

ANALYSIS OF THE INHIBITORY IMPACT OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION ON JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

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ABSTRACT

This study looked at how non-formal education can help keep kids from becoming criminals. It focused on how freedom, accessibility, community involvement, and cultural relevance can play a role as moderating factors. The study was motivated by the need to deal with youth crime, which is very harmful to building a country and keeping society stable. The study focused on how flexible non-formal education programmes are and how they can be used to make solutions that fit a wide range of needs. This made it easier to spot risks early and help people get back on their feet in the community. Accessibility was important so that fragile teens could easily get services like therapy, education, and social support, which lowers their chances of acting badly. Community involvement created a sense of shared duty and connection, which led families, teachers, and social workers to work together to stop kids from acting out. The research also emphasised the mediating function of cultural relevance, showing that instructional materials that were in line with regional values and social mores boosted participation and promoted constructive behavioural change. Quantitative and qualitative studies indicated a significant negative link between non-formal education and juvenile delinquency, suggesting that inclusive, culturally sensitive, and well-designed programmes may reduce juvenile misbehaviour. Cultural relevance, community involvement, flexibility, and accessibility in non-formal education decreased adolescent crime, according to the findings. A comprehensive approach that included these factors decreased juvenile delinquency, enhanced social cohesion, and healthy adolescent development, which supported long-term societal peace and progress, according to the research.

KEYWORDS: Non-Formal Education; Juvenile Delinquency; Cultural relevance; Community Involvement; Accessibility.

INTRODUCTION

One challenge in nation-building is dealing with the bad conduct of certain members of society, which may have far-reaching effects on a nation's infrastructure, economy, cultural relevance, and general social advancement. The problem of juvenile delinquency is one of several types of social problems. Destitution, dysfunctional families, and insufficient education are the standard causes of delinquency. This contains a broad range of illicit pursuits, including but not limited to rioting, robbery, burglary, murder, rape, drug use, and gambling. Flexibility helps reduce adolescent delinquency by allowing customised treatments. It backs early risk identification, community-based and rehabilitative techniques, and law enforcement discretion to focus on advice rather than discipline. Flexible policies encourage families, schools, and social services to work together, discouraging crime (Yang & Zhao, 2021). Flexible programmes decrease stigma and keep policies current with society. By stimulating healthy adolescent growth and reducing crime, flexibility improves the juvenile justice system's compassion and effectiveness. In the combat against juvenile delinquency, accessibility is essential because it guarantees that at-risk teens have easy access to services like education, counselling, relaxation, and social support. Teenage misbehaviour as a means of venting unwarranted emotions will be lessened when help is easily accessible. Another benefit of accessibility is the ability to recognise and fix issues before they escalate. This supports prompt action. It may be able to lower the probability of juvenile criminality by reducing obstacles such as cost and distance, as well as social stigma, and creating an environment that promotes positive growth. Teen community involvement helps them develop and prosper, reducing their risk of criminality. Social services, interesting activities, and mentors give youths a sense of identity and belonging. Strong community involvement inspires families, schools, and law enforcement to address problems and help identify children who are in danger. This cooperative approach makes young people safer and healthier by promoting good behaviour, lowering social pressure to break the law, and offering alternatives to crime (Maemonah et al., 2024).

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

A new societal issue in China is juvenile delinquency. Before reforms, China's crime rate was exceptionally low because of excellent informal controls. While modernisation in China has brought about fast economic progress since the mid-1980s, it has also led to a rise in the country's juvenile delinquency rate. A thorough understanding of the phenomena is crucial in the endeavour to shed light on the increasing rates of adolescent delinquency in China. Juvenile aberrant behaviours may be better understood in China due to the country's distinct cultural relevance. China has seen a decline in juvenile delinquency nationwide in recent years as a consequence of improved crime prevention policies and legal protections for youngsters. Even though China's crime rate is gradually declining, juvenile delinquency and crime—which include violent and young involvement and gang affiliation—remain a challenging problem. Drug use has increased dramatically in China during the 1990s (Wong & Fung, 2023). The juvenile justice system in China has evolved and expanded since the 1980s. While both China and other nations have made attempts to divert young offenders from conventional judicial processes, the specifics of how this has worked out vary from country to country. Juvenile diversion programmes in China do not follow restorative or welfare-based approaches, in contrast to their Western counterparts. Instead, juvenile diversion in China is a managerialism-driven programme that uses two main components: institutional diversion, which focuses on controlling and punishing juvenile offenders according to the severity of their offence, and noninstitutional diversion, which uses community-level interventions to manage and correct juvenile offenders based on risk. Some have also argued that the stated goals of the Chinese government's juvenile justice programmes contradict the country's unique socio-legal cultural relevance and practices (Xie et al., 2024).

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

This study showed how non-traditional learning methods might keep teens out of trouble. The research indicated that non-formal education gave poor and vulnerable children educational options outside of school. Emphasising the significance of learning new skills, fostering values, and maturing might help avoid delinquency. It demonstrated that community involvement cannot be overstated since it created a friendly environment, encourages good conduct, and offers direction and mentoring. Flexible delivery increased initiative effectiveness. By making such programmes more accessible, more teens from a range of social backgrounds could participate, reducing the gaps that frequently lead to violent behaviour. It also demonstrated that cultural relevance made informal learning more useful and acceptable by making sure that the material fits with local beliefs, practices, and social norms. Constructive behavioural change was fostered when education had social meaning, since it cultivated a sense of identity and belonging. The overall goal of this research was to show that non-formal education might be an effective strategy for preventing juvenile delinquency and promoting positive adolescent development when it was planned with flexibility, accessibility, community involvement, and social relevance in mind.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Violence is common among young people, particularly in developing nations. The destruction of life and property as well as the halting of progress hurt not just the youth but also their families and society at large. One of the biggest threats to the well-being of both sexes is violence. Informal education reduces adolescent delinquency in elementary and secondary schools. Character traits among the country's youth are influenced by its socio-cultural relevance, economic, and political climate. Everyone must be on the same page about the requirements of juveniles if everybody want to raise their standard of living.

Appropriate techniques and processes will be inspired by this vision, which will achieve the purpose. Delinquency is associated with (positively or negatively) social disorganisation of communities, age, familial relationships, school links, peer groups, and peer pressure. There is a favourable correlation of delinquency with flexibility, accessibility and community involvement. The likelihood of delinquency decreases when there is a dedicated support system at home and in the classroom. This kind of criminality is unaffected by peer pressure. There is an immediate impact from age, and there are further substantial impacts from the interplay between age and family restrictions and age and school connections (Abhishek & Balamurugan, 2024). Delinquent youth are more likely to arise from low-income families. Poor individuals may feel inferior, dissatisfied, and criminal. Children of low-income parents may become engaged in the drug trade, which leads to crime and delinquency. Society affects a child's physical, social, psychological, and moral evolution. Social standards and values may cause kids to misbehave. Delinquent children are more likely to have been neglected by their parents, who failed to teach them right from wrong, supervise their activities, punish them inconsistently and brutally, and see some amount of household violence. Unsupervised kids commit more crimes. Antisocial conduct is more common in young children since they cannot distinguish good from bad social standards. Education is key to crime reduction. When education is scarce, adolescent crime may grow. Juvenile delinquency may be amplified by psychological factors. Maleness, lower IQ, racism, adolescence, immigrant status, impoverishment, delinquent friends, child abuse, poor academic scores, and parental neglect are risk factors (Yin & Zhao, 2024). Depression and stress in teenagers create anxiety and despair. Youth must attend non-formal education to avoid delinquency. It teaches teenagers new skills, positive habits, and behaviour in an interactive way. Flexibility, accessibility, and community involvement are critical for reducing teenage delinquency via the establishment of responsive and inclusive support networks. Flexibility allows for individualised treatment, whilst accessibility guarantees that children can access school, counselling, and social services. Community involvement encourages belonging and collective responsibility, allowing local stakeholders to prevent and rehabilitate. Social workers with youth are vital, and non-formal education may improve their outcomes. However, social workers are not in schools and have few possibilities to administer juvenile delinquency prevention programmes (Wu & Li, 2023).

RESEARCH QUESTION

- What is the role of non-formal education in declining juvenile delinquency?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

The study used a mixed-method research methodology. The quantitative data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 25. The odds ratio and 95% confidence interval were used to measure the strength and direction of the statistical association. A p-value below 0.05 indicated statistical significance. The essential characteristics of the data were comprehended by descriptive analysis. Furthermore, comprehensive interviews were undertaken to gather qualitative data.

SAMPLING

The researcher used a convenience sampling technique. The Rao-soft program was used to verify that the sample included 624 individuals. The researcher executed a study necessitating the dissemination of 770 questionnaires to the participants. A total of 715 questionnaire sets were gathered; 37 sets were omitted due to incompleteness. Consequently, the final sample size was determined to be 678.

DATA AND MEASUREMENT

To gather its main data, the study project used quantitative and qualitative analysis. For quantitative data measurement, the surveys used a five-point Likert scale to ask respondents to assess their ideas. Another tool for evaluating qualitative data was the use of in-depth interviews. Additionally, secondary data was gathered from a variety of sources, with the majority of it coming from online sites.

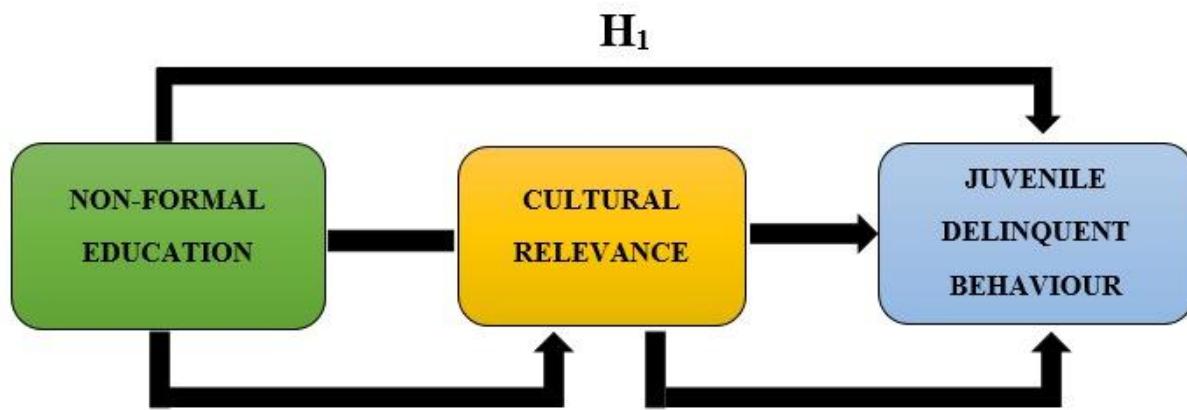
STATISTICAL SOFTWARE

Microsoft Excel and SPSS version 25 were used to perform the statistical assessment.

STATISTICAL TOOLS

A descriptive research elucidated several demographic and level-specific elements of numerous programmes. Inductive statistical studies used analysis of variance (ANOVA), 95% confidence intervals for odds ratios, factor analysis for assessing validity and theoretical reliability, along with several other statistical tools.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



RESULT

- **FACTOR ANALYSIS**

Factor Analysis (FA) aims to identify latent variables via the use of publicly accessible data. In the absence of clear visual or diagnostic indicators, assessments often rely on regression coefficients. The primary objective of this investigation is to discern any detectable correlations, weaknesses, or violations. Multiple regression techniques present the datasets used in Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) tests. The theoretical model and its sample parameters provide dependable predictions, as shown by the findings. Duplicate data entries may be identified. Streamlining the proportions improves the clarity of the data. KMO provides the investigator with a numerical value within the range of 0 to 1. An adequate sample size is indicated by a KMO value that falls within the range of 0.8 to 1.

Kaiser considers these amounts to be appropriate: The conditions for approval, according to Kaiser's standards, are as follows:

An appalling 0.050 to 0.059, well under the typical range of 0.60 to 0.69. The usual range for middle grades falls between 0.70 and 0.79.

An excellent point score fluctuates between 0.80 and 0.89. The range from 0.90 to 1.00 astonishes them.

Table 1: Analysis of KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sampling Adequacy

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure is 0.926.

The conclusions of Bartlett's test of Sphericity are as follows:

The approximate value of chi-square is 3252.968.

Degrees of freedom (df) = 190; sig = 0.000.

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.926
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3252.968
	df	190
	Sig.	.000

Applying sample criteria becomes easy in most circumstances because of this. Using Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, the researcher assessed if the correlation matrices exhibited statistical significance. If the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value is 0.926, then the sample size is considered adequate. A p-value of 0.00 is generated by Bartlett's Sphericity test. Since the results of Bartlett's Sphericity test were positive, it may be inferred that the correlation matrix is not unique.

❖ INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

• NON-FORMAL EDUCATION:

Non-formal education helps to build a sustainable knowledge society by providing more adaptive, equitable, and community involvement in traditional schooling. This teaching style is regaining popularity since it emphasises lifelong learning, experiential learning, and social involvement in order to fulfil global needs. Government regulations, cultural relevance, and finance may all contribute to the growth of non-formal education. Several countries are regulating their non-formal education systems (Kicherova & Trifonova, 2023). National education systems and policies are increasingly including non-formal education. This breakthrough enables standardised quality certification, recognition, and outreach, raising the profile of non-formal education in education. There are universal trends notwithstanding these differences. Unemployment, social marginalisation, and illiteracy are some of the social challenges that have been prioritised via targeted non-formal programmes. The active participation of local clubs, NGOs, and residents in the planning and implementation of educational projects is crucial. component of community involvement. Non-formal education is suitable for underprivileged persons, retraining persons, and rural people since it adapts quickly to changing societal circumstances. Non-formal education is becoming more important for sustainable development, lifelong learning, and social peace. It has the potential to solve global social concerns and foster an inclusive knowledge society because of its accessibility, community involvement, flexibility, and institutionalisation (Almeida & Morais, 2025).

❖ DEPENDENT VARIABLE

• JUVENILE DELINQUENCY:

When individuals commit crimes when under the age of 18, this is referred to as juvenile delinquency. The sins that are covered under juvenile delinquency are many. Theft, burglary, robbery, assault, vandalism, fraud, drug usage, and a host of other transgressions are all included under this broad category in English criminal law. There are a lot of factors that contribute to it, such as negative role models, inadequate education, and bad parenting. Current media criticism has made this a significant problem, and it has only become worse over the years (Kolesnikov, 2022). These negative beliefs are misguiding even the young. While society may not be able to eliminate adolescent criminality, individuals may assist by providing a positive example. Juvenile delinquency refers to youth conduct that might lead to localised crime and legal consequences. Many youth worldwide face arrest every day. More people in today's culture should be thinking about this. The young of today are in a precarious situation and need immediate assistance. The leaders of tomorrow will be children of today. They need people to guide children towards better conduct and teach them that behaving out is never acceptable if they are to reach their full potential, as is widely believed. For the sake of the youth's future success as adults, it is imperative that elders provide a good example, no matter the cost (Bobbio et al., 2020).

• RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NON-FORMAL EDUCATION AND JUVENILE DELINQUENCY:

Although there is a complicated relation between non-formal education and misbehaviour among adolescents, its fundamental principles of openness, accessibility, flexibility, and community involvement are essential. illegal activity. Flexible non-formal education allows at-risk adolescents to tailor their education to their individual needs. It is possible that non-formal education programmes may include a variety of socioeconomic statuses, learning styles, and histories in order to be more approachable and applicable to youth. A more flexible approach makes it less likely for teens who feel disconnected from standard learning to get into trouble, be left out, or be unhappy. Knowing that they can be in an inviting atmosphere in the classroom may be extremely helpful for students who are having difficulty with mental, physical, or intellectual problems. It is essential that communities promote casual learning so that kids who are weak can deal with problems like bullying, bad behaviour, and not having enough skills. As a component of non-formal education initiatives, community involvement provides a sense of duty, membership, and socialisation. In addition, youth education projects can be designed and implemented based on the participation of community members, local groups, and parents (Maemonah et al., 2024).

In light of the above discussion, the investigator has formulated a subsequent hypothesis to estimate the relationship between non-formal education and juvenile delinquency:

- “ H_0 : There is no significant relationship between non-formal education and juvenile delinquency.”
- “ H_1 : There is a significant relationship between non-formal education and juvenile delinquency.”

Table 2: H₁ ANOVA Test

ANOVA					
Sum	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	37526.431	216	5794.571	1076.057	.000
Within Groups	573.952	462	5.385		
Total	59275.740	678			

This inquiry has shown significant findings. The statistical significance is shown by the p-value (0.000) and the F-value (1076.057), both of which are below the 0.05 alpha level. The findings indicate that "*H₁: There is a significant relationship between non-formal education and juvenile delinquency*" has been accepted, whereas the null hypothesis has been rejected.

DISCUSSION

The multifaceted experience of non-formal education's dampening effect on adolescent delinquency was moderated by a variety of connected factors, such as flexibility, accessibility, cultural relevance, and community involvement. Non-formal education presented a less uniform experience to adolescents who were at risk compared to conventional school. Participation could be enhanced and delinquency lowered through programmes that are adaptable to different interests, learning behaviours, and economic strata. By taking classes in community centres, vocational schools, and other unofficial venues, non-formal education enabled children from poverty levels to study and mature with greater individuality as costs, distance, and social ostracism were lowered. Community involvement promoted non-formal education by creating a supportive atmosphere in which parents, educators, social workers, and community leaders work together to solve juvenile concerns holistically. This cooperation helped young people stay out of trouble by instilling a sense of community and responsibility. Cultural relevance bridged the gap between non-formal education and juvenile delinquency by ensuring that programmes reflect community beliefs, traditions, and social norms. When instructional materials addressed community-specific challenges and reflected local culture, students became more involved and internalised good behavioural changes. Finally, culturally appropriate, easily available, community-driven, and adaptable programmes dramatically improved non-formal education's deterrent impact on adolescent crime. These components worked together to provide a caring atmosphere that encourages growth, minimises the chance of antisocial behaviour, and strengthens social bonds. To ensure the success and sustainability of non-formal education in varied community settings, cultural relevance must be recognised and included as a mediator component.

CONCLUSION

Finally, when the framework of non-formal education was enhanced with independence, accessibility, and community involvement, it significantly enhanced the effectiveness in preventing young crime. Flexible solutions were more effective and appealing because they could be easily adjusted to meet the unique requirements of at-risk youth and their circumstances via informal learning activities. Reducing the likelihood that a lack of resources would lead to antisocial conduct, accessibility ensures that underprivileged and needy groups may access these educational opportunities. Community involvement provided a feeling of belonging, responsibility, and good social ties that deterred deviance. Importantly, cultural relevance mediates, emphasising the significance of matching educational material and approaches to participant cultures. Culturally sensitive programmes appealed to kids, enhancing engagement and trust. The influence of non-formal education was improved by this relevance. Last but not least, a thorough method that promotes adaptability, accessibility, community involvement, and cultural relevance might reduce juvenile delinquency while enabling social cohesiveness and juvenile growth. This method resolved severe behavioural issues and created enduring societal peace.

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