

# ADOLESCENT EMOTIONAL INSTABILITY AND JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

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## Abstract

Juvenile delinquency has been identified as a major issue in India and around the world. There is no denying that today's delinquent boy, if not adequately cared for, will become a criminal tomorrow. Children's delinquency should be regulated until it becomes a major threat to society.

According to psychology, any child between the ages of 15 and 18 who commits a crime, regardless of whether he is apprehended or not, is considered a juvenile delinquent. In this sense, a juvenile delinquent is somebody who takes another's property forcibly or damages it, engages in anti-social behaviour, threatens another's life, or obstructs others' activities. From a psychological perspective, a child who throws a stone at a vehicle and runs away, one who sets fire without purpose, and one who puts another's life in danger just for the fun of it are all examples of juvenile delinquency.

**Keywords-** Adolescent, Emotional Instability, Juvenile Delinquency, Behaviors.

## Introduction

According to Pavlenko et al. (2009), an emotionally stable individual is one who is able to cope with general changes in the world without having an intense emotional reaction. The symptoms of emotional stability include mental calmness and the absence of anxiety and depression (Hay & Ashman, 2003). An emotionally stable person possesses emotional intelligence, self-confidence, and consistency in their plans and affections; these individuals look confidently ahead for evidence and circumstances and do not submit to mood swings.

According to Seibert and Kramer (2001), Emotional Stability is a measure of change versus maladjustment, with individuals with low Emotional Stability displaying elevated levels of anxiety, aggression, depression, and self-consciousness. Emotional stability is not something we are born with. Our emotional stability as children is very weak and raw, necessitating our focus. We can focus on our emotional stability in the same way as we work on our physical stability as we grow older and learn more. Emotional instability is one of the most significant causes that lead to delinquent's behavior. Emotional stability is delinquents and non-delinquents measured through emotional stability test.

## The objectives of the study:

- To scrutinize whether emotional stability is a significant of juvenile delinquency.
- To study the emotional instability of juvenile delinquency.

## Hypotheses of the study:

- Delinquents will be more emotionally unstable than non-delinquents.

## Methodology:

The proposed study was conducted on delinquents and non-delinquents. This study was based on primary data were gathered from institutionalized delinquents living in special observation homes and a non-delinquent group is living with parents.

## Sample:

A total sample of 200 subjects (Age group 14-18) was used. The sample had two main groups, i.e., delinquents' group (Study group) and non-delinquents' group (Comparison group), each group consisting of 100 subjects. Non-delinquents' group was living with parents. Delinquents group consists of juvenile offenders alleged/convicted of offences. The delinquent sample was composed of institutionalized delinquents living in special observation Home, Shivajinagar, Pune and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Industrial School, Yerwada, Pune. Purposive Sampling Method was used.

The distribution of the total sample is depicted as follows:

Children	Delinquents	Non-Delinquents	Total
Sample	100	100	200

**Research design:** In the present study 2 group ex post facto design was used. The two independent variables are Delinquents and Non-Delinquents. Dependent variable is Emotional Stability.

**2Group Design**

Children – A		Total
Delinquents - A1 100	Non - delinquents A2 100	200 Sample

**Variables:** Independent and dependent variables for the present study are described as follows-

**1. Independent Variables:****Children**

1. Delinquents
2. Non-delinquents.

**2. Dependent Variables**

1. Emotional Stability

**Operational Definition:****Juvenile Delinquents:**

A juvenile delinquent is a young person who is incorrigible or who is disobedient on a regular basis. Juvenile delinquency refers to wrongdoing committed by a child or young person who is under the age of the law of the land.

**Non-delinquents:** Relating to a person who is not a delinquent.

**Emotional Stability:** Emotional Stability of the delinquents and non-delinquents will be determined with the help of score obtain by emotional stability test developed by Dr. H.A. SenGupta& A. K. Singh.

**Research Tool:**

Following tests and scales were used for the data collection.

**Emotional Stability Test for Children (ESTC 1985)**

Emotional stability can be defined as having a congruent transition of emotional states and moderate emotional resilience to environmental influences (or cues). Someone who has the ability to cope with general changes in the environment without responding with an intense emotional reaction is said to be emotionally stable. The ability to stabilize emotions differs from the ability to regulate emotions. The signs of an emotional stability are calmness of mind and freedom from anxiety and depression. (Hey & Ashman, 2003) According to Smitson (1974), emotional stability is the process in which the personality is continuously striving for greater sense of emotional health, both intra-physically and intrapersonal. Emotional Stability is not only one of the effective determinants of the personality patterns, but it also helps to control growth of adolescent development.

Emotional Stability of the sample is measured through Emotional Stability Test for children developed by Dr. H.A. Scngupta& Dr. A.K. Singh (Hindi). This scale contains 15 items for testing emotional stability of children. The maximum possible score of this test is 15. Test-retest reliability was .70 which was significant beyond .01 levels and split-half reliability was .55.

**Procedure**

Total samples of 200 subjects were selected for this study. The sample had two main groups, i.e. delinquent group (Study group) and a non-delinquent group (Comparison group). Each group consisted of 100 subjects. Delinquents were selected from institutionalized delinquents living in Special Observation Home, which is situated in Pune, Maharashtra. The Delinquents and Non-Delinquents were between the age group of 14 to 18 years. Non-Delinquents group was living with parents. Non-Delinquents were from a Municipal Corporation School, matching the sample with respect to Socio Economic factor. The Non-delinquents were from similar socio-economic strata as that of Delinquents sample. The size was selected through purposive sampling technique. After having the sample selected, the researcher administered the Personality, Emotional Stability and Parenting style inventory. The researcher ensured confidentiality of answers and identities. To fill up the tests, subjects were given general instructions as per the Manual of each test and administered the tests after their assurance that they would be able to fill the responses.

**Statistical Analysis:**

t-test was applied to check the difference between groups.

Graphical representation was done wherever necessary.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:****EMOTIONAL STABILITY**

**Hypotheses No 1. Delinquents will be more emotionally unstable than non-delinquents.**

**Table No –1** Showing mean, standard deviation and t values of Delinquents and Non - delinquents on Emotionally Unstable

Children	No	Mean	SD	t Value	Sign.
Delinquents	100	10.56	2.38	8.35	P<0.01
Non – Delinquents	100	7.95	2.03		

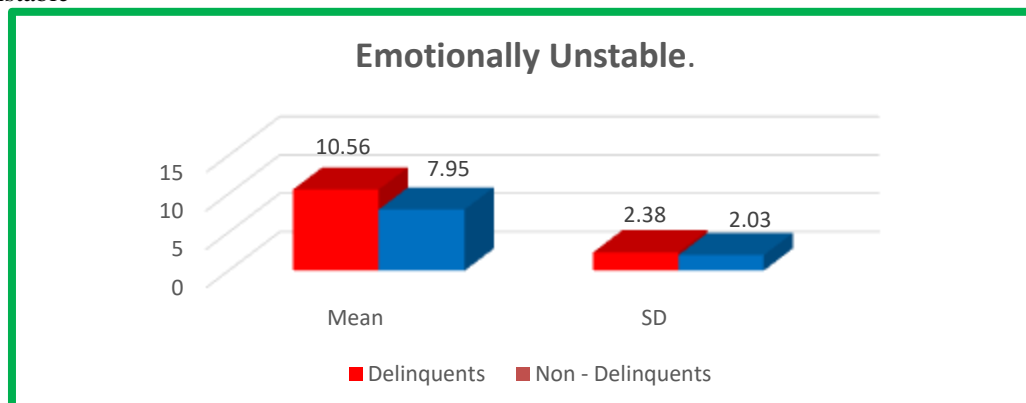
**Chart 1** Showing mean, s d and t values of Delinquents and Non - delinquents on Emotionally Unstable

Table no. 1& Chart 1 reveals the mean scores on the emotionally stable delinquents and non-delinquents' children are 10.56 and 7.95 with the standard deviation of 2.38 and 2.03 respectively. When such values are subjected to the testing of their significance of the difference, the t value was found to be 8.35\*\* which are significant at 0.01 level. As per the manual, high Score indicate low emotional stability and low score indicate high emotional stability. This result shows that delinquents and non - delinquents differed significantly with regard to their level of emotional stability. Therefore, the result supports the hypothesis number four that is ***“Delinquents will be more emotionally unstable than non-delinquents.”*** Hence, the fourth hypothesis is accepted.

It is proved that that emotional instability is one of the most important causes of juvenile delinquency. Majority of delinquent suffer from emotional problems. Hence, delinquents are emotionally more unstable as compared to non-delinquents.

The results are supported with the study conducted by Riner and Kaufman and Aichhorn also associated behavioral disturbance of parents with delinquent behavior of their children and pointed out the negative family environments that parents of delinquents often come from.

### CONCLUSIONS

The major finding of the present study has led to certain conclusion as below:

- 1) The delinquents found more emotionally unstable than non-delinquent's children.

### LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTION:

There is no doubt that every researcher tries his or her level best to keep the study undertaken by him or her flawless, but in spite of it, some limitations may be inherent, it cannot be denied.

The scope of the study was limited to delinquent's and non-delinquent's children of Pune city only hence the results may not be generalized to the whole of Maharashtra. So, further research may be conducted at the State level in India.

As India is a diversified country, so the result of the study cannot be generalized to other part of India.

In the present research, only 14 to 18 between age group were taken as a sample, further investigation can be done on above age group.

Only males could be included in the sample, due to unavailability of female samples. The female residents of comparable government-run-homes were mostly victims of various social mishandlings

The present investigation focused on the only limited psychological aspect like emotional stability but other psychological variables can be taken in future research for better understanding of the student's problem.

**IMPLICATION**

The obtained findings can be helpful for psychologists, parents, social workers, teachers, jailer staff, and the authorities of other institutions working for the mental health of delinquents to control the crime rate and to develop the prevention programs for delinquents.

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