

# Social Skills Training and Violent Crimes among Juvenile Delinquent Adolescents, the Case of Borstal Institute of Buea

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## ABSTRACT

International standards require countries to promote the establishment of laws, procedures, and institutions that respect the rights of minors in conflict with the law and are directed towards their rehabilitation and reintegration into society. The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of social skills training and violent crimes among juvenile delinquents at the Buea Bostal Institute. The study was anchored on the Rehabilitative Model. Raynor and Robinson, 2006, Social Disorganization Theory by Clifford Shaw and Henry Mckay 1929, Social Bond Theory Hirschi (1969) and the Social Learning Theory of Albert Bandura, 1963. The Ex-post-facto design employing both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection was used in the study. A sample of 122 was equally used. This study had three categories of respondents involving: adolescents, parents/guardians of children who had graduated from the rehabilitation institution and staff of the selected institution. Convenient sampling was used to get staff members to participate in the study while snowball was used to supplement convenience sampling to sample former graduates from Borstal Institute and their parents. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire for graduates of Borstal Institute, interview guide for parents and staff was equally used in collecting qualitative data. A checklist was also developed by the researcher. The checklist contains screening questions about 38 offenses against youth that cover five general areas of concern: (1) Conventional Crime, (2) Child Maltreatment, (3) Peer and Sibling Victimization, (4) Sexual Victimization, and (5) Witnessing and Indirect Victimization. Findings revealed that, social skills training as a rehabilitation technique was very instrumental to curb violent acts among juvenile delinquent adolescents. Concerning the ability of aggressive replacement training to curb acts of vandalism in adolescents is concerned, more consideration should be given to Borstal Institute but the contribution of Real Life context should not be neglected. However, the combined effect of both is more effective given the higher Explanatory Power of the IVM. The researcher developed a "Theory of Reciprocal Rehabilitation" as a major contribution of this study to existing scientific knowledge. This theory examines the rehabilitation context of juvenile delinquency relative to cognitive behavioural conceptualizations, which underpin contemporary approaches to behaviour change aimed at modifying behaviours amongst delinquents. This reflections and ideas are based on three major techniques used in rehabilitation programmes. The study recommends that, social skills training should be systematically integrated into the rehabilitation curriculum.

## INTRODUCTION

International standards require countries to promote the establishment of laws, procedures, authorities and institutions that respect the rights of children in conflict with the law and are directed towards their rehabilitation and reintegration into society. A child is born innocent and if nurtured with tender care and attention, then he/she may grow in a positive way. Physical, mental, moral and spiritual development of children makes them capable of realizing their fullest potentials. On the contrary, harmful surroundings, negligence of basic needs, wrong company and other abuses may turn a child to a delinquent. With changing societal trends, children now appear to possess strong likes and dislikes and also show expressions that indicate maturity at very early ages. These qualities also

make children more vulnerable to anti-social behavioural patterns.

Every day, worldwide, an estimated 227 children (age 0-19 years) die as a result of interpersonal violence, and for each death many are hospitalized with injuries from violence, Siegel, (2003). Factors such as poor social competence, low academic achievement, impulsiveness, truancy and poverty increase individuals' risk of violence. Thus, developing children's life skills, improving their participation and social integration can help protect them from violence, both during childhood and later in life. Interventions for developing life skills can help young people to avoid violence; this can be done by improving their social and emotional competencies,

teaching them how to deal effectively and not violently with conflict situations and helping them to effectively integrate socially. The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of the training programmes and therapeutic methods employed to improve on the behaviours of juvenile delinquents at the Buea Borstal Institute. Specifically, the investigator examined the techniques, the rehabilitative programmes, and the use of therapeutic approaches to assess the effectiveness of programmes in addressing the personal needs of juvenile delinquents.

Juvenile delinquency can be understood in relation to the discovery or realization of childhood as a separate stage of life and to the idea that misbehaviour of juveniles is distinct from adult crime. Juvenile delinquency is a worldwide problem. Its occurrence in every country is phenomenal; and in spite of frequent news-media accounts of juvenile crimes and efforts to curb them, they continue to increase. The case of Cameroon is not different as reports of juvenile misconduct are being reported daily. The continuous violation of societal values and norms by juveniles is not just a Cameroon concern but a global trend. This has been attributed to issues such as poor parental attachment, maltreatment, homelessness, mental health problems, substance abuse and gangster membership. To effectively assess the reformation process, components of the programmes such as (social skills training, cognitive behaviour training, aggressive replacement training) were examined as major independent indicators. Others include the dependent indicators of juvenile delinquency such as violent crimes, aggressive behaviours and vandalism.

#### Statement of problem

Delinquency among juveniles constitutes a problem which the research was intended to address. In their families and communities, juvenile delinquents burn peoples' houses, rape women and defile young females, steal peoples' property and ever malingering which all constitute a threat to the communities. On the street, juvenile delinquents take drugs, rape women; kill people at night rob, involve themselves in criminal gangs to threaten the public at night. They also associate themselves in drug trafficking and associate with vultures to get food from the dustbins. Their existence in their homes and streets has threatened their families, communities and the government since in most cases is fertile ground for recruiting rebels and child trafficking.

In Rehabilitation Centres, such as Borstal institute, juvenile delinquents are taken with such characters with hope that when given psychotherapy, delinquency will stop. While in Rehabilitation Centres, juvenile delinquents are counselled by the trainers, care-takers, guided through religious services, given free food, water, shelter and accommodation, they are also given comfort, taken to schools and given skills to use for their future life. However, on reintegration into their families and societies, one wonders whether they learn too much and forget so fast from the Rehabilitation centres. After few days of reintegration, some juveniles resume fighting, defilement, raping of females and arson activities. Upon graduation from Borstal institute, juvenile delinquents resume with criminal activities and once again end up on streets if not prisons. Since most of juvenile delinquents are taken to Rehabilitation Centres (RCs) with the hope to get pro-social behaviours, the researcher wonders what is the intricacy involved in bringing pro-social behaviours among

them. The threat is that once they have returned to delinquency, they become more dangerous and unruly than ever before and the prior respect completely wanes away. Although many documents have been written about juvenile delinquents, the challenges involved in rehabilitating them has never been documented yet their existence has remained a threat to the community. This has been so because researchers have neglected them without knowing that their existence on streets is a harvesting ground to agents of conflicts in the world. It was from such background that the study was thought to examine the reformation programmes of Borstal Institute and juvenile delinquent behaviours.

#### Literature review

##### The Concept of Juvenile Delinquency

According to Thabethe (2010) Juvenile is a child who unlike an adult person, having not attained prescribed age, cannot be held liable for his criminal act. The age criteria for being a juvenile vary from country to country. Delinquency is an act or conduct of a juvenile which is socially undesirable. Juvenile delinquency generally means the failure of children to meet certain obligations expected of them by the society. Juvenile delinquency is expression of an unsatisfied urge in the juvenile delinquent. Whether a particular act or conduct of the child would be deviant or not will depend on various factors and vary in different countries, Cities and also time to time Barker (1999). The juvenile delinquent has even been defined as "a child trying to act like a grown up". A particular act of the child may be viewed as ordinary childish prank but in another particular context it may cause concern and anxiety. The distinction between a delinquent and normal child, at times is very blurred and deciding point between a playful act and the juvenile delinquency is his relation to concerned person. In fact there is a haze of vagueness and confusion surrounding the definition of juvenile delinquency and there is no single definition that may be acceptable to all.

Juvenile delinquency is an expression of unsatisfied desires and urges. For a delinquent, his deviant act is a normal response to his inner desire. Like a non-delinquent a delinquent is also conditioned by various attending and prevailing circumstances around him. A juvenile delinquent is a person who has been so adjudicated by a judicial court though he may be no different from other children who are not delinquent. Delinquency is an act, conduct or interaction which is socially undesirable. According to Barker (1999), the causes of juvenile delinquency are varied.

According to Robison Holt,[2000] "we use the term delinquent as we sometimes use the term 'love' as though it were a simple concept whereas it actually embraces complex patterns of behaviour." Delinquency, it is clear, is many things to many people. The man in the street is concerned chiefly with behaviour that interferes with his property, his person and his rights. He believes that the official label of delinquency is attached only when the behaviour is really harmful and has occurred repeatedly. To assume that the label 'delinquent' is defined or applied uniformly is as naive as it would be to assume that divorce statistics accurately and uniformly reflect the incidence of marital discord.

Sussmann [2001] presents a summary list of acts or conditions included in delinquency definition or description, as follows; violation of any law or ordinance, habitual truancy, association with thieves, vicious or immoral persons, and incorrigible beyond control of parent or

guardian and so on. Powers [1990] and Witmer [2008] found in their study that in order to define the real delinquents it was necessary to take into consideration three concepts or criteria namely; the seriousness of the behaviour, its frequency and the attitude of the offender toward a lawfully constituted society. Accordingly, they classified the delinquents into four groups most; ordinary, occasional, seldom and least delinquent. Thus the term delinquency does not have a fixed meaning. However, there are two generally accepted approaches to the interpretation of the term, the sociological and the legal.

### Classification of Juvenile Delinquency

It is extremely difficult to assess precisely the extent of the problem in any part of the country since accurate statistics are not available and are not indicator of the true extent. This is because of the fact that a large number of such acts remain undetected or unreported. Nevertheless, it has been observed that delinquency rates are highest in all developed countries. It is in countries with the highest levels of technical and economic advancement that social change occurs most rapidly, and traditional social roles and institutional controls over child conduct tend to breakdown. Different classifications of the juvenile delinquency and delinquents have been given by various authors. A few important classifications are noted below. Hirsh [1998] delineated the following kinds of juvenile offences:

- Incurability, which includes keeping late hours, disobedience, and so on.
- Truancy, which can be from home or school.
- Destruction of property, which includes both public and private property.
- Violence which is perpetrated against the community by using such means as knives and guns.
- Sex offenses which can range from homosexual activity to criminal assault and rape.

Eaton and Polk [2011], classified the delinquents by the following types of offences they have been involved in:

- Minor violations which include disorderly conduct and minor traffic violations.
- Property violations which include all property thefts except automobiles.
- Major traffic violations which include automobile theft and drunk driving and any other offence that would involve an automobile.
- Human addiction which includes sex offenses as well as alcohol and drug addiction.
- Bodily harm which includes homicide offenses that involve sexual deviation, such as rape, and generally, all other acts of violence against a person.

Kvaraceus [189], classifies youngsters who become delinquent in relation to three major variables:

- The extent to which the individual engages in delinquent behaviour.
- The degree of demonstrable emotional pathology.
- The individual's social class.

Sellin and Wolfgang [1990], also used the type of offence for classifying the delinquent behaviour into two classes. Under class I they list:

- bodily or physical injury;
- property theft; and
- Property damage. Under class II, they include the following:

- Intimidation.
- Property loss and property loss threatened.

### The school and juvenile delinquency

The school, like the home, has a major influence on the social development of the youth. However, it is also the locus for various forms of juvenile misconduct (Schmallegger, 2008). The latter scholars also contend that juvenile delinquency within the school not only disrupts harmonious teaching and learning activities, but also endangers teachers and learners. Teachers are confronted daily by acts of learner misconduct directed at themselves and other learners. Quite often, the media cites various incidents of bullying, aggression, fights, violent outbursts, vandalism, theft, the use of illegal substances, carrying of dangerous weapons and inappropriate language directed at teachers and learners. According to Gottfredson (2001), such behaviour by juvenile delinquents has harmful effects on the perpetrators and others inside and outside the school environment.

Teachers have been found to harbour feelings of frustration and inadequacy caused by the aforementioned experiences, consequently, rendering them unable to deal with learner delinquency. Steyn (2008) and Masitsa (2008) attest to this finding and state that the abolition of corporal punishment in South Africa and some other countries undermines the disciplinary role of teachers, thus leading to a decline in their morale. Since the abolishment of corporal punishment, learners have been known to misbehave with impunity and continue to exhibit undesirable behaviours.

The latter make up a few of the numerous acts of misconduct displayed by learners the researcher has personally observed. Learners, on the other hand, experience a range of effects which include some of those listed in Thabethe (2010) as follows: School phobia; Truancy; Behavioural problems; Stress indicated by physical and emotional changes; and Inability to cope with learning activities. The next section traces societies' reaction to the problem of juvenile delinquency over time.

### The school's failure in child socialisation

The school provides a much more complex socialisation setting than the family does, since more diverse forces interact and pull against each other. Hence, it is assumed that school is the first location of socialisation away from the family unit where a child can be exposed to ideas that are inconsistent with those learned at home. Furthermore, the school provides abundant ground for the making of choices of behaviour and establishment of companionship without any intervention by and dependence on parents (Kratcoski & Kratcoski 1990). Most American schools systems, as agents, of socialisation have been criticized for their apparent inability in many instances, to join the conflicting elements presented to by the community, to serve as the location of peer culture formation, and to produce a socially acceptable citizen (Kratcoski & Kratcoski 1990).

It is evident that the enforcement of discipline is recognised as a pressing social interaction problem. Most of the post-democracy schools in South Africa are characterised by a lack of discipline. In fact, violence appears to be escalating in schools, aggravating the existing lack of discipline and impacting extremely negatively on learners (Bezuidenhout & Joubert 2003).

For example Young black high school learners during the regime of apartheid in South Africa were a barometer of regular marginalisation and helplessness. Most schools were oppressive, but also became sites of a highly politicised struggle, a vehicle through which young people could declare their chance and role in society (Frank, 2006). By that it was seen as noble to be on the wrong side of the law. Violence was socially approved in the name of liberation. When some youngsters who had dropped out of school and returned to school during the transition to democracy, realized that there is no change that had taken place, they decide to go back home, to the street. As a result juvenile delinquency continues to escalate in South Africa (Bezuidenhout & Joubert 2003:145).

## Methods

### Participants

#### Sample

The sample size of this study was made up of 104 out of the 190 graduates between 2014 and 2018 (accessible population) from the Buea Borstal Institute. The institution was purposefully selected on basis of having populations that corresponded with the research concerns; boys with behaviour maladjustment.

This study had three categories of respondents involving: adolescents, parents/guardians of children who had graduated from the rehabilitation then institution and staff of the institution.

**Table2: Sample size of the study**

Categories	Sample
Adolescents (Graduates)	104
Rehabilitation Staff	12
Parents/Guardians	09
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>

A total of 104 adolescents participated in the study; 12 rehabilitation staff and 9 parents/guardians (all with graduated children from Borstal Institute). Therefore the sample size of this study was 125 respondents.

## Procedure

### Sampling technique

Convenient sampling was used to select staff members who participated in the study while snowball was used to supplement convenience sampling to sample former graduates from Borstal Institute and their parents. This was necessitated by the fact that the researcher noted resistance from some boys and because participation was voluntary, only those who were willing and accessible were included in the study. The Director of the institution also helped the researcher to meet or get contacts of some adolescents and parents/guardians used in the study. The rehabilitation staff who participated in the study were those found in the institution by the researcher and who were willing. In this case therefore, convenient sampling was used to select (6 rehabilitation staff). This is in agreement with Kumar (2005), who intimates that in a situation that impedes random sampling; convenience sampling is an acceptable alternative. Convenience sampling is whereby respondents are selected for inclusion on basis of easy accessibility.

### Method of data processing and analysis

Quantitative data was entered using EpiData Version 3.1 (EpiData Association, Odense Denmark, 2008) and analyzed

using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Standard version, Release 21.0 (IBM Inc. 2012).

Data clean-up (content clean-up and exploratory statistics): Exploratory statistics is an integrated part of data clean-up. Variables were explored to identify questionable entries, inconsistency in responses and outliers and their validity discussed to make the necessary corrections (Nana, 2015). During this stage, the fate of missing data was defined. Some were set as missing and some recoded depending on the statistical requirements. Frequency analysis was used for categorical variables as to identify invalid entries and missing values. This was done just for precautionary reasons because all the entries were checked for valid ranges in Epi Data using advance algorithms or machine language. At the end of this exercise, the proportion of valid cases in relation to what was initially expected was appreciated and data was then validated for analysis.

### Instrument

A questionnaire for graduates containing closed and open-ended items, a checklist, and two sets of structured interview schedules (for parents and staff) were the main research instruments. This is because most data was descriptive. Mugenda (2008) contend that descriptive data is typically collected through questionnaires, interviews or observations. The questionnaire was for the former graduates of the institution while the structured interviews were used with rehabilitation institutions' staff and the respondent's parents/guardians. A questionnaire was preferred as it is credited for giving respondents a greater feeling of anonymity and therefore encouraging responses to sensitive items. In addition, it has the advantage of enabling quick data collection.

### Intervention strategies

#### School Interventions

Academic failure is often associated with the beginning of delinquency and the escalation of serious offending, and interventions that improve a child's academic performance have been shown to reduce delinquency (Maguin and Loeber, 1996). To assess the effectiveness of school wide interventions, the Study Group examined five types of school interventions, which targeted a variety of risk factors (including academic failure, social alienation, low commitment to school, association with violent and delinquent peers, and aggressive behaviour) and introduced a number of protective factors (such as bonding to school, social and cognitive competencies, recognition of positive behaviour, and positive norms regarding behaviour).

#### Structured Playground Activities

A school playground program for boys and girls in kindergarten through second grade in Tallahassee, FL, significantly reduced aggressive behaviour on the playground (Murphy, Hutchinson, and Bailey, 1983). The program offered organized games, such as jump rope and races, to 344 children who arrived at the playground before school began. Three aides supervised the activities and used a timeout procedure for students who were particularly unruly. Most of the disruptive incidents involved aggression, and the program showed a 53-percent reduction in aggression as a result of the structured activities.

#### Behavioural Consultation

Two comprehensive school intervention programs designed to reduce school vandalism illustrated that changing student

behaviour is one way to prevent delinquent behaviour. In a 1-year program, graduate students trained in applied behavioural analysis and behavioural consultation helped Los Angeles County elementary schools develop classroom and school wide anti vandalism programs (Mayer and Butterworth, 1999). Interventions included matching academic materials to students' skill levels, increasing positive reinforcement for appropriate classroom behaviour and academic progress, reducing the use of punishment, applying learning and behavioural management principles, and educating school counsellors and psychologists about behavioural consultation methods. Vandalism costs and disruptive behaviour at the elementary schools where the program was implemented decreased, and on-task classroom behaviour increased following implementation of the program

### **Behavioural Monitoring**

Closely supervising student behaviour and rewarding positive conduct also appear to be effective interventions, according to an evaluation of a behavioural intervention program that focused on low-achieving, disruptive seventh-grade students who had trouble bonding with their families (Bry, 1992). As part of the 2-year program, intervention staff and teachers met weekly to discuss students' tardiness, class preparedness, performance, and behaviour. Staff also met with students in small group sessions and reviewed their school behaviour. Students earned points (later redeemed for a special trip) for positive ratings from the teacher interviews, good attendance, lack of disciplinary referrals, and lack of inappropriate behaviour during the weekly meetings. As part of the program, staff also routinely informed parents of their children's progress and continued to interview teachers and hold small "booster" review sessions for the students every 2 weeks for 1 year after the intervention.

Monitored students had significantly higher grades, better attendance, and far fewer problem behaviours at school than students in a non-intervention comparison group (Bry and George, 1980). The behaviour changes continued after the program ended. One-and-a-half years later, students who had participated in the program were found to report less illegal drug use and criminal behaviour than youth who did not receive the intervention. The impact on delinquency was long-term: 5 years after the program ended, youth in the program were 66 per cent less likely to have a juvenile record with the county probation office than youth who had not been in the program (Bry, 1992).

Although intervention efforts traditionally have focused on treatment after the fact (e.g., incarceration and rehabilitation), decades of research suggest that prevention is the most effective strategy available for reducing youth antisocial and violent behaviour (Bilchik, 1997; Dodge, 1999; Hawkins; Kashani, Jones, Bumby, & Thomas, 1999; Leone, Mayer, Malmgren, & Meisel, 2000; Snyder, 2000). Yet prevention is not a popular model in a society that is fixated on immediate gratification (Kauffman, 1999). By analogy, if a person develops an illness for which he or she takes a particular medicine and then improves, the effects of the intervention are evident. However, if preventative steps are taken and the illness never develops, the effects of the preventative intervention are not clearly evident. Therefore, it is difficult to show a definite causal relationship.

Changing popular opinion and government policy in order to promote prevention and adopt proven models of best

practice is a long and difficult process, especially when the issue involves behaviours that are dangerous and illegal (Sugai, Sprague, Horner, & Walker, 2000). The nature of antisocial and violent behaviour tends to prompt drastic, knee-jerk interventions. Nevertheless, there is growing evidence that prevention research findings have begun to influence federal, state, and local policy in this country. Governmental agencies are beginning to call for empirically validated, proactive solutions to the problems of youth antisocial and violent behaviour (Greenberg, Domitrovich, & Bumbarger, 1999).

### **Reformation through Community Based Programmes**

The movement towards community based correction has occurred largely as a result of disenchantment with Institutional programs and the increase emphasis given to the rehabilitation of the juveniles in conflict with law. States which have come forward with the idea of community correction have proved that advantages are prominent in this exercise. The first benefit is the humanitarian goals which are surely better met in a community setting than in an government run Home It is also observed in some instances that community based programs have been operated at a lower cost than comparable programs in an institutional settings.

The primary and the most important feature required to combat the major challenge of establishing effective community based corrections and intermediate sanctions is to educate the public about the motives of this program and involve them in a positive way. Since citizens are not aware of the basic objectives, they remain ignorant and raise objections to organizing corrections within a community setting. They are needed to be assured that keeping the public protection in view only those offenders are to be placed in the community who do not possess a high risk. It is important for the public and the policymakers of any country to understand that eliminating incarceration does not eliminate control.

Community based treatment program is today given importance in many countries. Most young people who get into trouble with the law do not need to be formally processed or held in custody. In fact, such measures often do serious damage by disrupting the bonds that connect youth to their families and communities. Unfortunately, the juvenile justice system often errs on the side of formal handling and incarceration. Juvenile institutions are filled with youth of minor offence who could be safely and effectively managed in other settings. The confinement of low-level delinquents is costly for communities, and doesn't serve public safety. For this it is necessary to have a close networking with well-established NGOs who further can guide the boy and assist him in pursuing his education or any other careers. Financial constraints often act a hurdle in the adjustment of the child. At this instance banks can step in to provide help and the surety can either be the guardian, any NGO or a competent person who can be considered fit in the society. Community based services is considered as an alternative to incarceration. The probability of recidivism also reduces.

### **Social Skills Training and Juvenile Delinquency**

Reviewing the research on SST has become a daunting task simply because of the sheer number of published studies in existence. Therefore, it may be more judicious to review the reviews. In addition, most reviewers have pointed out

methodological flaws and made recommendations for future research. A review of reviews may provide clues about why some mythological flaws and recommendations have been addressed and others have been ignored. Reviews of SST began appearing in the mid-1990s (e.g., Ladd, 1984) and continue (e.g., Kavale, Mathur, Forness, Rutherford, & Quinn, 1997; Mathur, Kavale, Quinn, Forness, & Rutherford, 2000). Their foci have been vast and besides different populations included methods of skill selection, assessment techniques, training approaches, outcome evaluation, and lack of generalization (e.g., Landrum & Lloyd, 1992; McIntosh, Vaughn, & Zaragoza, 1991; Zaragoza, Vaughn, & McIntosh, 1991). A particularly troubling issue has been the heterogeneity of participants who received SST under the umbrella terms "emotional and behavioural disorder" or "seriously emotionally disturbed." These terms, for better or worse, are used to classify students as being eligible to receive special education services under federal and state guidelines (Forness & Kavale, 2000). Participants in many studies, however, did not meet any federal or state eligibility criteria and, instead, were those who had been diagnosed with psychiatric disorders (e.g., conduct disorder, oppositional-defiant disorder), adjudicated (e.g., juvenile delinquents), "at risk," or simply nominated by their teachers as having behaviour problems (Maag, 2005). Consequently, all conclusions about SST for students with EBD are, to a certain extent, problematic

## Results

The influence of social skills training on violent crimes among juvenile delinquent adolescents was significant in the context of Borstal Institute and in real life context. The hypothesis stated to test the relationship between social skills training and violent crimes among juvenile delinquents was retained. Juveniles were further asked to indicate the lessons learnt being in the institution. They affirmed that they had learnt to live a responsible life free of drugs, to always make the right decisions and appreciate the importance of education. The graduates from Borstal Institute revealed that humility, perseverance and hard work pays in life. They learnt about personal responsibility, self-awareness, and personal hygiene. The graduates from Borstal Institute understood that habits like stealing, abusing others were not contextually acceptable acts. They were trained on good morals through spiritual nourishment. They could now differentiate good behaviour from bad, controlled themselves and keep off from bad company.

Contrary to the lessons learnt and relevance of the programmes, the rating of the staff, and management policies and guidelines, the juveniles felt that they had not been successfully reformed even after being in the institutions for the recommended period of 3 years. While others indicated that they had benefited from the institutions for three years. This contradicts Siegal (1997) observations, that if successful rehabilitation were not the ultimate goal of juvenile corrections, the use of residential facilities would be an expensive exercise in futility. Every effort must therefore be put to make juvenile delinquents rehabilitation an effective process.

The juveniles felt that they had not been successfully reformed because the programmes were not offered regularly, the staff were lazy and not attending classes / workshop frequently. Some of the programmes were non-existent and the students were in most cases put to play and

sleep or work in the farms. Some of the children were missing their parents who in most cases did not come to visit.

Kikvi (2011) in his study, also established that staff members indicated a below average involvement of parents in the rehabilitation of their children. They also felt that the period of stay was very short hence not enough for proper rehabilitation. And the state of the buildings did not encourage proper rehabilitation to take place. They had not changed fully into good people because most of the facilities and basic needs were missing or inadequate to realize meaningful rehabilitation.

For those who felt that they had benefited from staying in the institutions, they were able to acquire skills and knowledge through education, life skills training, became responsible and law abiding citizens and accountable. They further added that the programmes enhanced their self-esteem and moral ideals, they left criminal life, developed respect for all the people, obedient and disciplined people, were able to know between right and wrong and now identified with good company.

Graduates equally learnt that bad habits do not pay but only destroys their lives, they were inspired and motivated into a better life through counselling, education and vocational training as such they were able to integrate into the society and lead a responsible life. The graduates from Borstal Institute developed self-exploration, were able to realise their mistakes and made the right decisions to lead a good life by avoiding bad behaviour, learnt about the bad effects of dropping out of school and drug abuse. And they were able to co-exist with other people from different communities. They could choose career, discovered their talents, able to understand their parents, neighbours and community. Oluoch (1993) reported that the best intervention programs were capable of reducing recidivism rates.

The present findings reveal the effectiveness of social skills training redirecting the social behaviour and characters of juvenile delinquents. This was supported by the works of Ang and Hughes, 2002; Beelmann, Pflugstein and Lösel, 1994; Kazdin, 1997; Schneider, 1992; Wilson, Gottfredson and Najaka, 2001; Wilson, Lipsey and Derzon, 2003). These studies suggest that social skills training is an effective form of intervention for preventing and treating behavioural problems in childhood and adolescence. All this raises questions about whether social skills training for young people is already a proven measure in preventing antisocial development and later offending. One must also emphasize that the oft-quoted studies on long-term effects of developmental crime prevention addressed more complex and intensive multi-modal family-oriented programs (Olds *et al*, 1998; Schweinhart, Barnes and Weikart, 1993; Tremblay *et al*, 1995; for an overview: Farrington and Welsh, 2003). These should not be confused with mostly relatively short and child-focused social skills training programs.

Therefore, a lack of social skills was associated with various delinquencies among graduates from Borstal Institute. Specifically, social skill deficits are related to a higher risk for both offending and criminal offense recidivism (van der Put *et al*. 2012). Social skills training (SST) for juvenile delinquents and juveniles at risk for offending aims to improve social skills as a means to reduce the risk for (re)offending. Social skill deficits and poor social

competence are evident in the etiology and maintenance of numerous psychological problems of childhood and adolescence, including: depression (Reinecke & Ginsburg, 2008); social anxiety (Beidel, Turner, Young, & Paulson, 2005); social phobia (Spence, 2000); Autism Spectrum Disorders (Bellini & Peters, 2008); and conduct problems (Prins, & Emmelkamp, 2004). Similarly, social problem-solving deficits among aggressive and antisocial youth have also been reported (Cunliffe, 1992; Goldstein, 1999; Lochman *et al.*, 2000). Compared to their socially competent peers, antisocial youth have deficits in social competence that are a significant risk factor in the maintenance of aggressive behaviours and poor psychosocial outcomes into adulthood (Moffitt *et al.*, 2002). This is not to suggest, however, that all young offenders consistently show deficits in social competence, or that the construct can be used to differentiate offender from non-offender populations (McGuire, 2001; McMurrin, 2005).

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