

## **Socio-demographic perspects and Psychological Outcome among Juvenile Delinquents and Normal Adolescents**

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### **Abstract**

The tendency of increasing delinquency among the teenage group has become a matter of concern. The heinous crimes committed by them moves the person to the core. Teenagers who indulge in criminal activity are termed as Juvenile Delinquents. Occurrences of such socially maladjusted behavior highly depend on the psychological upbringing and makeup of the individual. Such unlawful acts cannot be assumed to be merely a coincidence, rather some solid reason existing behind these acts must be unveiled like incongruence or mis-conceptualization of thoughts. In line to this need, variables like self-concept, emotional intelligence and impulsiveness has been studied in the present study along with the differences in the psycho-social profile between normal adolescents and juvenile delinquents. The profile here includes personal information, familial environment, peer-group effects and school environment. The data includes 66 adolescents of age group 12-19 years of which 33 are juvenile delinquents who were interacted from their respective juvenile observation homes while the other 33 are normal school going adolescents. The results show major differences in the psycho-social profile between the two groups indicating the significant role of psychological make-up, and environmental stimuli in the shaping of future actions.

**Keywords-** *Emotional Intelligence; Impulsiveness; Juvenile Delinquency; Normal Adolescents; Self Concept*

In layman's language, Juvenile delinquency can be defined as a situation when the normal adolescent is meant to focus on his personal and social development through proper schooling and polishing social relationships along with intrapersonal relationships rather gets deviated towards committing criminal activities and proving harmful to society. The current rate of delinquency among the teenage group has become a matter of concern. Even the heinous crimes committed by teenagers move the person to the core. Psychological upbringing and makeup invariably define the possibility of the occurrence of socially unadjusted behaviour. This depends on a variety of psychosocial circumstances and bombarded stimuli.

The psychological state of mind includes unventilated emotions and thoughts giving rise to behavioural, mental, physical as well as emotional maladjustment. This unventilated charge may lead to undesirable actions like offensive or criminal behaviour as well as incapability to express emotions even when in need. The increasing rate of Juvenile Delinquency in the country questions the moral, ethical, social as well as psychological upbringing of adolescents. This includes parental care, peer group effects and the inbuilt temperament and personality of the adolescent. Out of many factors, this study chooses to know about the differences in the level of Impulsiveness, Emotional Intelligence and Self Concept among Juvenile Delinquents and Normal Adolescents where many personal and social factors have been matched like Socio-economic status, Geographical Background, Education, Schooling, Family Type (Nuclear/Mixed), Parenting Style and Locus of Control.

Impulsiveness: Impulsiveness refers to the tendency to act without considering the logical consequences of one's actions" Eysenck & Eysenck (1977). This tendency makes a person wilfully do actions that are not favourable to them, be it physically, psychologically, emotionally or socially. Impulsivity has been explained by Eysenck and Eysenck (1978) as "risk-taking, lack of planning, and making up one's mind quickly. It refers to the tendency to act without considering the logical consequences of one's actions" Eysenck & Eysenck (1977). This tendency makes a person willfully do actions that are not favourable to them, be it physically, psychologically, emotionally or socially. Similar to Impulse Control or self-control which means to willfully refrain from doing actions we like to do and instead do that activity which we do not prefer otherwise. Unwanted activity is done to achieve a long-term goal (Baron & Branscombe, 2015).

Self-concept: Self-concept is the image of self that develops from interactions with others. It is what we understand and comprehend ourselves (Ciccarelli & White, 2015). Self-concept is the image of self that develops from interactions with others. It is what we understand and comprehend ourselves (Ciccarelli & White, 2015). According to Carl Rogers, Every person has two selves, one is the Real self and the other is the Ideal self. The real self is what the individual is and includes aspects, the acceptable as well as unaccepted by the person himself. The ideal self is one that the person wants to become. It is the destiny of his self-growth as a better and more refined person. The real self is his present being while the ideal self is his future presentation which the individual wants to attain (Corey, 2015). According to Roger's theory, the larger the difference between the real and ideal self, the more incongruence in behaviour. Congruence between the two selves makes the person happier and well-adjusted (Corey, 2015). The self-concept is also formed by interactions with other people we go through. We form it how others judge us and tell us. The theory of the 'looking glass self'

given by Charles Cooley (1902) states that people get to know about themselves from others. This process involves 3 components –

1. Imagining how we appear to others
2. How would others judge me
3. An emotional response gets developed based on the imagination of the way others would judge me (Baumeister & Bushman, 2010).

This formation involves both introspections as well as the remarks and comments that the person meets.

**Emotional Intelligence:** Emotional Intelligence can be understood as awareness and the ability to recognize and manage their own emotions as well as others to attain goals and facilitate thinking (Cicceralli and White, 2015). Emotional Intelligence can be understood as awareness and the ability to recognize and manage their own emotions as well as others to attain goals and facilitate thinking (Cicceralli and White, 2015). This concept was first defined by Mayer and Salovey in 1990 as “*the ability to perceive and express emotion, assimilate emotion in thought, understand and reason with emotion, and regulate emotion in the self and others.*” Mayer and Salovey (1997). Daniel Goleman (2001) defined Emotional Intelligence as the “*ability to recognize and regulate emotions in ourselves and others.*”

Researches on the above-selected variables are not much. It has been found that antisocial behavior is related to impulse control. Campbell and Ewing (1990) in their study state that children who are ‘hard to manage’ in early childhood later meet the diagnostic criteria for externalizing disorders. These pupils show a troublesome characteristic that leads them to antisocial conduct and compromised pro-social development. Guardian reports that such children have poor impulse control, oppositional tendencies, poorly developed social skills, inattention, and school problems (Campbell and Ewing, 1990). A study also shows that role of self-esteem in criminal and delinquent behavior is complex and inconclusive with some studies finding support for a positive relationship between self-esteem and crime or aggression (Kernis 1993) while others have a negative and significant relationship (Mier & Ladny, 2018).

Fine et al. (2017) indicate that level of impulse control affects criminal behavior among adolescents. But, the complication is defined as that according to the dispositional vulnerability, poor impulse control enhances delinquency, but equivalently, according to the vantage sensitivity hypothesis, context-related risk factors like poor school, home as well as a neighborhood can increase delinquency regardless of their level of impulse control suggesting that negative environment can outweigh individual characteristics that give way to juvenile delinquency. Cha and Nock (2009) have stated that adolescents having high emotional intelligence scores don’t easily show negative behavior like self-harm if followed by childhood abuse.

Many social factors like a financial crisis (Guttentag, 1968), lack of etiquette (Eisikovits & Sagi, 1982), drug consumption (Farrow & French, 1986) number of siblings (Rathinabalan & Naaraayan, 2017), enhance the possibility of adolescence being involved in criminal acts. Family factors like age, education, employment of parents, single parent or being a single child, smoking, alcoholism, and criminal behavior by parents play a vital role in increasing delinquent behavior. Additionally, punitive parenthood worked as a protective factor Rathinabalan & Naaraayan (2017). Single parenting deprives the child of a positive and healthy development due to insufficient involvement

and continuous interaction (Demuth & Brown, 2004). Wang et al. (2005) in their research found that delinquent students had disproportionate education accessibility with low grades and poor attendance. A positive correlation exists between low socioeconomic status and juvenile offenses as observed in research by Rekker et al. (2017) showing more proneness to offend laws during the period when the socioeconomic status of their parents is low.

Researches also support that early job recruitment (tits and bits earning) and more working hours or intensive working underemployment during senior schooling days are also significantly and positively correlated with delinquent offenses (Paternoster et al, 2003). Supporting the Age-Crime Curve Theory, Blumstein (1988) states that there is a unimodal peak in the rate of the criminal act during early age as compared to adulthood which decreases sharply followed by a gradual decline. Such major reviews suggested the need to study the different variables like impulsiveness, self-concept as well as emotional intelligence along with socio-demography among the juvenile and normal population. In the present study, psychological differences in the level of emotional intelligence, impulsivity, self-concept, and socio-demography between normal adolescents and juvenile delinquents have been studied.

### **Objectives**

1. To study the level of Impulsiveness, Emotional Intelligence and Self-concept among Juvenile Delinquents and Normal Adolescents.
2. To study the differences in the level of Impulsiveness, Emotional Intelligence and Self-concept among Juvenile Delinquents and Normal Adolescents.
3. To study the differences in the socio-demographic profile between Juvenile Delinquents and Normal Teenagers.

### **Hypotheses**

1. There will be significant differences in the level of Impulsiveness, Emotional Intelligence and Self-concept between Juvenile Delinquents and Normal Adolescents.
2. There will be significant differences in the socio-demographic profile of Juvenile Delinquents and Normal Teenagers.

### **Methods**

#### **Sample –**

The sample consists of 66 male adolescent of age range 12-19 years of which 33 are juvenile delinquents and 33 are normal school going students. The data of Juvenile Delinquents was collected from the Observation Home in Hisar, Haryana via special permission from the Superintendent of the Observation Home while data of normal adolescents was collected from schools. Out of average presence of 90-100 delinquents in the Observation Home, 40 delinquents filled the questionnaire. Out of that, only 33 were retained for further processing. The major reason for not filling the questionnaire were either unwillingness or lack of literacy. The sampling method used was random.

#### **Measures –**

1. **Socio-demographic Profile:** The Socio-demographic profile was structured to gather the relevant social/personal details of the respondents. It includes variables - age, Socioeconomic status, geographical locale, education, schooling, family type, siblings, parenting, psychiatric history, substance abuse history, criminal history, being the desired child, self-acceptance, abuse victim, bully victim, and locus of control.
2. **Self-Concept Questionnaire – (Saraswat, 1971) -**  
Self-Concept Questionnaire was given by Dr Raj Kumar Saraswat in is a 48 item self-concept assessing tool in the format of 5 point Likert Scale. There are six dimensions in the scale naming physical, social, temperamental, educational, moral and intellectual. The reliability of the test is 0.91 in total and 0.67 - 0.88 in dimension wise. The content and construct validity was established of the test.
3. **Impulsiveness Scale – (Rai & Sharma, 1988) –**  
The Impulsiveness Scale is a 30 item scale developed by Dr S.N. Rai and Dr Alka Sharma in 1988. The statements are to be responded to in Yes/No format in the form of a tick mark. The reliability and validity of scale is 0.72 and 0.58 respectively.
4. **Emotional Intelligence Scale – (Hyde, Pethe and Dhar, 2001) –**  
The Emotional Intelligence Scale given by Ankool Hyde, Sanjyot Pethe and Upinder Dhar (2001) consists of 34 items divided into 12 dimensions. The responses are to be given on a 5 point Likert scale from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’. The reliability and validity of this scale is 0.88 and 0.93 respectively. The dimensions are scored in totality through this scale are self-awareness, empathy, self-motivation, mmotional stability, managing relations, integrity, self-development, value orientation, commitment and altruistic behaviour.

## Result

**Table 1: Frequencies of the group sample demographics (Personal).**

Variable	Levels	Normal Adolescents (N=32)	Juvenile Delinquents (N=32)
Age	11-15	29	10
	16-19	3	22
Socio-economic status	High	1	1
	Medium	31	23
	Low	0	8
Geographical Background	Urban	24	16
	Rural	8	16
Education	Below 10	22	19
	10 and above	10	13
Schooling	Private	29	11
	Govt.	3	21

Locus of Control	Self	23	29
	Others	9	3
Desired Child	Yes	26	31
	No	6	2
Self-acceptance	26	23	
Abuse Victim	Physical	9	5
	Emotional	7	4
	Sexual	0	3
Bully Victim	10	4	

**Table 2: Frequencies of the group sample demographics (Social).**

Variable	Levels	Normal Adolescents (N=32)	Juvenile Delinquents (N=32)
Family Type	Nuclear	21	22
	Mixed	11	10
Parenting Style	Death	2	9
	Mixed	29	27
	Nuclear	3	28
	Orphan	0	2
Siblings	0	7	2
	1-4	23	28
	5-8	2	3
Father's Occupation	Farmer	3	10
	Skill Artisan	0	7
	Driver	1	3
	Retired Personnel	6	2
	Business	9	2
	Teacher	5	0
	Doctor	3	0
	Others	3	0
	Nothing	0	3
Mothers Occupation	Housewife	26	28
	Entrepreneur	0	0
	Teacher	2	0
	Doctor	2	0
	Others	2	2
Psychiatric History		1	3

Drug History		3	11
Criminal History		0	3

**Table 3: Group differences in the study variables.**

Variables	Normal Adolescents (32)		Juvenile Delinquents (32)		T	P
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Impulsiveness	15.16	3.66	13.12	4.06	2.1	.488
Emotional Intelligence	124.59	16.99	129.22	16.22.	-1.11	.284
Self- Concept	176.38	18.29	179.88	26.42	-0.61	.016

Table 3 shows significant difference in the level of impulsiveness between normal adolescents and juvenile delinquents while the mean difference in level of self-concept and emotional intelligence is not significant.

**Table 4: Group differences in socio-demographic variables.**

Variables		Normal Adolescents (32)		Juvenile Delinquents (32)		T	P
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Socio-economic status	High	0.06	.246	0.03	0.174	.611	.544
	Medium	0.94	.246	.73	.452	2.318	.024
	Low	0	0	.24	.435	-3.150	.002
Geographical Locale	Urban	.75	.440	.48	.508	2.248	.028
	Rural	.25	.440	.52	.508	-2.248	.028
School	Private	.91	.296	.33	.479	5.781	.000
	Govt.	.09	.296	.67	.479	-5.781	.000
Siblings		1.44	1.54	2.48	1.83	-2.483	.016
Drug History		0.09	0.296	0.33	0.497	-2.418	.019

Table 4 shows only those socio-demographic variables out of all surveyed as shown in frequency table which have significant mean differences between normal adolescents and juvenile delinquents.

**Table 5: Pearson's Correlation among variables of Normal Adolescents.**

Variables	Emotional Intelligence	Self-Concept
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Impulsiveness	-0.137	-0.295
Self-Concept	0.083	1

Table 5 shows that there is no significant correlation among the impulsiveness, self-concept and emotional intelligence in the normal adolescents but impulsiveness is negatively correlated with both self-concept and emotional intelligence.

**Table 6: Pearson's Correlation among variables of Juvenile Delinquents.**

Variables	Emotional Intelligence	Self-Concept
Impulsiveness	0.008	0.177
Self- Concept	-0.210	1

Table 6 also indicates that there is no significant correlation among the impulsiveness, self-concept and emotional intelligence among juvenile delinquents but impulsiveness is positively correlated with self-concept while negatively with emotional intelligence.

### Discussion

This study aimed to find the differences in the socio-demographic background that may play the role in diverting the young teenagers into criminality and also to study the differences and interrelationship among the variables impulsiveness, self-concept and emotional intelligence among the two groups. As per the designed hypotheses of the study, both the hypotheses has been partially rejected.

The first hypothesis of the study stating that there will be significant difference in the level of Impulsiveness, Emotional Intelligence and Self-concept between Juvenile Delinquents and Normal Adolescents confronts that only impulsiveness is significantly different at  $p \geq 0.005$  with t-value (2.10) at 63 degrees of freedom while the mean difference in level of self-concept and emotional intelligence is not significant between normal adolescents and juvenile delinquents. It is also found the level of impulsiveness is higher among the normal teenagers while the level of self-concept and emotional intelligence is higher in juvenile delinquents.

This finding is partially contrasting to the claims of Fine et al., (2017) as they found low impulse control manifesting crime.

The probable reasoning might be that the normal teenagers do not get that frequent opportunities for ventilation of impulsive energy while the juveniles come into action easily. Also, the high level of emotional intelligence helps them to analyse and manipulate the surroundings according to their needs and advantage which is lacking among their normal counterparts.

The second hypothesis of this study stating that there will be significant differences in the socio-demographic profile of Juvenile Delinquents and Normal Teenagers has also been partially accepted. Out of socio-demographic variables taken into account namely socioeconomic status, geographical background, education, schooling, locus of control, self – acceptance, being a desired child, abuse victimization, bully victimization, family type, parenting style, number of siblings, father and mother's occupation, parental psychiatric history, parental criminal history, and drug history, only a few have found to be significantly different between normal adolescents and juvenile delinquents



namely socioeconomic status, geographical locale, schooling, number of siblings and drug history either at .005 or .001 significance.

In the socio-economic status, juveniles were found to be rooting more from rural and low status, areas rather than high and medium status. The juveniles had more number of siblings than the normal teenagers. It was found that normal adolescents complained more of being bully and abuse victim but juveniles were more sexually abused. The history of drug use in families as well as self is higher among the juveniles. They also have internal locus of control and show less regret. The education level of juveniles was lower than the normal though it is not found significant in this study.

### **Conclusion**

This study aiming to unveil the differences in the level of impulsiveness, self- concept and emotional intelligence between normal teenagers and juvenile delinquents and also study the role of socio-demographic background in deviating teenagers into delinquency concludes that the juveniles have a higher level of self-concept and emotional intelligence than the normal teenagers along with lower impulsiveness. The low impulsiveness might be due to the already ventilated impulses through the criminal acts and high emotional intelligence helps them in manipulation and understanding the surrounding for their manifest. The role of socio-economical background is also found to be partially true as only socioeconomic status, geographical locale, schooling, number of siblings and drug history were found to be significantly different between the two groups which might indicate some causation.

### **Limitations**

Sample size can be increased for more generalizability.

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