

## **Addressing a Behavior Improvement Education to Reduce Rate of Recidivism Among Juvenile Delinquency in the Wolaita Ethiopia Youth Correction Center.**

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### **Abstract**

The objective of this study is to identify the relation between health behavior improvement education to reduce rate of recidivism among juvenile delinquency in the Wolaita Ethiopia Youth Correction Center. In today's world, juvenile delinquents are rapidly rising as a crime every country, either developed or developing. Ethiopia is one of the less developed countries in Africa and the world, which has certainly faced the major problems of juvenile children. For this study, a descriptive and explanatory research design and a mixed research approach were employed. The present study was carried out in the youth correction center in Wolaita, Ethiopia, with a sample of 150 included in the study. Based on the results of the multiple linear regressions, there is a positive relationship between the predictors (family, economy, culture, communication, substance, and mortality, education access, and school attendance) and outcome (health behavior improvement education), and there is also a negative relationship between the predictors and the value of beta (peer, broken family, and parenting style). Therefore, we conclude that all concerned bodies should give due attention to the major causes of juvenile delinquency identified by this study by shouldering the intervention on each problem identified as a cause of juvenile delinquency in the study area.

**Key words:** Health Behavior, Improvement Education, Recidivism, Juvenile, Delinquency

### **Introduction**

This study draws upon the relation between health behavior improvement education to reduce rate of recidivism among juvenile delinquency taken together, those who do not engage in frequent positive health behaviors may ultimately be sicker than those living a healthy lifestyle. This is particularly critical for adolescent populations because the clinical effects of these behaviors can begin to manifest in early childhood and have a significant impact on adolescent health (Johnson et al., 1997). Research on the relationship between physical health outcomes and delinquency has shown a significant positive association between illness as well as the experience of somatic symptoms such as frequent headaches, colds, aching, general pain, skin problems, dizziness, and joint aches and delinquency in adolescent populations (Ford, 2014; Jang, 2007; Stogner & Gibson, 2010, 2011). Importantly, the direction of these results generally indicates that good health behaviors decrease the likelihood of delinquency, whereas poor health behaviors increase the likelihood of delinquency. Although evidence shows a relationship between these health behaviors and delinquency, the mechanism underlying the associations is less clear. Poor health behaviors may be associated with delinquency because they increase negative health outcomes and illness, which have been associated with delinquency (Ford, 2014; Jang, 2007; Stogner & Gibson, 2010, 2011).

One of the most important issues that both developed and developing nations need to solve is juvenile delinquency (Ehiemua, 2014). According to SisayZegeye Tesfay Advisor: Mosisa Kejela, M'(2016), juvenile delinquency is defined as any criminal activity involving minors who are younger than the statutory age of majority. It is also referred to as juvenile offending or youth crime. Since most young people in the world are living in developing nations, where resources for health care, education and training, and more opportunities for socioeconomic development are scarce, these youths face additional challenges as a result of development restrictions (Greenberg et al., no date). The World Youth Report (Wangmo, 2017) states that young people nowadays face unique risks irrespective of their gender, place of origin, or nationality. Juveniles are more likely to commit crimes like drug addiction and aggressive acts against others because of the variety of opportunities they are given, some of which are good and some of which are bad. Juvenile delinquency's effects At the local and personal levels, youth arrests, referrals, petitions, and detentions result in large financial expenses for society.

According to 27037 (2013), there are costs that criminals bear, costs that society bears in order to prevent or manage crime, and costs that offenders themselves bear. Juvenile offenders, victims, families, and communities all bear social, psychological, and bodily consequences as a result of juvenile delinquency. Juvenile offenders are more likely to experience recurrent social, professional, and academic setbacks. These setbacks also increase the likelihood that they will drop out of school, experience mental illness, and face unemployment. These outcomes may result in weakening ties to the labor market, engaging in adult criminal activity, and entering the adult criminal justice system (Kosanke, 2019). One of the major issues that practically every society in the world is dealing with is juvenile delinquency, and developing Ethiopia is no exception. The goal of the current research project in Ethiopia is to investigate the factors that influence young people to commit crimes and how we, as a society, may work to prevent juvenile offenses from occurring.

The issue of juvenile offenders exists in nearly every state, whether it is developed or not. Ethiopia is among the less developed nations in the world and in Africa, and it has undoubtedly experienced serious issues related to young people. One of the social issues that plague society as a whole, but particularly in rural, semi-urban, and metropolitan areas, is delinquencies. These days, the issues are seen throughout the nation's rural, semi-urban, and urbanized areas. Wolaita Ethiopia is a region in southern Ethiopia that combines rural, semi-urban, and completely urbanized areas. It is characterized by a high rate of adolescent delinquency, particularly in industrial and trade route communities (Radda, 1996). Adolescents in developing nations are committing violent and serious crimes at a startling rate these days. Juveniles are increasingly engaging in violent person and property crime, as well as offenses related to alcohol, drugs, or narcotics. Poverty and economic decline have unquestionably made the issue worse. Ethiopia, one of the least developed nations on earth, has undoubtedly had to deal with a significant issue with juvenile offenders.

One of the societal issues that plague all civilizations, particularly those in cities, is delinquencies. These days, the issues are visible in a nation that is becoming more urbanized. One of the most urbanized cities in the nation is Wolaita Sodo, where industrial and trade route villages have a high incidence of juvenile misbehavior. A variety of environmental circumstances can have an impact on how juveniles develop both acceptable and unacceptable behavior. These variables could include the family's composition, size, and degree of education as well as the parents' jobs and occupations. The researcher was driven, among other reasons, to evaluate the primary causes of juvenile delinquency in order to lower the juvenile delinquents' recidivism rate by implementing cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) at the youth punishment institution located in Wolaita, Ethiopia. Therefore, the aim of the study was to ascertain the elements that contribute most to juvenile delinquency in the context of Wolaita Ethiopia Youth prison Center and to establish which of these factors affects juvenile delinquency more than any other youth prison center.

## **Materials and Methods**

### **Study data**

The study was conducted in wolaita zone which is located in south Ethiopia region. The zone has a capital city of wolaita sodo and consists of one youth correctional center. For study purpose, our target population were prisoner at wolaita Sodo prison administration and correction center taking a sample of 150 prisoners with 98 male and 52 female adopting Yemane Taro (1967) sample size determination method from total population of 500, among 325 are male while 175 of them are female using stratified random sampling technique. For source of data, both primary and secondary sources were used. In order to gather data and measure the rate of juvenile delinquency among prisoner, standardized scales were adapted and used. For measuring juvenile delinquency, international standard juvenile delinquency was used.

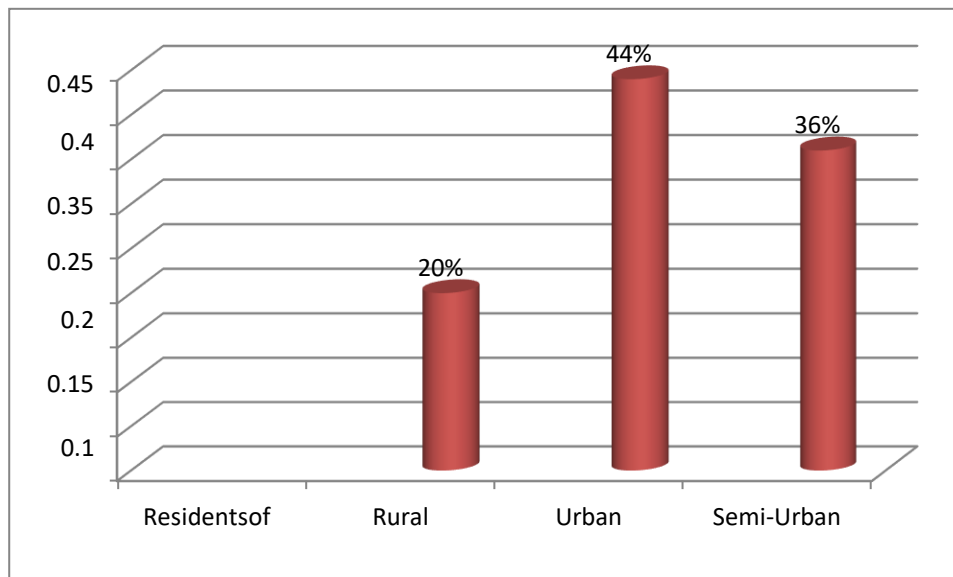
### **Statistical methods**

For analysis, descriptive statistics such mean, standard deviation, multiple linear regressions, and t-test were employed to compare the mean difference between the treatment and control groups. In order to relate research findings from literature reviews and primary sources and to help capture aspects of the study that could not be done through the quantitative method, the ideas and viewpoints of informants were also transcribing through narrative and descriptive approaches, which helped analyze the qualitative data.

## Result and discussion

The following statistic shows that 16% of respondents were female juvenile offenders, while 84% of respondents were male juvenile offenders. The majority of responders were female, according to the findings, compared to female juvenile delinquents at the correctional facility. The following table shows the age distribution of participants at the Wolaita sodo Correction Center's youth correction center: 43.3% of participants were between the ages of 9 and 12; 27.3% were between the ages of 13 and 15; 24.0% were below the age of 8; and the remaining 2.7% were between the ages of 18 and under. The finding indicates that majority of respondents age category was between 9 up to 18 below. It suggests that young people in correctional facilities are more impressionable and regarded as industrious. The following figure shows the respondents' level of education. 34% of the young people residing in Wolaita sodo town's correction center had diplomas; 28% had attended elementary school; 22.67% were illiterate or had no educational background; 14% had finished high school; and the remaining 1.33% had finished their degrees in Ethiopian contexts. The results show that most participants in the survey completed elementary school through diploma-level instruction. On the other hand, some young people lack formal schooling, which could result in juvenile cases. It's feasible to draw the conclusion that some of the young people in the correctional facility had only completed elementary school or were illiterate.

When the participants were asked, "The residences/dwellings you were living in the past 5 years," 44% of them said they had lived in an urban center prior to entering the youth correction center, and 36% said they had lived in a semi-urban area that was close to a town but wasn't officially designated as one, where the majority of the youths were playing and staying. Twenty percent of the respondents did not live in a city. According to the research shown in the figure below, the majority of the juveniles or responders who are currently housed in correctional facilities are from urban and semi-urban areas. Consequently, the investigator can draw the conclusion that the majority of young offenders came from metropolitan and semi-urban areas.



Source: field survey,2022 Figure1:Residents of respondents

The majority of respondents, as shown in the table below, were married in 31.33% of cases, divorced in 2.67% of cases, and widowed in 7.33% of cases. According to the data's outcome, the majority of responders were single. It indicates that all of the young people who entered Wolaita's youth punishment center were unmarried.

### The major causes of juvenile delinquency

The term juvenile delinquency refers to the criminal acts performed by juveniles or youths, thus calling them juvenile delinquents. The problem of juvenile delinquency is the result of a poor background, a broken family, and the influence of peer groups. Poverty, which is considered to be the root of all problems and issues in the country, may not be easily

eradicated easily. Juvenile delinquency is a major problem in many societies, as it causes major distress and damage to victims, perpetrators, and society at large (Nas et al., 2005). This problem is very common in the cities and towns of Ethiopia and is taking place at a fast rate, having its own consequences, as seen in other parts of the world. A large number of unemployed people are roomed around city streets. It is inevitable for such people to be fertile ground for deviant activities such as theft, robbery, burglary, and other similar crimes.

There is extreme poverty in Ethiopia. As a result of all these conditions, people were forced to adapt certain survival patterns that were labeled “anti-social” behavior. Some became beggars of prostitutes in order to survive, while others resorted to life as criminals (Andargachew Tesfaye, 1990).

This study uses data from different sources to determine the causes of juvenile delinquency in the case of the Wolaita Ethiopia Youth Correction Center. It also assesses whether monitoring, supervision, involvement, and attachment account for different factors. While different previous research has examined how family processes may explain differences in the relationship between family structure and delinquency (Demuth & Brown, 2004; Price & Kunz, 2003), a major contribution of this study is the exploration of the extent to which cohabitating families differ from two-biological-parent and other family types.

Some have questioned the causal association, suggesting that children from divorced homes may share a genetic feature that raises their risk of becoming delinquent (Guo, Roettger, & Shih, 2006). However, further studies have not proven this theory to be correct. In particular, Burt, McGue, Barnes, & Lacono (2009).

Previous studies have indicated that delinquency is contingent upon various circumstances, including but not limited to gender, race, age, family size, and place of residence.

Furthermore, research indicates that "broken home" families vary widely in many ways (Apel & Kaukinen, 2008; Demuth & Brown, 2004). Over half of children will spend some time in a single-parent household, and one-third of babies are born to unmarried moms (Demuth & Brown, 2004). Actually, the fastest-growing family type is one headed by a single father (Demuth & Brown, 2004). Today's family structures are incredibly diverse, resulting from rising rates of cohabitation and nonmarital childbearing in addition to the high divorce rate and the growth of complex stepfamilies (Demuth & Brown, 2004).

More recent studies have focused on the connection between cohabitation and delinquency. Research generally indicates that children living in cohabiting households are significantly more likely than those in two-biological-parent households to engage in juvenile delinquency (Apel & Kukinen, 2008; Kierkus, 2010; Manning & Lamb, 2003). Using data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997, Apel and Kaukinen (2008) investigated the connections between mixed families and parental cohabitation as well as the association between family structure and antisocial behavior. They discovered significant variation in the likelihood of antisocial and delinquent conduct among young people who live in households that are typically divided into intact and non-intact categories.

Juvenile delinquency is mostly determined by parenting styles and broken homes, as mentioned in the family structure above. In order to determine the determinants of juvenile delinquency for this study, the researcher also gathered information on the following factors: family economy, peer pressure, culture, broken family, parenting style, communication, substance, morality, education, and school attendance. The researcher then attempted to determine whether or not these factors were significantly affecting juvenile delinquency. The following table lists and discusses these variables.

**Table 1. The major causes of juvenile delinquency**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Average Mean	Std. Deviation
Family Economy	150	2.00	5.00	3.8783	.55994
Peer pressure	150	3.00	5.00	4.1370	.38471

Cultural Influence	150	2.75	5.00	4.2840	.47884
Broken Family	150	2.00	5.00	4.1333	.53381
Parenting style	150	2.50	5.00	4.2400	.48543
Communication	150	3.00	5.00	4.1800	.42458
Substance Abuse	150	2.60	5.00	4.1360	.43555
Morality	150	2.50	5.00	4.1683	.51691
Education Access	150	3.00	5.00	4.1900	.44654
School attendance	150	2.50	5.00	4.1983	.39745
Mean Average	150				

Source: (Survey result, 2022)

The above Table displays the findings, which include the independent variable's minimum and maximum values as well as its average and mean values and standard deviation values. On average The concept of a variable's core tendency is conveyed by its mean value. Each variable has 150 observations, and the above table presents the respondents' level of agreement with regard to the causes of juvenile delinquency. A given data set's dispersion is measured by the standard deviation. It shows the degree to which the data is clustered around the average. Therefore, the standard deviation values in the above table show how participants' responses varied with regard to the causes of juvenile delinquency.

First, participants were asked if adolescent criminality stems from the family economy. The study's average mean score, which falls between 3.4 and 4.20, is 3.8783 on average with a standard deviation of .55994. This suggests that the majority of respondents thought that adolescent delinquency stemmed from the family economy.

Second, participants were questioned about the relationship between adolescent criminality and peer pressure. The study's mean score, which falls between 3.4 and 4.20, is 4.1370 with a standard deviation of .38471. This suggests that the majority of respondents agreed that peer pressure is a sufficient reason for adolescent criminality.

Thirdly, participants were asked if they believed that adolescent criminality stemmed from their culture. The response's mean score, along with its standard deviation, is 4.2840. 47884; it falls between 4.2 and 5. This suggests that a majority of the participants strongly agreed that juvenile criminality stems from cultural factors.

Fourth, participants were asked if they believed that juvenile criminality stemmed from a shattered family. The response's mean score, which falls between 4.2 and 5, is 4.1333 with a standard deviation of .53381. This suggests that a majority of the participants firmly thought that adolescent criminality stems from broken families.

Fifth, the participants were questioned about whether juvenile delinquency originated from the parenting style. The response's mean score, which falls between 4.2 and 5, is 4.2400 with a standard deviation of .53381. This suggests that a majority of the participants firmly thought that adolescent criminality stems from broken families.

Sixth, the participants were questioned on whether adolescent delinquency was caused by a lack of communication. The response's mean score, which falls between 4.2 and 5, is 4.1800 with a standard deviation of .53381. This suggests that a majority of the participants firmly thought that adolescent criminality stems from broken families.

Seventh, was the question posed to the participants: Was the substance the cause of the juvenile delinquency? The response's mean score, which falls between 3.4 and 4.2, is 4.1360 Substance with a standard deviation of .53381. This suggests that the majority of those surveyed agreed that the substance was a contributing factor to adolescent criminality.

The eighth question posed to the participants inquired if morality contributed to adolescent criminality. The response's mean score, which falls between 3.4 and 4.2, is 4.1683, with a standard deviation of .53381. This suggests that a majority of the participants acknowledged morality as a contributing factor to adolescent misbehavior.

We questioned nine of the participants if they believed that adolescent criminality stemmed from their schooling. The response's mean score, which falls between 4.2 and 5, is 4.1900 with a standard deviation of .53381. This suggests that a majority of the participants firmly thought that education is a contributing factor to juvenile misbehavior.

The final question posed to the participants was whether juvenile criminality was caused by absences from school. The response's mean score, which falls between 3.4 and 4.2, is 4.1333 with a standard deviation of 4.1983. This suggests that a majority of the participants firmly thought that school attendance is a contributing factor to juvenile misbehavior.

Factors like family economics, peer pressure, culture, broken families, parenting style, communication, substance, morality, education, and school attendance are revealed as determinants of juvenile delinquency, as the above table and its interpretation illustrates through descriptive statistics. Juvenile delinquency had a greater impact on or source of culture, parenting style, education, and school attendance, according to the statistical data supplied; their average means agreed on these points between 4.2 and 5.

### **Qualitative Analysis on major causes of juvenile delinquency**

Six juvenile offenders took part in the FGD in total. Three of these received sentences for robbery and theft, while the other three received sentences for bodily harm. They were all men. One child was sixteen, two were fifteen, and three were thirteen. Two of the youngsters were in grades five and six, and three were in grade three. The juvenile offenders' religion provides further contextual information. One participant practices protestant Christianity, while five of the young offenders are Orthodox Christians. Among the six individuals, two were brought up by both their parents, two by their mothers alone, one by their fathers alone, and the final one was brought up by their mother and stepfather.

Out of the total number of participants, two reported that their moms were uneducated, two stated that their mothers had finished secondary school, and two said that their mothers had finished college. Three participants indicated that their fathers were uneducated, whereas the remaining three participants whose fathers were the fathers of their children indicated that their fathers had finished elementary, secondary, and college education.

According to one of the FGD's delinquent children, he was born in the center of the city, or "around Abebe zeleke." When he was thirteen years old, he was suspected of stealing and saw how his family's history was connected to criminal activity.

"I was suspected of theft. Before I came to the correction center, I lived with my friends, and I didn't know even his physical appearance. My mother generated her income by washing clothes and working as a daily laborer in the community, but nobody took responsibility for my education, and sometimes I became hungry when she had no money. I have no sister or brother. Once upon a time, I was faced with hunger, and my mother was not at home in order to eat food. Therefore, I participated in mobile theft. As soon as the police brought me to the correction center, they referred me to theft. The social worker accepted me in a child-friendly manner that enabled me to express my feelings. The social worker also gave me counseling services that helped me to be emotionally stable in the center and helped me to change my behavior."

As a result, in the aforementioned situation of a delinquent child, the mother was a single parent who bore all responsibility for the child; nevertheless, she was rarely available, and the social milieu drove the youngster to commit crimes. It is also revealed by another delinquent child in the FGDs that he was accused of physically harming other people. He was brought to the child-friendly correction institution at the age of fifteen due to the psychological traits associated with the parents of juvenile offenders. He cracks the child's teeth violently. In the FGD, he described the offense he had committed.

"I am failing in the action of the physical injuries to others. Because I was forced to break and destroy my friend's teeth. I was born in SNNPs, Wolaita Zone, Damot Sore Woreda; my father died when I was 8 years old; and my mother has no money to feed and educate me. I have one little brother who lives with my mother. I came to Wolaita Sodo before 5 years old and participated in small businesses like selling cigarettes and gum and sending some money to my family. I lived in a Wolaita sodo called "Ajif" with three friends in one room, where they came from the same village. On May 7, 2019, in the evening, one of my friends was beat and robbed by other people in our working area, and I wanted to support my friend and got in the middle of the quarrel. However, the theft guy also beat me, and I was emotional and fought with him, and two of his teeth broke. The policeman suspected me of having physical injuries and brought me to the correctional center. At the correction center, social workers helped me positively, and they helped me to reveal my feelings and problems."

There were six important informants present for the second FGD. A protection attorney, a police officer, and a social worker participated in the conversation. The correctional facility served as the venue for the FGD. According to the findings of the FGD, peer pressure, cultural influence, the family economy, and a lack of moral instruction are the main factors that contribute to antisocial conduct in youngsters.

There were more kids discovered in the Mochena Borage branch. CBE provides the following summary of the general situation:

"I am 13 years old, and I came from our home to school, "Tigil Fire." I have lived with my mother, and I don't know about my father. I just dropped my school off and approached the town. Then I stayed with my friends in town, sometimes went to my mother, and sometimes just lived in town. The social worker accepted me in a child-friendly manner that enabled me to express my feelings. The social worker also gave me counseling services that helped me to be emotionally stable in the face of the court, and I told him why I committed the crime. Finally, after the correction center found me criminal, they sent me to Woliata Sodo Correction Center, where juvenile delinquents get advisory and correction services provided by the institution.

As a result, in the aforementioned situation of a delinquent child, the mother was a single parent who bore all responsibility for the child; she was unavailable, and the social milieu compelled the youngster to commit crimes.

Members of FGD who participated and described the overall situation include the following:

Child offenders who come to court cannot explain themselves initially, and they fear the court process. Consequently, we create a comfortable environment in the interview sessions: most juvenile delinquency occurs in the summer season because schools close during this season; they mostly come from slum areas and overcrowded residences. Juvenile delinquent children came from rural areas in search of jobs and needed less supervision and follow-up with family members. Mostly, they were single parents, orphans, and of low economic status. Regarding the education of parents of juvenile delinquent children, most came from a less educated background. Therefore, we have witnessed that most juvenile delinquent children come from the above socioeconomic backgrounds, but we can't conclude that all the above-mentioned socioeconomic backgrounds of parents are the only factors that cause children to commit crime.

The UN conventions on the rights of children, the African Charter, and the Ethiopian Constitution, Ar. 36, state that all persons under the age of 18 are recognized as children. But in contrast, our national criminal law asserts that all persons above the age of 15 are not children, but rather adults. Moreover, children whose ages range from 9 to 15 are considered juvenile delinquents. This leads to the confinement of child offenders with adults at the same place, which initiates the acquisition of new criminal behavior on the part of these children. In the perceived psychosocial characteristics of parents of juvenile delinquents, in most cases, children of low socio-economic status, with less supervision and follow-up by parents and caregivers, street children, and orphans had a higher probability of committing crime.

Additionally, one FGD police officer provides the following description of the circumstances and conduct of juvenile delinquent children:

According to the police officer, the most frequent offenses involving juvenile delinquent youngsters are mobile theft and physical harm. He verified that children who commit crimes such as theft and robbery, physical harm, and occasionally sexual assault against children from primarily unsupervised family backgrounds and relatively low socioeconomic backgrounds begin to commit these offenses at the age of eight or nine.

Every FGD participant stated that the majority of young offenders are the children of single parents, have poor educational and socioeconomic backgrounds, and don't have enough supervision or background checks. These are the psychosocial traits that parents of young offenders believe to be present.

### **Recommendation**

The current study suggests that improvements education to adolescent health behavior can also help to reduce certain types of delinquency.

- A crime prevention strategy focused on improving how adolescents feel about themselves through the enhancement of health practices related to exercise, diet, and sleep may bolster the health of young people with the added benefit of reducing delinquency.
  - Efforts to advance exercise programs in school and at home, promote healthier eating through school lunch programs and healthy eating campaigns, and encourage properly enforced sleep schedules all may allow practitioners to “light two candles with one flame,” improving adolescent health while decreasing delinquency.
  - Programs that focus on helping adolescents to boost their through a healthy lifestyle may not only benefit the way that young people feel about themselves but also encourage prosocial behavior and positive valuation of conventional goals.
  - Future research with an eye toward practical application will help lead the way for programs that take the whole spectrum of adolescent health and behavior into account, with the goal of helping youth populations to become both healthier and safer.
  - This study offers several suggestions to those working with juvenile delinquent cases and cognitive behavioral treatment.
  - First and foremost, correctional facilities ought to offer counseling and awareness programs to inmates who require assistance with emotional instability, family problems, or other related concerns.
  - Additionally, educational initiatives such as programs that prevent bullying and raise awareness about the importance of social media and other related topics should be integrated into curricula.
  - . Lastly, there must to be an increase in the number of social workers, counselors, and other advocates willing to raise public awareness of issues pertaining to delinquency in society.
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- Concerned parties Counselors and advice from psychologists, attorneys, and community health professionals should be used by Youth Correction Center.
  - The centers that found correctional facilities ought to implement routine training as well as life skills instruction. Technology ought to facilitate learning and the change or adaptation of necessary health behaviors.

### **Declarations**

#### **Conflicts of Interest**

As an author’s we have no conflicts of interest to declare. All co-authors have seen and agree with the contents of the manuscript and there is no financial interest to report. We certify that the submission is original work and is not under review at any other publication.

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This is a statement to certify that all authors have seen and approved the final version of the manuscript being submitted. They warrant that the article is the authors' original work, has not received prior publication and isn't under consideration for publication elsewhere.

### **Ethical issues**

The data was collected after obtaining the consent of the participants. And the confidentiality of their response was maintained throughout the study process. Participants were participating only voluntarily. Personal privacy and cultural norms were respected. Finally, the results would be disseminated to the place where the study was conducted and to the department of psychology.

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18. Please note that for in-text citations, you will need to include the author's last name and the year of publication.