



CRIME INTENT AMONG SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS OF HIMACHAL PRADESH IN RELATION TO HOME ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract

The main objective of the present study was to study the crime intent among school adolescents in relation to home environment. To achieve the objective of the study, Home environment inventory by Dr. K.S. Mishra (1989) and Crime intent questionnaire (CIQ) was used. The sample consisted of 240 adolescent students, selected randomly from Govt. Sr. Sec. Schools of Shimla, Kangra, Mandi and Solan District of Himachal Pradesh. Results revealed that there exists a significant effect of home environment on the crime intent among school adolescents. Further, the results indicate a significant effect of home environment on all the aspects of crime intent viz. suicidal tendency, abuse, addiction, vandalism, fighting and theft.

Key words: Crime Intent, Adolescence, Home Environment

Introduction

Life is a journey characterized by several distinct and unique stages beginning with conception and ending at death. Among these stages, the most crucial and critical stage is 'Adolescence'. Commonly described as 'spring of life', adolescence typically encompasses the years between ages 13 and 19 and can be considered as the transitional stage from childhood to adulthood. It is a time of both disorientation and discovery posing a new set of challenges and opportunities in the life of an individual. Characterized by bubbling enthusiasm, surplus power, sense of independence, dreams, passions and hopes to lead a life of dignity and self-respect, adolescence is sometimes also marked by impatience, anxiousness, unruliness, pressures, aggressions, frustrations, etc. Stanley Halls has rightly described adolescence as the period of great stress and strain, storm and strife. The various developmental changes (i.e. physical, intellectual, emotional, psychological, social, moral and ethical) which an individual undergoes during this period create many adjustment problems in them. The most common ones include the problem related to: growth and development; behavioral issues; substance use and abuse; health issues; psychological and emotional disturbances; aggression and violence; sexual health issues (viz. unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases); social problems; addiction to cyber space, educational challenges, etc. The degree, rate and pace of these problems may vary from individual to individual. Thus, adolescence can be viewed as a tunnel very long and much darker in some than in others but through which all must pass so as to blossom into a wholesome personality.

The adolescents have an important role to play in society. What they do, what they accomplish, what they are exposed to has every effect, not only on their personal future, but on the future of the society as a whole. As a part of the next generation they will be shaping the future of the country someday but unfortunately the

astounding and alarming statistics of crime by them portrays a dark clouded picture for the nation at the moment. Not a day goes when news paper headlines don't read about crimes done by adolescents. This highlights that they do not have patience, there is a lot of anger in them and the only problem is that they are directing this anger in the wrong direction. In order to earn quick bucks and the need to fulfill their dreams and desires at the earliest, adolescents have resorted to unlawful means to achieve them. The lack of adequate opportunities also frustrates the adolescents to an extent where their impulses propel them to breach the standard norms and codes of the society resulting in crime.

Crime Intent

Crime is an unlawful act or default, which is an offence against the public that renders the perpetrator of the act or default liable to legal punishment. The Concise Encyclopedia of Crime and Criminals defines crime as "A crime is an act or default which prejudices the interests of the community and is forbidden by law under pain of punishment". An act becomes criminal when it takes into account the intent of the person who carries it out. The intention to commit a crime is termed as crime intent. It refers to an unlawful guiding motive which is necessary to commit a crime. According to *Legal Dictionary*, crime intent refers to an individual's state of mind at the time he committed a crime. It is the conscious decision someone makes to deliberately engage in crime or negligent act, or to harm someone else. Those with crime intent are fully aware of what they are about to do and the consequences that their actions can have.

Home Environment

Home occupies the first and most important place for the development of the individual. Home is the person's primary environment from the time he is born until the day he dies; hence its effect on the individual is also most significant and enduring. Home Environment refers to all sorts of moral & ethical values and emotional, social and intellectual climate set up by the family members to contribute to the wholesome development of an individual.

An ideal home environment is one where there is proper reward to strengthen the desired behavior, a keen interest in and love for the child, provision of opportunities to express its views freely, where parents put less restrictions to discipline the child, not preventing the child from acting independently and not continuing infantile care, optimum use of physical and affective punishment, where the children are not compelled to act according to parental desires and expectations, where they are neither threatened of being isolated from beloved persons nor deprived of love, respect and childcare (Mishra, 1989).

Objectives

The study was carried out with the following objectives:

1. To study the crime intent among school adolescents on the following aspects:
 - (a) Suicidal tendency (b) Abuse (c) Addiction (d) Vandalism (e) Fighting (f) Theft (g) Total Crime Intent
2. To compare the adolescent students of congenial and uncongenial home environment on the following aspects of crime intent:
 - (a) Suicidal tendency (b) Abuse (c) Addiction (d) Vandalism (e) Fighting (f) Theft (g) Total Crime Intent

Hypotheses

The school adolescents of congenial and uncongenial home environment differ significantly on the following aspects of crime intent:

- (a) Suicidal tendency (b) Abuse (c) Addiction (d) Vandalism (e) Fighting (f) Theft (g) Total Crime Intent

Delimitations

- The study was delimited to the four districts of Himachal Pradesh i.e. Shimla, Solan, Mandi and Kangra.
- The study was delimited to Govt. senior secondary schools only.

- The study was delimited to the school adolescents of class XII.

Methodology

In the present study descriptive research method was employed as the purpose of the study is to study the “Crime intent among school adolescents in relation to Home Environment”.

Sample

The four district of Himachal Pradesh i.e. Kangra, Mandi, Shimla & Solan were selected randomly by using lottery method. In order to get a proportionate sample from each of the four selected districts, 5 blocks from each district i.e. Kangra, Mandi & Shimla and 2 blocks from district Solan were selected randomly out of the total of 20, 19, 19 and 7 blocks respectively in each district. From each of these 17 blocks, 2 Senior Secondary schools with maximum strength were selected purposively for data collection. Thus, the final sample comprises of 240 students.

Tools Used

The crime intent questionnaire (CIQ) constructed and standardized by the investigator and the home environment inventory (HEI) by Dr. K.S. Mishra were used to collect the data pertaining to crime intent and its various aspects with respect to their home environment from the selected sample. The Crime intent questionnaire consist of 35 items related to six dimensions of crime intent viz. (a) suicidal tendency, (b) abuse, (c) addiction, (d) vandalism, (e) fighting and (f) theft.

The home environment inventory consists of 100 items related to ten dimensions viz.

(a) Control (b) Protectiveness (c) Punishment (d) Conformity (e) Social Isolation (f) Reward (g) Deprivation of privileges (h) Nurturance (i) Rejection and (j) Permissiveness.

Administration of the tools

The tools were administered to the school adolescents to collect the data. The investigator distributed the crime intent questionnaire and home environment inventory to the students personally and communicated the instructions to be followed in detail for getting the desired responses from the subjects. The scores obtained were recorded for further analysis and interpretation.

Scoring

The responses are to be given on the questionnaire itself. Four cells against every item indicating the frequency of agreement to a particular behavior are given. The responses belonging to each cell are, ‘Strongly agree’, ‘Agree’, ‘Disagree’, or ‘Strongly disagree’. Assign 4 marks to ‘Strongly agree’, 3 marks to ‘Agree’, 2 marks to ‘Disagree’ and 1 mark to ‘Strongly disagree’. Similarly, in HEI, there are five cells against every item indicating the frequency of occurrence of a particular behavior. The responses belonging to each cell are, ‘Mostly’, ‘Often’, ‘Sometimes’, ‘Least’, or ‘Never’. Assign 4 marks to ‘Mostly’, 3 marks to ‘Often’, 2 marks to ‘Sometimes’, 1 mark to ‘Least’ and 0 marks to ‘Never’ responses.

Statistical Technique Used

In the present study t-test was used to analyze the data.

Analysis and interpretation

The purpose of the present study was to study the crime intent among school adolescents in relation to home environment. After collecting the data with crime intent questionnaire and home environment inventory, the data was analyzed and interpreted in order to arrive at some meaningful conclusions.

Crime Intent among School Adolescents with respect to Home Environment

To study the presence of crime intent among school adolescents with respect to home environment, mean scores were calculated which are given in Table 1 as follows:

Table 1**Mean Scores on Crime Intent and its Various Aspects with respect to Home Environment**

Sr. No.	Aspects Of Crime Intent	Home Environment
1	Suicidal tendency	26.83
2	Abuse	10.9
3	Addiction	24.02
4	Vandalism	17.05
5	Fighting	8.51
6	Theft	6.18
	Total crime intent	81.46

From the Table 1 it is evident that the mean scores on the Suicidal tendency, Abuse, Addiction, Vandalism, Fighting and Theft scores among the school adolescents are 26.83, 10.9, 24.02, 17.05, 8.51 and 6.18 respectively, which depict that the school adolescents have a high intent towards all the aspects of crime intent viz. Suicidal tendency, Abuse, Addiction, Vandalism, Fighting and Theft. Further, the mean score on total crime intent among school adolescents with respect to home environment is 81.46 which indicate the presence of crime intent among school adolescents.

Suicidal Tendency among School Adolescents with respect to Congenial and Uncongenial Home Environment

To compare the school adolescents on suicidal tendency aspect of crime intent with respect to their Home environment means, standard deviation and t-values were calculated which are given in Table 2 as follows:

Table 2**'t' Value for The Mean of Suicidal tendency Scores among School Adolescents with respect to Home Environment**

Home Environment	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Uncongenial	120	28.95	5.472	1.316(NS)
Congenial	120	24.7	5.257	

The table 2 reveals that the computed 't'-value for the means of Suicidal tendency scores of uncongenial and congenial Home environment of school adolescents came out 1.316 for df 238, which is even less than the table value 1.97 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, it is interpreted that the students having uncongenial and congenial Home environment do not differ significantly on the Suicidal tendency aspect of Crime intent.

Abuse among School Adolescents with respect to Congenial and Uncongenial Home Environment

To compare the school adolescents on abuse aspect of crime intent with respect to their Home environment means, standard deviation and t-values were calculated which are given in Table 3 as follows:

Table 3**'t' Value for The Mean of Abuse Scores among School Adolescents with respect to Home Environment**

Home Environment	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Uncongenial	120	11.27	1.85	0.005(NS)
Congenial	120	10.53	4.22	

The Table 3 reveals that the computed 't'-value for the means of Abuse scores of uncongenial and congenial Home environment of school adolescents came out 0.005 for df 238, which is even less than the table value 1.97 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, it is said that the students having uncongenial and congenial Home environment do not differ significantly on the Abuse aspect of Crime intent.

Addiction among School Adolescents with respect to Congenial and Uncongenial Home Environment

To compare the school adolescents on addiction aspect of crime intent with respect to their Home environment means, standard deviation and t-values were calculated which are given in Table 4 as follows:

Table 4**'t' Value for The Mean of Addiction Scores among School Adolescents with respect to Home Environment**

Home Environment	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Uncongenial	120	13.25	4.50	1.948(NS)
Congenial	120	10.77	4.23	

The table 4 reveals that the computed 't'-value for the means of Addiction scores of uncongenial and congenial Home environment of school adolescents came out 1.948 for df 238, which is even less than the table value 1.97 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, it is inferred that the students having uncongenial and congenial Home environment do not differ significantly on the Addiction aspect of Crime intent.

Vandalism among School Adolescents with respect to Congenial and Uncongenial Home Environment

To compare the school adolescents on vandalism aspect of crime intent with respect to their Home environment means, standard deviation and t-values were calculated which are given in Table 5 as follows:

Table 5**'t' Value for The Mean of Vandalism Scores among School Adolescents with respect to Home Environment**

Home Environment	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Uncongenial	120	18.11	4.69	8.339**
Congenial	120	15.98	4.23	

**Significant at 0.01 level of significance

Table 5 reveals that the computed 't'-value for the means of Vandalism scores of uncongenial and congenial Home environment of school adolescents came out 8.339 for df 238, which is higher than the table

value 2.60 at 0.01 level of significance. Hence, it is inferred that the students having uncongenial and congenial Home environment differ significantly on the Vandalism aspect of Crime intent.

Fighting among School Adolescents with respect to Congenial and Uncongenial Home Environment

To compare the school adolescents on fighting aspect of crime intent with respect to their Home environment means, standard deviation and t-values were calculated which are given in Table 6 as follows:

Table 6

't' Value for The Mean of Fighting Scores among School Adolescents with respect to Home Environment

Home Environment	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Uncongenial	120	9.04	1.96	0.0003(NS)
Congenial	120	7.97	2.12	

Table 6 reveals that the computed 't'-value for the means of Fighting scores of uncongenial and congenial Home environment of school adolescents came out 0.0003 for df 238, which is even less than the table value 1.97 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, it is concluded that the students having uncongenial and congenial Home environment do not differ significantly on the Fighting aspect of Crime intent.

Theft among School Adolescents with respect to Congenial and Uncongenial Home Environment

To compare the school adolescents on theft aspect of crime intent with respect to their Home environment means, standard deviation and t-values were calculated which are given in Table 7 as follows:

Table 7

't' Value for The Mean of Theft Scores among School Adolescents with respect to Home Environment

Home Environment	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Uncongenial	120	6.74	2.34	0.0002(NS)
Congenial	120	5.61	1.96	

The table 7 reveals that the computed 't'-value for the means of Theft scores of uncongenial and congenial Home environment of school adolescents came out 0.0002 for df 238, which is even less than the table value 1.97 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, it is concluded that the students having uncongenial and congenial Home environment do not differ significantly on the Theft aspect of Crime intent.

Crime Intent among School Adolescents with respect to Congenial and Uncongenial Home Environment

To compare the school adolescents on total crime intent with respect to their Home environment means, standard deviation and t-values were calculated which are given in Table 8 as follows:

Table 8

't' Value for The Mean of Crime Intent Scores among School Adolescents with respect to Home Environment

Home Environment	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Uncongenial	120	87.34	10.99	4.34**
Congenial	120	75.55	11.80	

**Significant at 0.01 level of significance

The table 8 reveals that the computed 't'-value for the means of Crime intent scores of uncongenial and congenial Home environment of school adolescents came out 4.34 for df 238, which is significantly higher than the table value 2.60 at 0.01 level of significance. Hence, it is inferred that the students having uncongenial and congenial Home environment differ significantly on the Crime intent.

Findings and Discussion: On the basis of results obtained after interpretation of objectives and hypotheses the following findings has been drawn:

- School adolescents possess high level of intent for suicidal tendency, abuse, addiction, vandalism, fighting and theft. Further, it was inferred that the school adolescents possess a high level of crime intent among them.
- The students having uncongenial and congenial Home environment do not differ significantly on the Suicidal tendency, Abuse, Addiction, Fighting and Theft aspect of Crime intent.
- The students having uncongenial and congenial Home environment differ significantly from each other on the Vandalism aspect of Crime intent.
- The students having uncongenial and congenial Home environment differ significantly from each other on total crime intent.

Educational Implications: The result of the present study reveals that the school adolescents possess a high level of crime intent with respect to their home environment i.e. home environment of the adolescents has a significant effect on the crime intent. Therefore, attempts should be taken to make the home environment congenial.

- Provision of training in parenting must be made for parents/guardians to improve the emotional bonds between parents and their children, and helping them to develop self control in bringing up children.
- Parents should not exhibit harsh, physical discipline at home, including physical abuse and should model kindness, empathy and respect for all living things, including people, animals and the natural environment.
- The children should be encouraged to take part in co- curricular activities that highlights their strengths and this makes them feel safe, special and accepted. The incidences of inequality, cruelty or discrimination should be pointed out and discussed with the children and should be communicated that these all are not acceptable.
- The parents / elder members of the family should spend quality time in a friendly manner with the adolescents where they can express their interests, worries and doubts freely and in turn may be guided properly. The children must be given love, care, attention and respect. Due consideration must be given to their uniqueness and individualities and special interest must be taken to overcome their problems and fulfill their needs leaving behind the personal interests.

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