

# Social Maturity among Juvenile Delinquent and Non-Delinquent Children

K. Guru Lakshmi<sup>1</sup>, Dr. K. Anuradha<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research scholar, Human Development, Department of Home Science, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, Chittoor (Dt), A.P.

<sup>2</sup>Professor, Department of Home Science, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, Chittoor (Dt), A.P.

**Abstract:** *Children need to attain social development to be recognized as socially acceptable members. Social development is attaining of maturity in social relationships. Social development is a stage wise development. With respect to each stage the desirable traits and characteristics should be achieved and children, who achieve them are known as socially mature children. Due to several environmental factors some children exhibit anti-social behavior. "Delinquency" is defined as an act by a juvenile under the age of 18 years that if committed by an adult would constitute a crime, a disorderly person's offense or a violation of any other penal statute, ordinance or regulation. Social maturity is the process of appropriate attitudes for personal, interpersonal and social adequacies of an individual which are essential for functioning effectively in the society. The present study was conducted to assess social maturity among juvenile delinquent and non- delinquent children. The study sample were 95 delinquent children (66 Girls and 29 Boys) selected from Government observation home for girls the same for and boys and 105 non- delinquent children (60 Girls and 45 Boys) selected randomly from normal school setting. Social Maturity Scale (Nalini Rao, 2011) was used to collect the data. The results revealed that the Juvenile Delinquent children scored less is social maturity than Non-Delinquent children.*

## 1. Introduction

"Adolescence" is transition period between childhood and adult hood. World Health Organization (WHO) has defined 'adolescence' is being between the ages of 10-19 years. NCERT (1999) defined adolescence "as the period of physical, psychological and social maturity from childhood to adult hood- the period extending from puberty to attainment of full reproductive maturity". The adolescent period is also called as the 'teen age' because it extends roughly from thirteen to nineteen years.

"Juvenile delinquency" refers to the involvement by the teenagers in an unlawful behavior who is usually under the age of 18 and commits an act which would be considered as a crime. A child is known as a delinquent when he/she commits a mistake which is against the law and which is not accepted by the society. Thus a "juvenile" or "child" means a person who has not completed eighteenth years of age and violates the law and commits an offence under the legal age of maturity.

Delinquency is socially inadequate adjustment on the part of the individual to difficult situations. The factors which go to make up these difficult situations, together with the mental and physical conditions which influence an individual's capacity to adjust, constitute the causes of delinquency.

In spite of the great complexity and diversity of the causes of delinquency, cases are found to have many factors in common. The different combinations of these factors are largely responsible for the differences in offenses. It should be possible, therefore, to draw up a list of conditioning factors from a study of a large number of cases which would cover

most of the possibilities, and from which could be isolated any group or combination of factors applicable to a particular case.

Social maturity implies well-developed social awareness, deep and clear understanding of the social heritage and appreciation of the value of social customs, manners and the rules that govern social behavior of the right of others and of his/her own responsibilities as a member of Social group. A social mature person understands the importance of the social organization in which he/she lives, the desirability of rules and laws to govern group behavior and the overall objectives and purpose of the social structure. On the other hand a child who violates the rules lack appropriate attitudes for functionary as a socially socialized person.

Hence, a need was felt to identify the social maturity of juvenile delinquent children. It could be better understood if these children are compared against normal children. Hence the present study was planned to compare social maturity of delinquent and non-delinquent children.

## Objectives

The following are the objectives of the study –

- 1) To measure social maturity of delinquent and non-delinquent children.
- 2) To compare the significant difference in social maturity of delinquent and non-delinquent children.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 Sample

The samples were 200 students (95 delinquent and 105 non delinquent children) in the age group of 12 to 18 years. The delinquent children were selected from Govt. observation

home for boys and Govt. observation home for girls in Tirupati, Chittoor (District). The non-delinquent children (normal children) were selected from Government schools of Tirupati using systematic stratified random sampling technique.

### Tools

Tools used for the study were

- General Information Schedule for delinquent children (Developed by the investigator)
- General Information Schedule for non-delinquent children (Developed by the investigator)
- Social Maturity Rating Scale (SMRS) (Nalini Rao, 2011)

### 2.2 Data Collection

Among the children available at Govt. observation home for boys 29 boys and from Govt. observation home for girls 66 girls belonging to different age groups (12-18) years were identified and were administered with the general information schedule and social maturity scale, after establishing necessary rapport. Non – delinquent children (60 Girls and 45 Boys) were selected randomly from two Government schools of Tirupati.

**Table 1:** Distribution of Sample Delinquent and Non-Delinquent Children According to Child and Family Variables

S. NO	Variables	Non-Delinquent Children		Delinquent Children	
		Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
1	Gender				
	Boys	45	42.9	28	29.5
	Girls	60	57.1	67	70.5
	Total	105	100.0	95	100.0
2	Ordinal Position				
	1 <sup>st</sup> born	32	30.5	22	23.2
	2 <sup>nd</sup> born	53	50.5	36	37.8
	3 <sup>rd</sup> born & above	20	19.0	37	39.0
	Total	105	100.0	95	100.0
3	Age				
	>12 years	7	6.7	15	15.8
	13 years	22	21.0	12	12.6
	14 years	32	30.5	9	9.5
	<15 years	44	41.8	59	62.1
	Total	105	100.0	95	100.0
4	Type of Family				
	Nuclear	56	53.3	31	32.6
	Extended	41	39.1	33	34.8
	Joint	8	7.6	31	32.6
	Total	105	100.0	95	100.0

Table – 1 shows the distribution of sample delinquent and non-delinquent children according to child variable and family variables. Among the delinquent children nearly one – third of sample children (70 per cent) were girls and 29.5 per cent were boys. Majority of delinquent children (39 per cent) were 3<sup>rd</sup> born and later born children and nearly half of the sample delinquent adolescents (49.4 per cent) were above 16 years. With regard to type of family near half of the sample of non-delinquent children (53.3 percent) were from nuclear family.

Among delinquent children equal percent of sample were from extended and joint family (34.7 and 32.6 respectively). Very few sample children (7.6 percent) of non-delinquent category belonged to joint family.

**Table 2:** Frequency Distribution Social Maturity Scores of Non-Delinquent Children

Social maturity	Frequency	Percent
171-187	2	2
188-204	7	6.7
205-221	28	26.7
222-238	52	49.6
>238	16	11.4
Total	105	100

**Mean = 209.9 Median = 215.0**

**SD = 17.732 Range = 136.0**

**Minimum = 120.0 Maximum = 256.0**

Social Maturity of the sample children was assessed using Social Maturity Scale (Nalini Rao, 2011)

Table 2 shows the frequency distribution of social maturity scores of non-delinquent children. The mean score was 209.9 with S.D 17.732. The minimum score was 120 and maximum 256 with a range of 136. Table 2 shows that nearly half of the sample non-delinquent children (49.6 percent) had good social maturity score of 222-238.

**Table 3:** Frequency Distribution Social Maturity Scores of Delinquent Children

Social maturity scores	Frequency	Percent
188-204	12	12.6
205-221	39	41.1
222-238	38	40
>238	6	5.3
Total	95	100

**Mean = 204.11 Median = 204.0**

**SD = 13.39 Range = 65.00**

**Minimum = 175.0 Maximum = 240.0**

Table 3 shows the frequency distribution of social maturity scores of delinquent children. An equal number of delinquent children fell in the score ranges of 205-221 and 222-238. The mean social maturity scores of delinquent children was 204.11 (S.D = 13.39) with a score range of 175 to 240.

**Table 4:** Mean, S.D of Social Maturity Scores of Delinquent and Non-Delinquent Children and t-value

S.No	Variable	Mean	S.D	t-value
1	Non-Delinquent Children (n=105)	209.9238	17.73236	2.592
2	Delinquent Children (n=95)	204.1158	13.39646	P<0.01

The table shows mean, S.D of social maturity scores of delinquent and non-delinquent children. From the table it is known that there is significant difference in the social maturity scores of delinquent and non-delinquent children. The t-value

was 2.592 which was significant at 0.01 level. Comparatively delinquent children had low social maturity than non-delinquent children.

### **3. Conclusion**

The present revealed that when compared to non-delinquent children, delinquent children had low social maturity scores. Hence, education and training of children with delinquency on social aspects helps to improve not only social maturity but also a change in decreasing delinquent behavior among children

### **References**

- [1] Nalini, R. (2011). Social Maturity Scale, National Psychological Corporation, Agra
- [2] NCERT. (1999). Population Education – A National Source Book, New Delhi: NCERT.
- [3] Retrieve from [http://www.who.int/maternal\\_child\\_adolescent/topics/adolescence/dev/en/](http://www.who.int/maternal_child_adolescent/topics/adolescence/dev/en/)