



A Survey On Language Skills of Delinquent Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

Children, who are seen as the world's most valuable human resource, hold the key to the future. Children can either improve or worsen a community's societal harmony. Similar to adults, society and its societal structure have an impact on children's well-being. A child is a valuable contribution to the household and to society. It is evident that not all children, however, uphold the morals and values of their families and societies or act in a manner that complies with the law. There are some anomalies that could be harmful to both individuals and society at large. Law enforcement and correctional staff have enormous responsibilities, but they still battle to fulfil them effectively. Juvenile delinquency can be popularly seen in a developing country like India. This study tries to show the level of language proficiency in delinquent teenagers. Since language is a means of communication, mastering language skills is essential to succeeding in a variety of situations. Normative survey method used in this study. The sample of the study includes 50 Delinquents from Juvenile Observational home. The data was collected using a General Data Sheet and Language skills Proficiency test constructed and validated by the investigator.

Keywords: Juvenile delinquency, language skills, delinquency in India.

Introduction

Children, who are seen as the world's most valuable human resource, hold the key to the future. Children can either improve or worsen a community's societal harmony. Similar to adults, society and its societal structure have an impact on children's well-being. A child is a valuable contribution to the household and to society. It is evident that not all children, however, uphold the morals and values of their families and societies or act in a manner that complies with the law. There are some anomalies that could be harmful to both individuals and society at large. Law enforcement and correctional staff have enormous responsibilities, but they still battle to fulfil them effectively.

Juvenile Delinquency

Delinquency is a term which is an umbrella for a variety of antisocial behaviour. Juvenile delinquency refers to a wide range of behaviours that kids and teenagers engage in that society does not condone. The Latin term "Ju", "Venis," which means "thereby young," is the source of the English word "juvenile." A delinquent child is one who routinely disobeys the reasonable and legal orders of his parents or other persons in positions of legal responsibility, according to Ruth Caven. (Visanth&Mallesha 2017)

Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2014

Adolescent Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2014 means to succeed the existing Indian adolescent misconduct law i.e. Adolescent Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000, with the goal that adolescent criminals in the age gathering of 16– 18 can be attempted as grown-ups for genuine wrongdoings. All persons who have not completed 18 years of age on the date of alleged commission of offence shall be treated as 'Juvenile in Conflict with Law'. It was passed on 7 May 2015 by the Lok Sabha consistently and it is currently pending in the Rajya Sabha. The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of

Children) Act, 2015 makes it mandatory to have one Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) in each district to deal with matters relating to juveniles in conflict with law.

Delinquent

Delinquents represent a major concern for both society and their future. The children who are delinquents below the age of eighteen years are known as juvenile delinquents. The meaning stated that the child who violates the social norms and values is called Delinquents.

“He is a child, who, not finding in his environment, food and opportunities for normal growth and development, reacts to his situation in aggressive ways that irritates as adults. Moreover, he tends to be the adolescent boy who belongs to a minority race, comes from a broken family is poor and is not a church goer or a member of an organization like the scouts.”

- Henry B. Nelson (Shukla 2007

p. 402).

Mowrer (1961) American Psychologist defined

“Delinquency as moral deficiency because of weak conscience due to improper teaching of the child in early age of life.”

Numerous sociologists and criminologists have studied this issue from a socioeconomic viewpoint across the globe. The amount and importance of language abilities among adolescents who engage in antisocial behaviour have received the least amount of study attention. In order for offenders to become modernised and culturally literate like school-going children, this study tries to examine the necessity for English language proficiency. Additionally, the goal of this study is to know the level of language proficiency of juvenile offenders

Delinquency in India

Juvenile delinquency can be popularly seen in a developing country like India. All persons who have not completed 18 years of age on the date of alleged commission of offence shall be treated as ‘Juvenile in Conflict with Law’. The delinquents are found generally at the stage of adolescence. Even though delinquency is manifested because of needs which cannot be achieved in life, ultimately lead to aggression. This misbehaviour affects the level of development and resulted extreme low intellect.

Reiss (1952) suggests, “School is not composed of four walls but of trained personnel who collectively are responsible for the behaviour of children.” The parents and the teachers are responsible for shaping the personality of young students. But self-confidence and resilience cannot be acquired from four walls but it is also possible through four language skills. A language teacher can influence and develop the behaviour of children, by that we can prevent the rapid increase of anti-social behavioural changes. By imparting knowledge and self-confidence through language skills, intellectual skills and reasoning skills make them enable to adjust in the society they live with.

Language for adolescents

Adolescence is a period of physical and psychological maturation that occurs between puberty and legal adulthood. While adolescence is most strongly associated with the adolescent years, its physical, psychological, and cultural manifestations can begin earlier and end later. The adolescent period is the most crucial in human development. (Nair 2007)

Academic stress, violence, including bullying, sexual permissiveness, easy access to drugs and drug abuse, crowding, poor infrastructure, and social divide are some of the major issues that young people today must deal with in our rapidly changing social scene. This is especially true in countries like India where there is rapid urbanisation and globalization, which results in the dissolution of joint families and the traditional support systems. An empowered kid can overcome obstacles in life even in the midst of adversity by using the tools at his or her disposal. (Nair 2007)

What Language Skills can do?

It is hoped that children with excellent language abilities will fulfil their promise and develop positive personalities. Prevention of criminal behaviour depends on self-awareness and interpersonal connections. Language abilities will support learners' independence in acting and communicating in a disciplined way if they are profoundly ingrained. In order to fully grasp this concept, one must realise how much more acquainted with English language grammar and vocabulary delinquents are than non-delinquents.

Language difficulty is commonly linked to behavioural problems. Those who are found to have language and communication difficulties should be given speech and language therapy in order to enhance their language abilities. For kids and young offenders who are not registered in the educational system, this is particularly crucial. If they develop adequate comprehension in communication skills for a specific reason along with education and ethical principles, there is a proportional chance that they won't commit another crime.

Language skills of Delinquents

Samuel Taylor Coleridge famously said, Language is the armoury of the human intellect and at once holds the trophies of its past and weapon of its future triumphs. A necessary prerequisite for human growth and development is language. It aids in a child's socialisation. Getting within the educational doors is crucial for all children. Language has the effect of enhancing purposeful communication as well as direct teaching and replication. (Sharma, 2005). Even if they are unable to describe it, those who are speechless are best able to understand the necessity for language.

The Language Domains

- i. Listening: Recognize, comprehend, analyse, and assess spoken language in a range of contexts
- ii. Speaking: Use oral communication in a range of contexts for a variety of audiences and goals.
- iii. Reading - process, interpret, and evaluate written language, symbols, and text with knowledge and fluency.
- iv. Writing - participate in written communications in a number of formats for a variety of purposes and audiences.

This study tries to show the level of language proficiency in delinquent teenagers. Since language is a means of communication, mastering language skills is essential to succeeding in a variety of situations. Language serves as a higher study and fresh thinking medium. Its purpose in education is to transfer knowledge, and in everyday life, it serves as a tool for information gathering. Language is essential for learning, memory retention, and recall. It is the child's fundamental need. The present study is to emphasize the importance of language skills and make use of adolescents' talent and knowledge. This study is entitled as "Language Skills of Delinquent Adolescents"

Need and Significance

Language Skills are the root of all professional communicative skills. It is transferring to students as a developmental sequence to enable them to acquire sufficient proficiency in the language in both spoken and written modes for the present and future purpose. This study attempts to find out how far the delinquents are aware of the basic skills in English Language and in which level delinquents are giving importance to language skills. Language Skills are the root of all communicative professional skills. It should be taught as a developmental sequence to enable learners to acquire sufficient proficiency in the language in both spoken and written modes for the present and future life. Given the importance of language skills, better understanding the language skills of young offenders residing in residential facilities is essential. Developing English language skills has been considered one of the critical aspects for job creation and increase in proficiency. There is a need to study whether there were significant differences for language skills on the dependent measures age and locale.

Operational definitions

Language Skills – In this study Language Skills means language skills in English.

Delinquent – Adolescents with age ranges from 12 to 17 who violated the law and

committed unacceptable and illegal behaviour and kept in the juvenile correctional centre and found to have committed an offence and has not completed eighteen years of age on the date of committing such offence.

Adolescents – In this study adolescents are young boys and girls who are developing into adults – immature young persons from age ranging from 12- 18.

Objectives

1. To study the level of language skills of delinquent adolescents.
2. To study whether there is any significant difference in the mean scores of language skills of delinquent and non- delinquent adolescents with respect to background variables –Age, Locality.
3. To compare the language proficiency of delinquents with respect to Age, Locality.

Hypotheses

1. There exists no significant difference in the mean scores of language skills of delinquent adolescents with respect to background variable Age.
2. There exists no significant difference in the mean scores of language skills of delinquent adolescents with respect to background variable Locality.

Methodology

Normative survey method used in this study. The sample of the study includes 50 Delinquents of Juvenile Correctional Centre.

Tools used:

The following tools will be used:

1. General Data Sheet
2. Language skills Proficiency test constructed and validated by the investigator.

Statistical Techniques to be used:

- i. Percentage analysis
- ii. Arithmetic mean
- iii. Standard Deviation
- iv. t -test
- v. ANOVA

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1

Descriptive statistics for Language Skills Proficiency

Mean	26.98
Std Deviation	6.15
Count	50

The arithmetic mean was found to be 26.98 out of total 50 sample. The value obtained for standard deviation is 6.15.

Table 2

Percentage distribution of different levels of Language Skills Proficiency

Language Skills Proficiency	Count	Percent
Low	7	14.00
Medium	34	68.00
High	9	18.00
Total	50	100.00

From table 1, it is clear that 18% of delinquent adolescents have a high level of language proficiency, 68 % of delinquent adolescents have medium level and 14% of delinquents have a low level of language proficiency.

Table 3

Percentage distribution of the sample according to background characteristics

Background characteristics		Count	Percent
Age	14 to 17	40	80.00
	18 to 21	10	20.00
Locality	Rural	30	60.00
	Urban	20	40.00

Table 4

Comparison of Language Skills Proficiency based on Age

Age	Mean	SD	N	t	p	Remark
14 to 17	26.20	6.16	40	2.006	0.050	Sig. at 0.05 level
18 to 21	30.10	5.32	10			

From the above table it is clear that calculated mean values 26.20 and 30.10, corresponding standard deviation are 6.16 and 5.32. The obtained t value is > 1.96 at 5% level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 5

Comparison of Language Skills Proficiency based on Locality

Locality	Mean	SD	N	t	P	Remark
Rural	26.2	6.84	30	1.176	0.245	NS
Urban	28.15	4.88	20			

From the above table it is clear that calculated mean values 26.2 and 28.15, corresponding standard deviation are 6.84 and 4.88. The obtained t value is < 1.96 at 5% level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Results and Discussion

The study illustrates that older language learners are more successful and efficient in English language skills than young learners. Some studies have been done to support this view. Ekstrand reveals that L2 learning ability 'improves with age' (Ekstrand 1976, p. 130). In Harley's research, he favors the faster acquisition rate among later beginners (1986, p. 112). Therefore, we can get the point that older learners are the efficient language learners. Based on these researches and argument, it can be concluded that older learners will learn language faster and more efficient than young learners, whereas young learners will win the achievement in the long period of language learning. As most of them were living in an environment outside home, the influence of locality was not found to be significant in acquiring language skills.

Conclusion:

Delinquents must have a solid base in language skills. Values and life skills can be linked through language abilities. Language proficiency is a way to develop self-assurance and self-esteem in order to realise oneself, which is necessary to socialise the delinquents in society after their life from observational home. The study aimed to screen language skills in among adolescent delinquents, aged 14-21 years. It estimated the overall language skills of youth offenders involved with the juvenile justice system. Given the importance of this population, identifying avenues through which we can increase the likelihood of successful interventions is a necessary societal effort. The results suggest that speech and language therapy assessment should be available to adolescent delinquents found to have low level of language skills and those who are not engaged within the education system. Various social context factors can affect language learning among adolescents and suggests a crucial role for school and peer interventions. The findings have particular implications in the areas of early intervention for high-risk boys as language is a social skill.

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