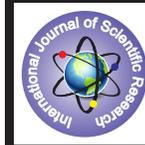


Problems Related to Mental Health of Juvenile Offenders – An Analysis



Education

KEYWORDS : Mental health, Juvenile offenders

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ABSTRACT

The research study focussed on the mental health problems of Juvenile offenders in the observation homes. Normative survey method was employed to collect the data through questionnaire by adopting Stratified Random Sampling technique. The sample size of the study is 132. The main objective of the study is to assess the mental health problem of juvenile offenders based on parental occupation, parents' educational qualification and locality. The major findings of the study are the problems related to mental health among Juvenile offenders is high in nature. There is a significant difference in the mental health problem of juvenile offenders based on father's occupation and locality. If the causative factors for mental health problems are identified and proper remedial measures are incorporated to impart positive attitudes among the offenders it will result in the effective functioning of the individual to the society.

Introduction

The Juvenile offenders in Juvenile Justice System are reported to have mental health problems. As many as 70 percent of youth in the Juvenile Justice system are affected with the mental problem and one in five suffer from mental illness which impairs their ability to function as a young person and grow into an responsible adult. Children with unaddressed mental health sometimes enter a juvenile justice system that is ill – equipped to assist them, even if they receive a level of assistance, some are then released without access to ongoing needed mental health treatment. An absence of treatment may contribute to a path of behaviour that includes continued delinquency and eventually, adult criminality. The Bureau of Justice statistics estimates that more than three quarters of mentally ill offenders in detention centres had prior offenses. Effective assessment and comprehensive responses to court – involved juveniles with mental health needs can help to break this cycle and produce healthier young people who are less likely to act out and commit crimes.

Operational Definition: Mental health Problems

Mental health problems can be seen as an unstable continuum, where an individual's mental health may have different behavioural and cognitive associated disorders. The term mental health problem highlights unstable emotional well- being, the incapacity to live a full and creative life, and the maladaptive to deal with life's inevitable challenges.

Need and Significance of the study

The study exemplifies the mental health problems of the young offenders and the necessity in taking herculean steps for bringing out effective behaviour. Steps should also be taken to cater to the mental health needs and to establish healthier young people, who are less likely to act out and commit crimes. The study outlines the decisive role of educational institutions in taking the pivotal role to shape the attitude towards mental health. As the crime rates associated with the juveniles increasing rapidly, hence it requires an immediate remedy, in order to grow them as a responsible citizen and to reduce the rate of victimisation.

Objectives of the study

- To analyze the mental health problem of juvenile offenders.
- To assess mental health problem of juvenile offenders based on,
 - Parental occupation
 - Parent's educational qualification
 - Locality

Hypotheses of the study

- The mental health problem of juvenile offenders is moderate in nature.
- There is no significant difference of mental health problem among juvenile offenders based on,

- Parental occupation
- Parent's educational qualification
- locality

Methodology and area of investigation

Normative survey method is employed to collect data using the questionnaire by adopting Stratified Random Sampling technique. The sample size of the study is 132. The area of study is around 3 districts in Tamil Nadu. It was considered that this approach to the collection of data would render the results of study more realistic and in tune with ground realities.

Mental health – Questionnaire

The questionnaire was constructed and standardized by the Investigator under the guidance and supervision of Research Guide. The questionnaire consisting of 43 items under the following five dimensions namely, Negative thinking patterns, Manage with moods/Feelings, Follow good sleep, Self – esteem, Maintain Positive relationship.

Scoring Procedure

Scoring for this 3 – point scale is assigned a weightage ranging from 3 to 1 as given in the tool. The maximum score is 129 and the minimum score is 43. Usually – 3, Sometimes – 2, Never – 1

Pilot Study

The pilot study was conducted on 50 juveniles to establish reliability and validity of the tool using odd even method. The reliability of the Mental illness Inventory was found to be 0.98 using Karl Pearson product correlation method. Validity of the tool was found to be 0.99.

Sample for the main study

After obtaining a prior permission from “The Directorate of Social Defence”, Government of Tamil Nadu, the data for the study was collected randomly. A representative sample of 132 Juvenile male offenders of age group between 15 – 18 years from 3 different districts in Tamil Nadu as scheduled by ‘The Directorate of Social Defence’ were considered to be the sample for the present study.

Statistics Used

For analyzing the data mean, standard deviation, 't'-test, and one way ANOVA have been computed.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1 Level of Mental health problem of male juvenile offenders

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
Mental health problem	Low	34	25.7	25.7
	Moderate	42	31.8	57.5
	High	56	42.5	100.0
	Total	132	100.0	

It is inferred that the level of mental illness among juvenile offenders is high.

Table 2 Mental health problem – Fathers’ Occupation

Variable	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	Level of Significance
Mental health problem	Between Groups	1,941.589	31	647.196	7.026	0.01
	Within Groups	42,004.783	101	92.116		
	Total	43,946.372	132			

The calculated ‘F’ value is found to be (7.026), which is greater than the table value, it is concluded that there is a significant difference in the mental health problem of juvenile offenders based on fathers’ occupation. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. The table has been subjected for further analysis using ‘t’ test.

Table 2(a) Mental health problem Vs Fathers’ Occupation

Fathers’ Occupation	Sample	Mean	S.D	‘t’- Value	Level of Significance
Unemployed	19	70.44	11.534	3.89	0.01
Cooly	53	79.57	9.814		
Unemployed	19	70.44	11.534	3.72	0.01
Business	32	78.30	9.254		
Unemployed	19	70.44	11.534	2.98	0.01
Professional	28	77.70	9.296		
Cooly	53	79.57	9.814	1.28	NS
Business	32	78.30	9.254		
Cooly	53	79.57	9.814	2.05	0.05
Professional	28	77.70	9.296		
Business	32	78.30	9.254	3.45	0.01
Professional	28	77.70	9.296		

Analysis of mean difference between the Fathers’ occupation was tested which reveals that, in the overall mental health problem, the juvenile offender whose father’s occupation is cooly (79.57) has comparatively high mental health problem.

Table 3 Mental health problem – locality

Variable	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	Level of Significance
Mental health problem	Between Groups	93.595	31	46.798	5.006	0.01
	Within Groups	4,272.396	101	9.349		
	Total	4,365.991	132			

The calculated ‘F’ value is found to be (5.006), which is greater than the table value, it is concluded that there is a significant difference in the mental health problem of juvenile offenders

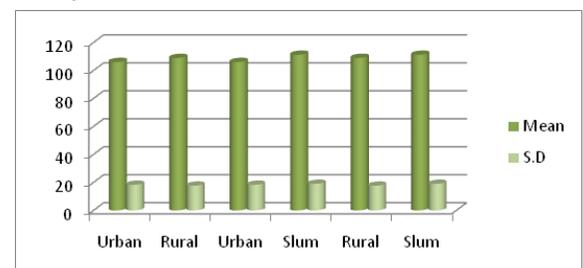
based on locality. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. The table has been subjected for further analysis using ‘t’ test.

Table 3(a) Mental health problem - Locality

Locality	Samples	Mean	S.D	‘t’- Value	Level of Significance
Urban	33	106.11	18.355	2.44	0.05
Rural	46	109.00	17.701		
Urban	33	106.11	18.355	3.33	0.01
Slum	53	111.26	19.023		
Rural	46	109.00	17.701	1.98	0.05
Slum	53	111.26	19.023		

Analysis of mean difference between the locality was tested which reveals that, in the overall mental health problem, the juvenile offenders whose location of residence is Slum (111.26) has comparatively high Mental health problem.

Graph showing the mean and standard deviation based on locality



Findings of the study

- The mental health problem of juvenile offenders is high in nature.
- There is a significant difference in the mental health problem of juvenile offenders based on fathers’ occupation. In the overall mental health problem, the juvenile offender whose fathers’ occupation is cooly has comparatively high mental health problem.
- There is a significant difference in the mental health problem of juvenile offenders based on locality. In the overall mental health problem, the juvenile offender whose location is Slum has comparatively high mental health problem.

Educational Implication

By analyzing the problems related mental health, successful intervention measures can be adopted to reverse these trends based on identified positive and negative characteristics -- protective factors and risk factors -- that are present or lacking in communities, families, schools, peer groups, and individuals. These factors either equip a child with the capacity to become a mentally vibrant and productive individual.

Conclusion

The problems related to mental health of offenders has been analyzed. The mental health problems of the juvenile offenders can be solved by giving them the coping strategies. By adopting the suitable coping styles that helps them to mend as a responsible citizen of our society

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