, the study underscores the impact of both parenting and creativity traits on adolescent crime involvement.

Limitations

1. Study focused only on delinquent boys, not generalizable to girls.
2. Based solely on adolescent self-reports; lacked direct data on parental behavior.
3. Limited to Delhi and NCR, so findings may not apply to other regions.
4. More advanced statistical analysis could improve results and insights.

Future Recommendations

1. Conduct similar studies across different regions of India.
2. Focus on specific offender types (e.g., criminals, murderers) for deeper insights.
3. Control variables like parental education, socioeconomic status, and family type.
4. Increase sample size and consider factors like race, gender, and ethnicity.

Implications

1. Parents should adopt authoritative, supportive parenting styles.
2. Spending time with children can reduce delinquency risks.
3. Creativity training could benefit delinquents, enhancing positive thinking.
4. Findings are useful for policymakers, educators, families, and society to encourage positive youth development.

REFERENCES

- Amran, M. S., & Basri, N. A. (2020). Investigating the relationship between parenting styles and juvenile delinquent behaviour. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 8(11), 25-32.
- Biswal, R. K. (2020). Exploring parental risk factors in the development of delinquency among children. *Mishra, E. & Biswal*, 141-148.
- Cropley, D. H. (2010). *The dark side of creativity*. Cambridge university press.
- Devi, S., & Bhuvaneshwari, M. (2023). The Impact of Juvenile Victimization, Peer Influence, Birth Order, Parenting Style, and Home Environment on Delinquent Behaviour: Literature Review. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 11(3).

Parenting Style and Malevolent Creativity Among Delinquents and Non – Delinquents

- Githuka, J. J. (2023). *The Relationship Between Parenting Styles and Adolescent Delinquent Behavior Among 13–17-year-Old Boys in Kabete Rehabilitation Center in Kabete, Kiambu County* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi).
- Hendrix, J. L. (2018). *A Longitudinal Study Investigating the Effects of Baumrind's Parenting Styles on Deviant, Delinquent, and Criminal Behavior*. The Chicago School of Professional Psychology.
- Lee, B., Gerber, J., & Cochran, J. (2020). Parenting styles and children's delinquency reconsidered: An empirical assessment. *Juvenile and family court journal*, 71(2), 33-59.
- Meshkova, N. V., & Enikolopov, S. N. (2020). Creativity and deviance: The present state of the issue in psychology. *Psychology and Law*, 10(3), 86-107.
- Mitchell, K. S. (2020). *Mischief managed: Measuring malevolent creativity*. University of Nebraska at Omaha.
- Mitchell, K. S., & Reiter-Palmon, R. (2023). Malevolent creativity: personality, process, and the larger creativity field. In *Creativity and Morality* (pp. 47-68). Academic Press.
- Rajeevan, B. G., Jain, D., & Parihar, P. (2022). Dimensions of Personality of Delinquent Prone Adolescents. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 10(1).
- Simons, L. G., & Sutton, T. E. (2021). The long arm of parenting: How parenting styles influence crime and the pathways that explain this effect. *Criminology*, 59(3), 520-544.
- Szabó, E., Körmendi, A., Kurucz, G., Croleby, D., Olajos, T., & Pataky, N. (2022). Personality traits as predictors of malevolent creative ideation in offenders. *Behavioral Sciences*, 12(7), 242.

Acknowledgment

The author(s) appreciate all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Chaudhary, R. & Khokhar, M. (2025). Parenting Style and Malevolent Creativity Among Delinquents and Non – Delinquents. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 13(3), 3283-3288. DIP:18.01.298.20251303, DOI:10.25215/1303.298