

A Comparative Assessment Of Self Esteem And Psychological Well Being Among Juvenile And Non Juvenile Female Adolescents

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Abstract

This study uses a survey-based approach to examine the self-esteem and psychological well-being of juvenile and non-juvenile female teenagers. Understanding the psychological effects of involvement in crime is crucial for designing effective support systems. The study involved 60 female participants, including 30 juvenile offenders and 30 non-offenders, aged 13 to 16 years. Established scales were used to assess self-esteem and well-being. **Objective:** To explore differences in self-esteem between juvenile and non-juvenile female teenagers. **Hypothesis:** There is a significant difference in self-esteem and psychological well-being between juvenile and non-juvenile female teenagers. **Methodology:** The sample comprised 60 participants, equally divided into juvenile and non-juvenile groups. A simple research design was used, and data were analysed using mean, standard deviation, and independent t-tests. **Results:** The findings show that juvenile female teenagers have significantly lower self-esteem and psychological well-being compared to their non-juvenile counterparts.

Keywords: - Self- Esteem, well-being, Juvenile and Non-Juvenile Female Teenagers

1. Introduction

A juvenile female is a young girl or adolescent who is legally considered a minor, usually under the age of 18. The term juvenile refers to an individual's age as being below the threshold of adulthood, which varies depending on legal and cultural standards. The word is frequently used in legal, sociological, and psychological contexts to address issues concerning youth development, behaviour, and rights, with a distinction made between minors and adults, notably in terms of accountability, treatment, and legal protection.

In legal systems, juvenile often refers to someone who has not yet been held entirely accountable for crimes or other behaviours as an adult, and the adjective female denotes gender. This classification is frequently used in talks about juvenile justice, adolescent psychology, and youth services.

Self-esteem, defined as a subjective assessment of one's own value and talents, is critical to adolescent psychological growth and well-being (Rosenberg, 1965). It has an impact on many parts of life, such as academic performance, social interactions, and emotional well-being. Low self-esteem is frequently linked to negative outcomes such as depression, anxiety, and deviant behaviour, whereas high self-esteem connects with positive outcomes such as resilience, social adaptability, and general life satisfaction (Orth & Robins, 2014).

Adolescents are especially sensitive to swings in self-esteem due to the complex interaction of cultural, parental, and peer pressures. Body image issues, social comparison, and peer acceptability can all have an impact on self-esteem in female teenagers (Harter, 1999). Female adolescent offenders may face additional obstacles due to the stigma and bad self-concept that frequently accompany illegal activity (Trzesniewski et al., 2006).

Participating in structured activities, such as runway events, can provide a platform for personal expression and social appreciation, potentially leading to increased self-esteem. Participation in such activities may allow crime-involved youth to redefine their identity, receive social support, and gain recognition, all of which can improve their psychological well-being (Harter, 2012). The current study examines self-esteem and well-being among female juvenile crime teens and non-crime teenagers engaging in runway events, evaluating how these activities may affect their self-concept and general well-being.

Psychological well-being is a person's entire mental health, which includes emotional, psychological, and social aspects of functioning (Ryff & Singer, 1998). It entails self-acceptance, life purpose, positive connections, personal development, and autonomy (Ryff, 1989). Adolescence is a vital developmental period in which young people manage identity construction, social integration, and emotional regulation. Psychological well-being is especially important during this time.

Family dynamics, peer interactions, and social expectations can all have an impact on the psychological well-being of female teenagers (Huebner, 2004). Those who have engaged in illegal behaviour frequently confront extra obstacles such as social stigma, broken relationships, and emotional trauma, all of which can have a severe impact on their well-being (Farrington, 2005). Juvenile criminals may have lower levels of well-being than their non-criminal peers because they frequently suffer with self-esteem, isolation, and the consequences of their behaviour (Loeber and Stouthamer-Loeber, 1998).

Participating in structured, supporting activities, such as runway events, can give a meaningful outlet for self-expression and social connection, hence improving psychological well-being (Lerner et al., 2009). These activities can promote a sense of accomplishment, belonging, and purpose, all of which are important aspects of well-being (Ryff, 1989). The purpose of this study is to compare the psychological well-being of female juvenile criminal teens to that of non-crime teenagers, with an emphasis on how participation in runway events may affect their mental health and general life satisfaction.

Definition of Key Terms: Self-esteem is defined as both general self-esteem and effective self-experiences that are linked to global assessments (Murphy and Morrel, 2005).

Psychological well-being is the cognitive and effective evaluation of one's life in terms of satisfaction. (Diener et al. 1985).

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Alexander et al., (2024) conducted a study to determine the effects of trauma exposure, PTSD, and trauma-related co-morbid diagnoses on the risk of readmission to a juvenile detention facility for a large metropolitan area sample (N = 1282). This study used the screening data of 1282 youth who were voluntarily screened for PTSD, depressive symptoms, and substance use while going through the initial intake process to a detention facility. More than half of the participants were readmitted to the detention facility over the course of the three-year study. The participants were most likely to be readmitted within one year of release. Those participants who were readmitted within one year of release were also most likely to be readmitted multiple times. Youth readmitted to detention had a history of sexual abuse and substance use problems. There were no other significant associations between the risk factors for readmission and the variables related to trauma. While trauma-related issues may be key areas of intervention to prevent readmission, it appears that if the focus is placed solely on the experiences of trauma and trauma-related stress without considering the effects of other factors, it may not have the desired effects in preventing readmission for youth of colour in a large metropolitan area.

Muhammad et al., (2024) to assess the impact of the program on the reduction of depression, anxiety, and stress levels of delinquent youth. The design used was quasi-experimental, employing a single group design for pretest and post-tests. In this particular study, 36 delinquent youth, all of whom were females and attending an approved school in Terengganu, Malaysia, were used. The data were analysed using the paired sample t-test. The results showed that the levels of depression, anxiety, and stress were decreased as much as 0.76, 1.46, and 0.79, respectively, after joining the program, which was below 0.05, or $p=0.000 < 0.05$. This indicates that the psych spiritual program does indeed have a significant impact on the reduction of depression, anxiety, and stress levels of delinquent youth. Therefore, it is imperative to explore this particular program as an alternative to the conventional allopathic approach in dealing with depression, anxiety, and stress issues, especially for delinquent youth, particularly females, attending approved schools and meeting the same criterion.

Hipwell et al., (2023) conducted a study to investigate the family and neighbourhood factors related to social connectedness that predicts psychological well-being during teenage pregnancy and offspring outcomes. Participants consisted of 135 teenage mothers who ranged in age from 14 to 21 years and were predominantly Black American (90%). Participants were assessed yearly from childhood. When in pre-adolescence (ages 11-13), contextual stressors and neighbourhood support was assessed from caregivers. Participants also reported their perceived trust/attachment to caregivers before and during pregnancy. To examine psychological well-being, positive and depressed moods were assessed in adolescents before and during pregnancy. The path analysis model was used to examine prospective relationships between family and neighborhood factors, psychological well-being during pregnancy, and offspring outcomes (birth outcomes and observed offspring positive and negative emotions at age 3-months). Positive mood decreased from pre-pregnancy to pregnancy, but depressed mood was stable across the two time points. Perceived caregiver trust/attachment in pregnancy, controlling for pre-pregnancy mood, was related to prenatal positive mood. Prenatal positive mood reduced the risk of preterm

birth and indirectly predicted infant emotions via birth outcomes. Preadolescent neighborhood support predicted reduced prenatal depressed mood, but depressed mood did not predict infant outcomes beyond positive mood. Contextual life stress was not related to prenatal mood after controlling for family and neighborhood support. The study's results underscore the changes in positive-valence emotions from pre-pregnancy to pregnancy and their potential unique associations with birth outcomes and infant emotions.

JE Duchscher et al., (2023) in their study titled providing evidence-based mental health care to the adolescent group, which is at risk of experiencing adverse mental health outcomes. The participants of the study were 128 males, aged 14-17, living in juvenile detention facilities. The findings of the study showed that the intervention was acceptable, feasible, and could be conducted with competency. The participants of the intervention showed reduced symptoms of mental health, as well as constructs of experiential avoidance, e cognitive fusion, and perceived barriers to moving towards the participants' values. These findings have significant implications for the possibility of developing an effective intervention, which has the potential of breaking the cycle of systemic inequity faced by the youth, thus the need for testing the intervention using a randomized controlled design.

Laveena D'Mello et al. (2018) conducted research on the relationship between self-esteem and academic performance in students. The study intended to determine whether a link existed between these two criteria, with a particular emphasis on students with inferior academic achievement. The study had a total of 50 students. The results showed that there was no significant link between self-esteem and academic achievement, implying that self-esteem did not always influence academic outcomes in this group.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Juvenile female teenagers are often exposed to adverse life experiences that may negatively affect their self-esteem and psychological well-being compared to non-juvenile female teenagers. However, limited comparative research has examined these psychological variables between the two groups. Therefore, the present study aims to compare the self-esteem and psychological well-being of juvenile and non-juvenile female teenagers.

Objective

To analyse the levels of self-esteem between juvenile female teenagers and non-juvenile female teenagers of Punjab.

To assess the psychological well-being of juvenile and non-juvenile female teenagers

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There is a significant impact of being a juvenile female teenagers and non-juvenile female teenager on self-esteem.
2. There is a significant difference in psychological well-being between juvenile female teenagers and non-juvenile female teenagers

METHODOLOGY

SAMPLE

The total sample study surveyed 60 females, 30 (Juvenile) female teenagers, and 30 non-juvenile teenage females from Jalandhar in Punjab. The subject selected in this sample was used in the age group of 13 years to 16 years.

Methodology

This study employs a cross-sectional survey design to assess self-esteem, and Psychological well-being among two groups: female juvenile and female juvenile. The sample included 60 people aged 13 to 16, distributed evenly between the two groups. Data were gathered using self-report questionnaires, including the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) and the Psychological Well-Being Scale Participants were selected from the juvenile centre and schools. We secured ethical approval and informed consent from both subjects and their guardians.

Data analysis and interpretation:

The main purpose of the present study is to investigate the well-being and self-esteem among Juvenile and Non-Juvenile Female Teenagers. For this purpose, the investigators formulated 2 hypotheses and the results are shown in the tables below

Comparison of Self-Esteem between Juvenile and Non-Juvenile Female Teenagers

Table -1

Female	Number of Female	Mean	Std. Deviation
Juvenile female teenager	30	12.96	2.10
Non-juvenile female teenager	30	19.1	3.28

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of self-esteem scores among juvenile and non-juvenile female teenagers. The results indicate that the mean self-esteem score of juvenile female teenagers was 12.96 (SD = 2.10), whereas the mean self-esteem score of non-juvenile female teenagers was 19.10 (SD = 3.28). The findings reveal that non-juvenile female teenagers exhibited substantially higher levels of self-esteem than juvenile female teenagers. The lower mean score among juvenile females suggests that they may experience reduced self-confidence, poorer self-worth, and greater emotional vulnerability, possibly due to adverse life experiences, family disruption, institutional care, social stigma, or psychological trauma. In contrast, the higher self-esteem observed among non-juvenile female teenagers may be attributed to more supportive family environments, better social relationships, and greater opportunities for healthy emotional and personal development. Furthermore, the standard deviation values indicate some variability in self-esteem within both groups; however, the variability was greater among non-juvenile female teenagers (SD = 3.28) than among juvenile female teenagers (SD = 2.10). Overall, the descriptive findings suggest that juvenile female teenagers have comparatively lower self-esteem than their non-juvenile counterparts, highlighting the need for psychological support and interventions aimed at improving their self-esteem and overall mental health.

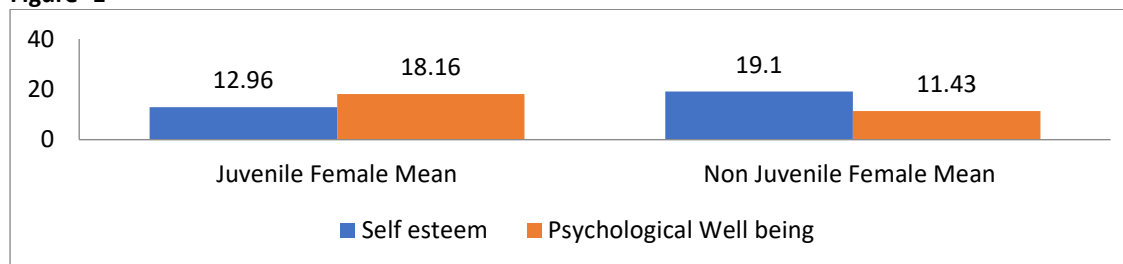
Comparison of Psychological Well-Being between Juvenile and Non-Juvenile Female Teenagers

Table -2

Female	Number of Female	Mean	Std. Deviation
Juvenile female teenager	30	18.16	4.22
Non-juvenile female teenager	30	11.43	2.17

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics of psychological well-being among juvenile and non-juvenile female teenagers. The findings show that the mean psychological well-being score of juvenile female teenagers was 18.16 (SD = 4.22), whereas the mean score of non-juvenile female teenagers was 11.43 (SD = 2.17). The descriptive results indicate that juvenile female teenagers obtained a higher mean score than non-juvenile female teenagers. If the psychological well-being scale used in the study is reverse scored (i.e., higher scores indicate poorer psychological well-being or greater psychological distress), these findings suggest that juvenile female teenagers experience lower psychological well-being and greater emotional or psychological difficulties than non-juvenile female teenagers. This may be attributed to factors such as family disruption, traumatic experiences, institutional living, social stigma, and limited emotional support. The standard deviation was higher among juvenile female teenagers (SD = 4.22) than among non-juvenile female teenagers (SD = 2.17), indicating greater variability in psychological well-being within the juvenile group. Overall, the descriptive statistics suggest notable differences in psychological well-being between the two groups.

Figure -1



Conclusion

The present study compared self-esteem and psychological well-being among juvenile and non-juvenile female teenagers. The findings revealed that juvenile female teenagers exhibited lower self-esteem and poorer psychological well-being than non-juvenile female teenagers. These differences may be associated with adverse childhood experiences, family disruption, institutional care, social stigma, and limited emotional support commonly faced by juvenile females. The study highlights the importance of implementing psychological counselling, mental health interventions, life-skills education, and supportive rehabilitation programs to enhance the self-esteem and psychological well-being of juvenile female teenagers. Strengthening these psychological resources can contribute to healthier emotional development, improved social adjustment, and successful reintegration into society. The findings also provide valuable evidence for educators, psychologists, social workers, and policymakers in designing effective support services for vulnerable adolescents.

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