

## JUVENILE AND NON-JUVENILE DELINQUENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE ROLE OF RECREATION ACTIVITIES IN PREVENTING DELINQUENCY

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### ABSTRACT

*The present study aimed to explore the attitudes of juvenile and non-juvenile delinquents, and the differences between these attitudes towards the role of preferred recreation activities (PRA) in preventing delinquency. A total of 569 male adolescents participated in the study (age range of 16–18 years). Participants consisted of 219 juvenile delinquents who were being held in custody by the juvenile authority, and 350 non-juvenile delinquents who were public high school students. In the present study a quantitative method was used, and the data was collected by using a questionnaire. Overall, the results indicated that the PRA had a key role in preventing delinquency. The role rates of PRA in preventing delinquency were the highest, because such activities provide thrill-seekers with an optimal level of arousal, followed by reducing leisure boredom, and coping successfully with the stresses of adolescent development, respectively. Juvenile delinquents scored significantly higher than did non-juvenile delinquents in terms of the role of PRA for delinquency prevention by providing thrill-seekers with an optimal level of arousal and reducing leisure boredom. The findings recommended that recreation professionals should consider what recreation activities could be offered to reduce leisure boredom and meet the optimal arousal level of thrill-seekers to satisfy their needs for enjoyment and excitement, which in turn prevent delinquency behaviors.*

**Keywords:** Adolescents, Attitudes, Delinquency prevention, Recreation activities.

### INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a transitional phase of growth between childhood and adulthood (Casey et al., 2010). Kapur (2015) mentioned that adolescence can be broadly categorized into three developmental stages: early adolescence (ranged between 11 to 14 years), middle adolescence (15 to 17 years), and late adolescence (18 to 21 years). Globally, adolescents make up 25 percent of the world population (UNFPA State of World Population, 2018). Adolescence is characterized by rapid cognitive, physical, psychosocial, and emotional development (Moghaddam et al., 2016). These rapid biological, psychological, and social changes during adolescence often lead to problems in behavior, as adolescents try to cope with these stresses (Steinberg, 2005, 2007; Reyna and Farley, 2006; Dumas et al., 2012; Sweeten et al., 2013).

Criminologists have investigated the criminal age curve and arrived that the proportion of the population involved in crime tends to peak in adolescence and decline with age (Ulmer and Steffensmeier, 2014; Rocque et al., 2015; Matthews and Minton, 2018). These include the use of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol as well as other problematic behaviors that are either criminal or deviate from social norms (Lee et al., 2016; Akalın, 2016; Hill et al., 2018).

Researchers stated that adolescence is a critical time period in an individual's life, as many patterns of criminal behavior are established and formed during this developmental phase (Rhoades et al., 2017; Cabrera et al., 2017), and delinquent adolescents are likely to grow up to be adult criminals (Dubow et al., 2008; Green et al., 2011; Laubacher et al., 2014; Ranapurwala et al., 2016; Rhoades et al., 2017). More specifically, longitudinal and follow-up studies found that behavioral patterns during adolescence are more likely to persist and escalate into adulthood (Lee et al., 2016; Torregrossa et al., 2018; Hill et al., 2018). For that reason, leisure researchers have directed special efforts toward adolescent development to find a privileged context for a successful transition into adulthood and preventing or decreasing their problematic behaviors (Kim et al., 2015; Freir and Teixeira, 2018).

The increasing attention of leisure studies for adolescents is due to the fact that leisure-time activities comprise 40-50% of an adolescent's life (Caldwell et al., 1992). Despite the positive effects of leisure activities on adolescent psychosocial well-being including anxiety, depression, self-esteem, self-concept, self-efficacy, self-confidence, and life satisfaction (Schwarzenegger et al., 2005; Nimrod et al., 2012; Agyar, 2013; Eime et al., 2013; Shin and you 2013; Kim et al., 2015; Argan et al., 2018; Howland et al., 2018), leisure can be instrumental in limiting the achievement of successful development into adulthood and promoting delinquent behaviors (Caldwel and Smith, 2006).

Tibbits et al. (2009) have found that delinquent behaviors probably occur most often during leisure time and in leisure settings. Psychological explanations suggest that when leisure activities don't meet adolescents' recreation needs, they get bored, and engage in deviant activities as a means of reducing leisure boredom (Sharp et al., 2011; Wegner, 2011; Akgul, 2015; Malizia, 2018). Thus, the study was aimed to explore the role of preferred recreation activities in preventing delinquency according to juvenile and non-juvenile delinquents' attitudes.

The results of this study could have implications for counselors and parents in handling delinquency. The study may provide the criminologists and recreation providers with the juvenile delinquents' attitudes of participation in recreation activities as an alternative source to deviance rather than engagement in delinquent activities. Moreover, it adds to the research knowledge base by comparing juvenile and non-juvenile delinquents' attitudes in order to examine possible differences in attitudes in regard to the role of recreation in preventing delinquency.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Participation in leisure activities may provide adolescents with unique positive developmental opportunities (Paggi et al., 2016; Freire and Teixeira, 2018; Eime et al., 2013; Howland et al., 2018). On the other hand, there is solid evidence that leisure may place adolescents at risk of engaging in deviant behavior and lead to severe psychological and developmental problems (Caldwel and Smith, 2006; Wegner, 2011).

A number of psychological studies supported that delinquency behaviors are more likely to occur when adolescents experience leisure as boredom as an escape-based coping strategy to deal with this negative mood (Sharp et al., 2011; Bacon et al., 2014; Weybright et al., 2015). This type of boredom might occur in situations when an adolescent is unable to participate in recreation activities. In this case, the adolescent may disengage psychologically through the experience of boredom (Sharp et al., 2011; Wenger, 2011; Akgul, 2015; Malizia, 2018).



The assumptions of recreation theorists, which claimed that many elements are supposed to be enhanced by participation in recreation activities, can be protected against the development of delinquents' behavior (Ehsani et al., 2012; Ekholm, 2013). Those elements are (i) alleviation of leisure boredom (Wenger, 2011; Weybright et al., 2015 Akgul, 2015; Malizia, 2018), and (ii) promoting positive adolescent development such as socializing with peers, self-esteem, self-confidence, reduce depression and anxiety, improving mood state, externalizing problems, co-operating with others, and skills to cope with disappointments and internalizing problems (Shin and you, 2013; Kim et al., 2015; Argan et al., 2018; Howland et al., 2018).

Recently, a new approach based on recreation opportunities has been emerged, highlighting the recreation activities should be optimally aroused to be psychologically rewarding (Chien, 2017; Klinar et al., 2017). Along with this perspective, recreation professionals have tried to search what activities could be offered to satisfy these individuals who have high sensation-seeking needs that can increase their motivation towards participation and prevent negative experiences of leisure (Sivan et al., 2019). Perceived satisfaction has been found to be an important indicator for participation in recreation activities, thus contributing to not only positive leisure experiences (Leversen et al., 2012; Bołdak and Guskowska, 2016) but also to the adolescents' psychological well-being (Leversen et al., 2012; Shin and you, 2013; Kim et al., 2015; Argan et al., 2018; Freire and Teixeira, 2018).

The differences in levels of satisfaction or arousal involve a personality trait known as sensation seeking (Klinar et al., 2017) which is generally peaks in adolescence and diminishes in adulthood (Steinberg et al., 2017). Klinar et al. (2017) have asserted that adolescents have different arousal levels and different ways to maintain an optimal level of arousal. Satisfying a preference for stimulation or needed stimuli for some adolescents can be reached through specific recreation activities (Schrader and Wann, 1999; Guskowska and Bołdak, 2010; Klinar et al., 2017), while others look for arousing stimuli by participation in delinquent activities to match their needs for risk-taking as a function of pleasure- or fun-seeking behaviors (Bacon et al., 2014; Weybright et al., 2015, Yancheshmeh, 2018; Kara, 2019).

Therefore, Sivan and his colleagues (2019) highly recommended that adolescents must feel that they are engaging in satisfying or enjoyable recreation activity based on their own preferences or self-determination to meet their recreation needs and optimal arousal (Kim et al., 2015; Guskowska and Bołdak, 2010; Klinar et al., 2017), which in turn satisfy their thirst for fun, enjoyment, and excitement (Shin and you, 2013; Klinar et al., 2017; Sivan et al., 2019). Adolescents who participated in preferred recreation activities had reported more leisure satisfaction (Argan et al, 2018) and less leisure boredom than did adolescents who had forced to practice disliked recreation activities as there is nothing else to do (Wegner, 2011; Weybright et al., 2015).

Despite increased attention to delinquency behaviors over the past two decades, scientific researches on leisure have generally overlooked factors as correlates and causes of deviant activities. There is a general assumption to consider preferred recreation activities as a legal alternative in delinquency behaviors (Ehsani et al., 2012; Ekholm, 2013; Spruit et al., 2016), however, that the assumptions work indirectly on delinquency prevention.

In other words, literature found that adolescents who had reported a high level of leisure boredom and sensation seeking were more likely to commit delinquency behaviors as a means of reducing leisure boredom (Sharp et al., 2011; Wenger, 2011; Liebrechts et al., 2015; Spaeth et



al., 2015; Malizia, 2018), and as an unacceptable source of fun and excitement (Bacon et al., 2014; Weybright et al., 2015; Yancheshmeh, 2018; Kara, 2019).

Other studies have shown that PRA motivates adolescents towards participation, thus, less likely to be bored in leisure, and such activities are more likely to satisfy sensation-seekers' thirst for excitement (Guszkowska, and Bóldak, 2010; Klinar et al., 2017). These improvements of leisure boredom and sensation-seeking can impact directly delinquency prevention due to the fact that a low level of leisure boredom and sensation-seeking has been significantly associated with fewer delinquency behaviors (Wegner, 2011; Spaeth et al., 2015; Yancheshmeh, 2018).

Despite the obvious assumptions of preferred recreation activities in preventing delinquency behaviors, there is a lack of robust evidence of the direct role of these activities on delinquency prevention. Moreover, Spruit and his colleagues (2016) have found that there is no significant association between recreation participation and juvenile delinquency. Hence, the present study was conducted to test these assumptions in a direct way and the conflicts in literature by exploring the role of preferred recreation activities in preventing delinquency according to juvenile and non-juvenile delinquents' attitudes.

In addition, despite some locations offer equal recreation facilities and opportunities for adolescents, especially those who live in the same city, interestingly, why some adolescents have become juvenile delinquents while others are not. Therefore, it is a logical reason arisen to examine the differences between juvenile and non-juvenile delinquents' attitudes towards the role of the preferred recreation activities as an alternative source of delinquency. Supported in these cutting-edge approaches, the aims of the study is: (i) to know how participation experience in preferred recreation activities, expressed in term of juvenile and non-juvenile delinquents' attitudes, is reflected with the experience of positive functioning in preventing delinquency behaviors; and (ii) to know difference between attitudes of juvenile and non-juvenile delinquents towards the role of preferred recreation activities in preventing delinquency.



## DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Juvenile Delinquents:** Juvenile delinquency is a term commonly used for referring to a young person who has committed an offense which, if done by an adult, would be considered as a criminal act (Young et al., 2017). The age criteria for being a juvenile vary from country to country (Sharma and Kirmani, 2017). In the Saudi system, juvenile delinquents arrested by the security authorities and the judge decided to be kept in the Social Observation House are in the age range between twelve and eighteen years (Juvenile care, 2017).

**Attitude:** Social psychologists defined attitudes as a psychological tendency to evaluate things based on beliefs, feelings, and behavioral tendencies, with a degree of positive or negative attitude (Schwarz and Bohner, 2001; Howe and Krosnick, 2017). Howe and Krosnick, (2017) found that attitudes have been strongly associated with actual future behaviors (Wallace et al., 2005; Glasman and Albarracín, 2006). Thus, the current study can be declared that based on juvenile delinquents' reports either positive or negative attitudes towards role of recreation activities in preventing delinquency, it can be concluded that they will be more likely to prevent or not prevent delinquency; because these attitudes will be reflected in their behaviors when preferred recreation activities will be provided for juvenile delinquents to participate in.

**Preferred Recreation Activity (PRA):** PRA has been defined by Hurd and Anderson (2011) as an activity that an individual engages in, during his leisure time, to meet a personal desire, primarily for his own satisfaction and enjoyment. According to literature (Schrader and Wann, 1999; Guskowska, and Bołdak, 2010; Klinar et al., 2017) that adolescents' recreational preferences can be divided into low-risk recreation (sports, computer games, hiking, pets, hunting, camping, etc.), and high-risk recreation (bungee jumping, hang gliding, rock climbing, car racing, whitewater rafting, skydiving, mountaineering, scuba diving, and paragliding, etc.).

For the purposes of this study, the operational definition used for defining attitudes towards the role preferred recreation activities as attitudes, beliefs, or feelings of juvenile and non-juvenile delinquents towards the role of PRA (whether were low or high-risk recreation) in preventing delinquency.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a descriptive method and a questionnaire as a data collection tool. Participation in the study was voluntary and anonymous.

### Participants

The participants consisted of 569 male adolescents (age range of 16–18 years), 219 juvenile delinquents (M= 17.26 years; SD=1.02), and 350 non-juvenile delinquents (M=17.05 years; SD=0.94), located in the same city, Arar city (the capital city of Northern Borders Province in Saudi Arabia). Adolescents were chosen from the same city because it offered the same recreation facilities and opportunities, which were considered useful for comparison purposes. The two groups of the sample were recruited by the following methods of sampling from the population:

**The juvenile delinquents:** A purposive sample method was used. This method is a form of non-probability sampling, also known as selective, or subjective sampling in which participants are selected because they fit a particular profile based on characteristics of a population and the objective of the study (Taherdoost, 2016). This group of the sample was included from all juvenile delinquents (n=219, the age range of 16–18 years) who were imprisoned in Social Observation Houses in Arar city in August 2019.

**The non-juvenile delinquents:** The participants were chosen by the random sampling method. In this sampling technique, each member of the population has an equal probability and likelihood of inclusion in the sample (Taherdoost, 2016). The total population of non-juvenile delinquents consisted of 3419 adolescents who were public high school students. The sample size, required to be representative and was specified by using Krejcie and Morgan table which was projected based on a p-value of 0.05 (Draugalis and Plaza, 2009). A total of 350 students were randomly selected as a non-juvenile delinquents sample, which represented 10 percent of the total population. Those identified as non-juvenile delinquents have not been arrested and detained or incarcerated by the security authorities before participating in the study and have not acted any delinquency behaviors in their schools according to schools' records.

**Table 1: Age-Sample frequency distribution**

Category	Age	Frequency	%
Juvenile delinquents (n=219)	16	46	21%
	17	70	32%



	18	103	47%
Non- juvenile delinquents (n=350)	16	109	31%
	17	115	33%
	18	126	36%

### *Research Instrument*

Attitudes towards the role of PRA for delinquency prevention consisting of three subscales designed to assess the three domains. These domains were identified based on a review of the literature on delinquency behaviors related to leisure (e.g. Wegner, 2011; Bacon et al., 2014; Spaeth et al., 2015) including a review of existing leisure experiences measures which related to deviant activities, in an attempt to cover the full range of delinquency situations encountered by adolescents in leisure. The approach from literature toward delinquency behaviors related to leisure can be subdivided into three key factors:

- Leisure boredom: when adolescents get bored, they are more likely to commit delinquency behaviors as a means of reducing leisure boredom.
- Sensation-seeking: delinquents are sensation-seekers who want high levels of excitement.
- Adolescents' development: rapid developmental changes during adolescence often lead to problematic behaviors as adolescents try to cope with these stresses.

Therefore, the scale consisted of 43 items in three subscales (domains) to assess the role of PRA in preventing delinquency (Table 2).



**Table 2: 43- items and its distribution on the scale**

Domains	items	No. of items
The role of PRA in preventing delinquency by reducing leisure boredom.	1, 4, 9, 13, 17, 21, 25, 29, 33, 36, 38, 41, 43	13
The role of PRA in preventing delinquency by providing thrill-seekers with optimal levels of arousal.	2, 5, 7, 11, 15, 19, 23, 27, 31, 35, 40	11
The role of PRA in preventing delinquency by coping successfully with adolescent development.	3, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34, 37, 39, 42	19
<b>Total scale</b>	<b>43 items</b>	

The whole attitudes as a result of the three domains were taken together to measure the role of PRA for delinquency prevention. The questionnaire was administered to both juvenile and non-juvenile delinquents and they were told that PRA may include low- and high-risk recreation according to their own preferences. The statements are rated on 5-point Likert scales anchored by 1 ("Strongly disagree") and 5 ("Strongly agree").

### *Validity of the instrument*

To evaluate content validity, items were reviewed by eight experts in the leisure and recreation field and four experts in social science. All experts held doctorates. The panel was asked to rate (on a four-point rating scale) the degree to which each scale item represents the objective or

domain. The content validity index is the percentage of total items receiving a score of 3 or 4 and thus deemed content valid. According to Yusoff (2019) to meet a satisfactory level of content validity for new instruments, researchers should consider a minimum content validity index of 80% agreement among judges. The content validity index at this phase was 86.5%.

The panel was also asked to comment on the comprehensiveness of the total instrument and on the clarity of the items. The scale was revised based on the panel's feedback and recommendations. Then, the panel was asked to rate the revised scale. At that time, the content validity index was 100%.

#### **Reliability of the instrument**

Time invariant (test-retest method) reliability coefficients were measured by giving the same test twice to the same people at different times. Therefore, a pilot study was implemented (pilot subjects=48 students, they were excluded from the main study). Three weeks later, the same scale was re-administered to the same subjects. The test-retest correlation was 0.84 which indicated good reliability. There is another support for the reliability of the scale; the internal consistency reliability coefficients were calculated in the present study. High reliabilities of 0.946, 0.921, and 0.833 were obtained from the three domains (reducing leisure boredom, providing thrill-seekers with an optimal level of arousal, and coping successfully with adolescent development, respectively). Cronbach's alpha value of 0.935 was obtained from the total scale, which was an acceptable value. Hence, the instrument in this study was reliable.

#### **Statistical analyses**

The data were analyzed using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 20.0, and the following statistical methods of data analysis were used:

- Means, and Standard deviations (std) to describe juvenile and non-juvenile delinquents' attitudes towards the role of PRA in preventing delinquency.
- The Pearson correlation coefficient (test-retest correlation) and Cronbach's Alpha, to assess the reliability of the study scale.
- Independent-samples t-tests were conducted to determine if there is a significant difference between attitudes of juvenile and non-juvenile delinquents towards the role of PRA in preventing delinquency.

To describe the levels of role of PRA in preventing delinquency, the weighted means were interpreted as follows:

**Table 3: Statistical range and descriptive interpretation**

Legend	Descriptive interpretation	Overall Descriptive Rating
4.21-5.00	Strongly agree	Very High
3.41-4.20	Agree	High
2.61-3.40	Neutral	Moderate
1.81-2.60	Disagree	Low
1.00-1.80	Strongly disagree	Very Low

## **RESULTS**

The main purpose of the study was to explore the attitudes of juvenile and non-juvenile delinquents towards the role of PRA in preventing delinquency behaviors. It also attempted to

discover the differences between attitudes of juvenile and non-juvenile delinquents for the role of PRA in preventing delinquency.

***Attitudes towards the role of PRA in preventing delinquency:***

The means and standard deviations were calculated to evaluate the attitudes towards the role of PRA in preventing delinquency.

**Table 4: Means and standard deviations by item and juvenile category for the role of PRA in preventing delinquency**

No	Item – How much do you agree? In my opinion, PRA can prevent youths from committing delinquent behaviors because of such activities.	Category	M	SD	Interpretation	Rank
1	Get rid of boredom in leisure time causing delinquency.	Delinquents	3.93	1.07	High	18
		Non-delinquents	3.77	0.99	High	15
2	Consider as a socially acceptable outlet for youths who look for high levels of thrill and adventure.	Delinquents	4.09	1.01	High	12
		Non-delinquents	4.23	1.19	Very High	2
3	Carry out in an environment that prevents youths from meeting delinquent individuals.	Delinquents	4.09	0.93	High	12
		Non-delinquents	3.96	1.12	High	8
4	Reduce youths' feelings that leisure time is too long.	Delinquents	3.77	0.95	High	26
		Non-delinquents	3.71	1.15	High	17
5	Provide youths with opportunities to show their amazing and exciting skills to prove themselves in front of others.	Delinquents	4.22	0.92	Very High	7
		Non-delinquents	3.88	1.17	High	11
6	Help youths gain endurance and sportsmanship	Delinquents	4.01	1.11	High	16
		Non-delinquents	3.75	0.94	High	16
7	Meet the desire of adventurers to face challenges and risks.	Delinquents	4.49	1.03	Very High	1
		Non-delinquents	4.29	0.97	Very High	1
8	Keep youths satisfied with themselves.	Delinquents	3.83	0.96	High	22
		Non-delinquents	2.66	0.97	Moderate	41
9	Motivate youths to spend most of their leisure time participating in, so they don't have enough time to engage in delinquent behaviors.	Delinquents	4.08	1.01	High	14
		Non-delinquents	3.83	1.06	High	13
10	Encourage youth to respect rules and regulations.	Delinquents	3.92	1.06	High	19
		Non-delinquents	2.48	1.04	Low	43
11	Fulfill youths' thirst for fun, enjoyment, and excitement.	Delinquents	4.44	0.93	Very High	2
		Non-delinquents	4.16	0.99	High	3
12	Enhance youths' skills to cope with disappointments.	Delinquents	3.73	1.11	High	29
		Non-delinquents	3.66	1.02	High	21
13	Increase youths' happiness and improve their moodiness.	Delinquents	3.97	0.99	High	17
		Non-delinquents	3.55	0.98	High	25
14	Help youth to relieve stress.	Delinquents	3.24	1.03	Moderate	40
		Non-delinquents	3.81	0.99	High	14





15	Absorb youths' full attention which reduces the chances of thinking about any delinquent behaviors.	Delinquents	4.26	1.17	Very High	5
		Non-delinquents	4.08	1.18	High	6
16	Provide youth with a sense of accomplishment.	Delinquents	3.80	1.02	High	24
		Non-delinquents	3.36	0.99	Moderate	30
17	Reduce delinquent behaviors performed with the purpose of enjoying leisure time.	Delinquents	3.89	1.21	High	20
		Non-delinquents	3.64	1.21	High	22
18	Help youth not to feel he is useless and worthless.	Delinquents	3.19	0.94	Moderate	41
		Non-delinquents	3.40	1.16	Moderate	28
19	Help thrill-seeker youth to enjoy being at risk.	Delinquents	4.32	0.79	Very High	4
		Non-delinquents	3.84	0.87	High	12
20	Improve their emotional wellbeing.	Delinquents	3.30	1.04	Moderate	38
		Non-delinquents	2.94	1.11	Moderate	39
21	Keep youth satisfied with the way they spend their leisure time.	Delinquents	3.79	0.98	High	25
		Non-delinquents	3.06	1.19	Moderate	37
22	Provide an opportunity for self-expression.	Delinquents	3.61	0.97	High	31
		Non-delinquents	3.08	1.09	Moderate	36
23	Help youth be physically and emotionally challenged.	Delinquents	4.20	0.97	High	8
		Non-delinquents	3.51	0.96	High	26
24	Offer a good opportunity to enjoy the company of friends.	Delinquents	3.11	0.95	Moderate	42
		Non-delinquents	3.57	1.22	High	24
25	Keep youth in a continuous feeling that they have something to do in their leisure time.	Delinquents	3.86	1.15	High	21
		Non-delinquents	3.94	1.11	High	9
26	Make youth as a social person and decrease his isolation and loneliness.	Delinquents	3.40	0.92	High	35
		Non-delinquents	3.61	0.98	High	23
27	Help youth develop close relationships with others who are excitingly adventurous.	Delinquents	4.17	1.07	High	9
		Non-delinquents	3.70	1.21	High	18
28	Help youth to relax.	Delinquents	3.27	0.91	Moderate	39
		Non-delinquents	3.19	0.89	Moderate	33
29	Limit youths' negative tendencies in looking for abnormal options to get rid of boredom.	Delinquents	3.57	0.97	High	32
		Non-delinquents	3.39	1.13	Moderate	29
30	Absorb youths' excess energy in positive activities rather than discharging it in delinquent activities.	Delinquents	4.15	1.02	High	10
		Non-delinquents	4.11	0.96	High	4
31	The dangers of its performance help youths get fully satisfied with their strength.	Delinquents	4.23	0.98	Very High	6
		Non-delinquents	3.67	1.07	High	20
32	Reduce mental depression and anxiety.	Delinquents	3.57	0.91	High	32
		Non-delinquents	2.77	0.89	Moderate	40
33	Get rid of lethargy and laziness.	Delinquents	3.81	1.12	High	23
		Non-delinquents	3.24	1.04	Moderate	32



34	Enhance youths' ability and determination to overcome the difficulties of life.	Delinquents	3.51	0.97	High	34
		Non-delinquents	3.29	1.08	Moderate	31
35	Include competitive activities that allow youths to saturate their competitive tendencies and trends.	Delinquents	4.11	1.18	High	11
		Non-delinquents	3.91	1.13	High	10
36	Help youth meet people who are not dull or bored persons.	Delinquents	3.75	1.06	High	28
		Non-delinquents	2.99	1.01	Moderate	38
37	Promote healthy behavior, which in turn, takes youths away from any delinquent activities that damage their health (drugs, alcohol, and smoking).	Delinquents	3.38	0.94	Moderate	36
		Non-delinquents	4.03	1.01	High	7
38	Change the negative stereotype of leisure time.	Delinquents	3.72	1.03	High	30
		Non-delinquents	3.17	1.01	Moderate	34
39	Increase youths' feeling of being valuable in society.	Delinquents	3.03	0.93	Moderate	43
		Non-delinquents	2.55	1.10	Low	42
40	Allow youth to engage in horrible and frightening activities.	Delinquents	4.35	1.06	Very High	3
		Non-delinquents	4.11	1.04	High	4
41	Increase youths' desire to have enough leisure time.	Delinquents	3.77	1.17	High	26
		Non-delinquents	3.15	0.97	Moderate	35
42	Help youth distinguish delinquent behaviors from natural ones.	Delinquents	3.33	1.01	Moderate	37
		Non-delinquents	3.49	1.06	High	27
43	Help youths get rid of boring daily routine activities.	Delinquents	4.03	0.96	High	15
		Non-delinquents	3.68	1.09	High	19
	<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	Delinquents	3.88	0.643	High	
		Non-delinquents	3.59	0.730	High	

In table 4, juvenile and non-juvenile delinquents were asked to reflect their opinions on how PRA can prevent youths from delinquent behaviors. For juvenile delinquents, the statement "Meet the desire of adventurers to face challenges and risks" had the highest weighted mean of 4.49 and SD of 1.03, interpreted as very high. Meanwhile, the statement "Fulfill youths' thirst for fun, enjoyment, and excitement" had the second highest weighted mean of 4.44 and SD of 0.93, interpreted as very high. The overall weighted mean was 3.88 and SD was 0.643, interpreted as high implies that preferred recreation activities had a high role in preventing delinquency. However, for non-juvenile delinquents, the statement "Meet the desire of adventurers to face challenges and risks" had the highest weighted mean of 4.29 and SD of 0.97, interpreted as very high. Meanwhile, the statement "Consider as a socially acceptable outlet for youths who look for high levels of thrill and adventure" had the second highest weighted mean of 4.23 and SD of 1.19, interpreted as very high. The overall weighted mean was 3.59 and SD was 0.730, interpreted as high implies that PRA had a high role in preventing delinquency.



**Table 5: Means and standard deviations by domain and juvenile category for the role of PRA in preventing delinquency behaviors**

Category	Domain	M	SD	Interpretation	Rank
Juvenile delinquents	Reducing leisure boredom.	3.84	0.772	High	2
	Providing thrill-seekers with an optimal level of arousal.	4.26	0.691	Very High	1
	Coping successfully with adolescent development.	3.55	0.642	High	3
Non-juvenile delinquents	Reducing leisure boredom.	3.47	0.904	High	2
	Providing thrill-seekers with an optimal level of arousal.	3.94	0.773	High	1
	Coping successfully with adolescent development.	3.35	0.751	Moderate	3
The sample as a whole	Reducing leisure boredom.	3.65	0.741	High	2
	Providing thrill-seekers with an optimal level of arousal.	4.10	0.663	High	1
	Coping successfully with adolescent development.	3.45	0.612	High	3

The data analyzed in table 5 revealed the attitudes of the juvenile and non-juvenile delinquents on the three domains regarding the role of PRA in preventing delinquency. Juvenile delinquents, on average, reported a higher role of PRA in preventing delinquency, because such activities provide thrill-seekers with an optimal level of arousal ( $M=4.26$ ;  $SD=0.691$ ), followed by reduced leisure boredom ( $M=3.84$ ;  $SD=0.772$ ), and coping successfully with adolescent development ( $M=3.55$ ;  $SD=0.642$ ). Similarly, non-juvenile delinquents' rates were highest for providing thrill-seekers with an optimal level of arousal ( $M=3.94$ ;  $SD=0.773$ ), reducing leisure boredom ( $M=3.47$ ;  $SD=0.904$ ), and coping successfully with the stresses of adolescent development ( $M=3.35$ ;  $SD=0.751$ ), respectively.

The sample as a whole, on average, reported a higher role of PRA, because such activities provide thrill-seekers with an optimal level of arousal ( $M=4.10$ ;  $SD=0.663$ ), followed by reduced leisure boredom ( $M=3.65$ ;  $SD=0.741$ ), and coping successfully with adolescent development ( $M=3.45$ ;  $SD=0.612$ ).

***Difference between juvenile and non-juvenile delinquents' attitudes towards the role of PRA in preventing delinquency:***

An independent sample t-test was used to ascertain whether or not there were any differences between attitudes of juvenile and non-juvenile delinquents towards the role of PRA in preventing delinquency.

**Table 6: Comparison between attitudes of juvenile and non-juvenile delinquents towards the role of PRA in preventing delinquency**

Domain	Juvenile delinquents		Non-juvenile delinquents		t-value	P	Remark
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Reducing leisure boredom.	3.84	0.772	3.47	0.904	2.983	0.003*	Significant
Providing thrill-seekers with optimal level of arousal.	4.26	0.691	3.94	0.773	2.961	0.003*	Significant
Coping successfully with adolescent development.	3.55	0.642	3.35	0.751	1.927	0.056	non-significant
<b>Grand Total</b>	3.88	0.643	3.59	0.730	2.666	0.008	Significant

\* Significant at  $p \leq 0.05$ , t-critical value at 0.05 = 2.042.

Analysis of table 6 showed that t-calculated value was greater than the t-critical value in terms of the role of PRA in reducing leisure boredom and providing thrill-seekers with an optimal level of arousal. This means that t-test differences emerged between the two groups. Juvenile delinquents, on average, scored the role of PRA in reducing leisure boredom with a significantly higher number ( $M=3.84$ ;  $SD=0.772$ ) than non-juvenile delinquents ( $M=3.47$ ;  $SD=0.904$ ).

T-test analysis also showed that juvenile delinquents reported significantly higher scores for the role of PRA in providing thrill-seekers with an optimal level of arousal ( $M=4.26$ ;  $SD=0.691$ ) than non-juvenile delinquents ( $M=3.94$ ;  $SD=0.773$ ). The results revealed that t-critical value is higher than the t-calculated value in terms of the role of PRA in coping successfully with adolescent development, which implies that there was no statistically significant difference between the two groups.

The grand total was proved that t-calculated is higher than the t-critical, which provides evidence that there are statistically significant differences between the two groups on the role of PRA in preventing delinquency, and the difference was in favor of juvenile delinquents.

## DISCUSSIONS

The primary goals of this study were to evaluate the role of PRA in preventing delinquency behaviors according to juvenile and non-juvenile delinquents' attitudes and to examine the differences between these two groups' attitudes. As can be noted from the findings, the attitudes of juvenile and non-juvenile delinquents on the role of PRA were highest for providing thrill-seekers with an optimal level of arousal, followed by reducing leisure boredom, and coping successfully with adolescent development. This seemed a logical finding considering that adolescence is a time of heightened sensation seeking (Byck et al., 2015).

These findings are also consistent with the Steinberg et al.'s study (2017) who compared age differences of sensation-seeking across 11 countries (China, Colombia, Cyprus, India, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, the Philippines, Sweden, Thailand, and the United States) and found that adolescence is a time when individuals are inclined to pursue exciting, novel or emotionally intense experiences. Therefore, the feeling of high sensation-seeking may be reflected on juveniles in this study when they reported high role of PRA for providing thrill-seekers with an optimal level of arousal, since the optimal level of arousal can be achieved through engagement



in preferred and exciting recreation activities (Schrader and Wann, 1999; Guskowska, and Bołdak, 2010; Klinar et al., 2017; Sivan et al., 2019).

The study showed that both groups reported the higher role of PRA in reducing leisure boredom for delinquency prevention. Results were in line with findings of previous studies (Wegner, 2011; Leversen et al., 2012; Weybright et al., 2015; Argan et al., 2018) that adolescents who participated in PRA reported less leisure boredom and more leisure satisfaction and happiness than did adolescents who had nothing to do in their leisure or who forced to practice disliked recreation activities.

Generally, attitudes of delinquents and non-delinquents indicated that PRA has a high role in delinquency prevention. These findings are contrary to the results of Spruit and his colleagues (2016) who conducted a multilevel meta-analysis of 51 published and unpublished studies. Their findings showed that there is no significant association between recreation participation and juvenile delinquency. This contrariety may be due to the fact that their study has analyzed the relationship between juvenile delinquency and participation in recreation activities regardless of these recreation activities were liked or disliked activities for adolescents. They indicated that one of their study limitations was that the reviewed studies did not provide detailed information about recreation activities' characteristics. However, this study asked juveniles to rate their opinions on preferred recreation activities. There is solid evidence that adolescents who participated in PRA are more likely to be less bored than those who participated in disliked activities (Wegner, 2011; Leversen et al., 2012; Weybright et al., 2015; Sivan et al., 2019), which in turn reduce their engagement in delinquency behaviors (Sharp et al., 2011; Wenger, 2011; Liebrechts et al., 2015; Spaeth et al., 2015; Malizia, 2018).

Juvenile delinquents reported a significantly higher role of PRA in providing thrill-seekers with an optimal level of arousal and reducing leisure boredom for delinquency prevention than did non-juvenile delinquents. However, there was no statistically significant difference between the two groups in terms of the role of PRA in coping successfully with adolescent development in preventing delinquency. It may be because of the adolescent development is experienced by all adolescents whether are delinquents or not (Kapur, 2015), which may lead them to agree without any difference on the role of PRA in coping successfully with adolescent development in preventing delinquency.

However, these differences may refer to the fact that sensation seeking is a personality trait and its relationship with leisure boredom and delinquency is reciprocal, in that an increase in one leads to an increase in the other. In other words, delinquents are thrill-seekers who want high levels of excitement during leisure, but when recreation activities don't meet their optimal arousal, they get bored and engage in delinquent activities as a means of reducing leisure boredom (Wegner, 2011; Byck et al., 2015). Eventually, because delinquents are characterized by having a high level of sensation-seeking and leisure boredom, so it is not surprising that delinquents recognized a significantly higher role of PRA as a means of reducing their leisure boredom and fulfill their thirst for excitement compared to non-delinquents. The results of this research are similar to relevant research conclusions. For instance, a high level of leisure boredom and sensation-seeking have been significantly related to various forms of delinquency (Sharp et al., 2011; Wenger, 2011; Byck et al., 2015; Malizia, 2018; Yancheshmeh, 2018).

Overall, although the two groups were adolescents living in the same city that offered the same recreation facilities and opportunities, the delinquents reported a significantly higher role of





PRA in preventing delinquency than did the non-delinquents. However, some adolescents have become juvenile delinquents while others were not. As confirmed in the previous studies, this is due to the fact that delinquents are thrill-seekers who want a high level of excitement compared to non-delinquents (Byck et al., 2015; Mann et al., 2017; Yancheshmeh, 2018). When the offered recreation activities don't meet their needs, they get bored (Weybright et al., 2015; Sivan et al., 2019) and engage in delinquency behaviors as a means of reducing leisure boredom (Wenger, 2011; Malizia, 2018).

In this study, it seems a logical explanation that the offered recreation activities in Arar city were boring to juvenile delinquents compared to non-juvenile delinquents, and they were not satisfied with their optimal arousal or stimulation to be as a legal alternative in delinquency behaviors. This idea was supported by the present study's findings that juvenile delinquents reported a significantly higher role of PRA on delinquency prevention than did non-juvenile delinquents, because they may feel that the absence of preferred and exciting recreation activities have led them to delinquency behaviors and caused their current situation as prisoners.

### CONTRIBUTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

There are some shortcomings in the current study. First, the cross-sectional design used in this study may have a generation effect, which to some extent weakens the credibility of the causal role of PRA in preventing delinquency. Second, this study adopts the "descriptive method" with adolescents and a questionnaire for measurement. This research method is relatively simple. In the future, this research can be further verified by using an experimental method to explore the actual effect of designed recreation programs based on juvenile delinquents' needs and explore its effect on reducing the levels of delinquency behaviors.

Despite these limitations, the present study provides some valuable information to the related literature and has important practical implications. Based on the delinquency prevention theory, this study introduced the PRA as a socially acceptable outlet for juvenile delinquents rather than involvement of delinquency. This suggestion is supported by literature which found that less leisure boredom was related to preferred types of recreation involvement, particularly those of high-risk recreational activities for high thrill-seekers (Guszkowska and Bołdak, 2010; Bołdak and Guszkowska, 2016; Klinar et al., 2017).

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a number of recommendations based on the conclusion of this study:

- i. Juvenile delinquents and non-juvenile delinquents scored a strong role of recreation activities in preventing delinquency. Hence, this study recommended that participation in recreation activities may provide a socially acceptable outlet for adolescents rather than the engagement of delinquency behaviors. These recreation activities should be based on their own preferences or self-determination to meet their recreation needs.
- ii. Juvenile delinquents scored the role of PRA for delinquency prevention by providing thrill-seekers with an optimal level of arousal and reducing leisure boredom with a significantly higher number than did non-juvenile delinquents. Therefore, recreation professionals should consider what recreation activities could be offered to meet the optimal arousal



level of thrill-seekers, and satisfy their needs for enjoyment and excitement, which in turn reduce leisure boredom delinquency behaviors.

- iii. There is a great need to conduct an experimental study in order to examine the actual effect of recreation program designed based on juvenile delinquents' needs in reducing delinquency behavior levels.

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