

INDIVIDUAL ATTRIBUTES MECHANICS IN THE EFFECT OF LIFE SKILLS TRAINING ON BEHAVIOUR MODIFICATION OF JUVENILE DELINQUENTS IN ELDORET AND KAKAMEGA REHABS

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ABSTRACT: *There is a growing concern with the growth and prevalence of Juvenile delinquents (JD) in rehabilitation centres in Kenya. Juvenile delinquency has become an intricate social problem that significantly influences all members and processes of a social structure. In January 2016, Eldoret Juvenile Remand Home alone had 155 juveniles which is its full capacity. It is against this background that this study examined psychotherapeutic interventions in behaviour modification of JD and recommended measures that would increase the effectiveness of psychotherapeutic interventions in rehabilitation centers of JDs in Kenya. The purpose of the study was establish effect of life skills training and behaviour modification of juvenile delinquents in Eldoret and Kakamega rehabs. The area of study was Eldoret and Kakamega rehabs. The study adopted Glaser Psychological Reality Theory on Maladaptive Behaviour and Merton Functional Theory of Juvenile Delinquency as the theoretical framework. Further a conceptual framework was also used in the study. The study used descriptive and explanatory research survey designs. The target population was comprised of delinquents in Kakamega and Eldoret Rehabs, administrators, trainers and counselors in the rehabs and probation officers. A sample size of 149 respondents comprising of 127 JD, 13 trainers, 5 probation officers, 2 counselors and 2 administrators of the Eldoret and Kakamega rehabs participated in the study. Saturated sampling catered for the delinquents, probation officers, rehab administrators and trainers. Research instruments that were used in this study included questionnaires, interview schedule and document analysis. A Pilot study was carried out to ascertain validity and reliability of the instruments and a reliability coefficient of 0.7 was deemed acceptable. Descriptive statistical tools and inferential statistics were used for data analysis. Study findings showed that life skills training had a positive and significant effect on behaviour modification. This implies that life skills training is an important tool in bringing discipline among juvenile delinquents and for overall rehabilitation programmes which can enhance behaviour modification. There is therefore need for psychotherapeutic intervention at both individual and group level for delinquents so that they can change their behaviour. There is thus need for life skill training so as to reduce violence, aggression, and destructive behaviour in adolescents. Thus there is need for psychotherapeutic interventions for behaviour modification of delinquents in Kenyan rehabilitation centers.*

KEYWORDS: Individual attributes, life skills training, juvenile delinquents, Eldoret, Kakamega

INTRODUCTION

The challenge of juvenile delinquency is fast becoming more and more complex and global. Furthermore, programmes aimed at prevention of crime are either ill equipped to address the current realities or such programmes are non-existent. Many developing nations have not done much to address such challenges and international programmes are not enough. Generally, the current activities to fight juvenile delinquency are described by the absence of systematic action and the lack of task-oriented and effective psychotherapeutic interventions with the offenders, whether real or potential. Therefore, the current study sought to address the effects of psychotherapeutic interventions applied on behaviour modification of juvenile delinquents in Eldoret and Kakamega rehabs.

The Children's Department in the Ministry of Labour Social Security and Services faces difficulties in rehabilitating juvenile delinquents due to the rapid increase in the numbers of delinquents and young offenders in Kenya. The juvenile justice system places them in rehabilitation centers with the hope that when given close supervision by the law enforcers' delinquency will reduce. Eldoret and Kakamega are examples of towns that host such rehabilitation centers. However, on reintegration into their families and society some of them resume their delinquent behaviour. In addition, there are still many juveniles in the streets of Eldoret and Kakamega as well as in Kenya as a whole something that creates concern on what can be done in regard to bringing juvenile delinquents to the mainstream of the society. This study examined the psychotherapeutic interventions used by therapists/counselors for behaviour modification among delinquents in Eldoret and Kakamega rehabilitation centers in Kenya.

Although many studies have been done on juvenile delinquents in Kenya, for example, a study done by Odera (2013) in Nairobi which indicated that the rehabilitation programmes for the juvenile delinquents in Kenya were carried out in deplorable conditions which have greatly affected the juveniles' rehabilitation process; psychotherapeutic interventions and its effects on behaviour modification among juvenile delinquents had not been explored yet the existence of juvenile delinquents has remained a threat to the society. In essence, there is no empirical evidence from the literature the present researcher came across to show that delinquency can be addressed through psychotherapeutic interventions in childhood. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to address the above gap examining psychotherapeutic interventions and their effects on behaviour modification of delinquents in rehabilitation institutions in Eldoret and Kakamega towns in Kenya.

Research Hypothesis

The study thus sought to test the following null hypothesis:

H₀: Life skills training has no significant effect on behaviour modification of juvenile delinquents in Eldoret and Kakamega rehabs

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study was based on the Functional Theory of Juvenile Delinquency. William (2000) built on Merton's (1957) theory and describes Functional theory of juvenile delinquency as the results of a bad rapport between goals and the legal ways of achieving them. Merton (1957) stressed on two types of social and cultural structure that is culturally defined goals and the acceptable means to their achievement. He asserted that the society's success goals are widely shared, while the means of or opportunities for attaining them are not. According to Khromina (2007) functional theory investigated how social order is maintained and created through the maintenance and promotion of societal institutions such rehabilitation centres. In addition, Khromina argued that functionalism devote much attention to the phenomenon of social change which is a process of 'evolution' in which social institutions(rehabilitation centres) become highly functional through their differentiation as well as their adaptation of common norm. This theory explains why some youth become delinquents and why others are more delinquent than others. The lower class is said to have a higher rate of delinquent behaviour than the upper and middle classes. The upper and middle classes also experience delinquency but to a lesser extent compared to the lower class.

This theory was relevant to the present study in that most juvenile delinquents in the rehabilitation institutions are from the lower economic strata of society (Oliver, 2000).The lower class is characterized by extreme poverty, most families living in abject poverty. This deprives them from attaining their basic goals in life which may lead to frustration. Most children are neglected by their parents because they cannot afford to feed them. As a result, children resort to illegal means like stealing to satisfy their hunger drive. However, it is essential to put into focus that the children of the middle class and upper class are also delinquents but their delinquency is covered as their parents use their resources to bail them out. This study fits into this theory in that, improving counselor child efficacy reduces delinquency. Children are sensitized on the need to respect other people thus disengaging from wrong behaviour like stealing or fighting and channel their energy to productive activities

The Research Design

In this study, explanatory and descriptive research surveys were adopted. Cooper and Schindler (2000) indicate that explanatory research survey focuses on why questions. In answering the 'why' questions, the study is involved in developing causal explanations. The explanations argue that phenomenon Y (behaviour modification) is affected by variable X (psychotherapeutic interventions). These designs were chosen because they were relevant to the research objectives of the study and were practical in testing the study hypotheses. In trying to investigate the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable, the study did not manipulate the psychotherapeutic interventions and behaviour modification; the independent and dependent variables. They had already occurred. The challenge thus, was on how to control variance, when

one has no control over the variables. The study did not control variance by direct manipulation or by random assignment. Explanatory research survey is used to refer to a research whereby, other than creating the treatment, examines the effect of a naturally occurring treatment after it has occurred (Kumar, 2005). In other words, it is a research design that attempts to discover the pre-existing causal conditions between variables. On the other hand, Bechhofer & Paterson (2008) note that descriptive research tries to verify formulated hypotheses that refer to the present situation in order to elucidate it.

Study target Population

The target population comprised of all juvenile delinquents who were incarcerated in the two selected rehabilitation centers in Eldoret and Kakamega. These includes; Kimumu Probation Hostel (KPH) hosting 47 delinquents and Kakamega Rehabilitation School (KRS) with 80 delinquents. This gave a total of 127 juveniles. The study also targeted 2 administrators from the juvenile institutions, 13 trainers and 2 counselors. Further, 5 probation officers were be included in the study.

Table 1 Target Population

| | Juvenile delinquents | Trainers | Counselors | Probation officers | Administrators |
|--------------|----------------------|-----------|------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Eldoret | 47 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 |
| Kakamega | 80 | 9 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Total | 127 | 13 | 2 | 5 | 2 |

Sampling Procedures and Sample Size

Newman (2000) argues that the main element to consider in establishing the sample size is the need to keep it manageable enough. The current study used saturated sampling technique (Sampling until no new information emerges) to include all the 127 delinquents in the two juvenile institutions that are, KPH and KRS, 5 probation officers, 2 counselor 13 trainers and 2 administrators due to their inadequate numbers. According to Mugenda (2003) a big sample enables the researcher to reduce the sampling error. Therefore, the researcher has to always use a big sample. In this study therefore all the above respondents were included to constitute the sample. This gave a total of 149 respondents.

Data Collection Instruments

The researcher used triangulation strategy to harvest data from the respondents. Three research instruments were used to authenticate the collected information. The research instruments that were used in the study includes: interview schedule, questionnaire and document analysis.

DATA AND RESULTS

Association between Demographic Factors and Life Skills Training

The study used chi square to evaluate how age, number of years juvenile had been the rehab and number of times delinquent have been arrested are associated with life skills training. The findings are presented in table 2

Table 2 Association between Demographic Factors and Life Skills Training

| | | | Descriptive | | ANOVA | | Chi-Square Tests | |
|------------------------|-------------------|--|-------------|----------------|-------|-------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| | | | Mean | Std. Deviation | F | Sig. | Pearson Chi-Square | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
| Age of the delinquents | less than 8yrs | | 4.7 | . | 0.309 | 0.819 | 123.859a | 0.003 |
| | 8-12yrs | | 3.86 | 1.11265 | | | | |
| | 13-17yrs | | 3.9404 | 0.90912 | | | | |
| | above 17yrs | | 3.76 | 0.74364 | | | | |
| | Total | | 3.9358 | 0.90375 | | | | |
| Years in rehab | 1 yr. or less | | 3.9727 | 0.91812 | 0.526 | 0.592 | 100.111a | 0.000 |
| | 2-4yrs | | 3.8755 | 0.89376 | | | | |
| | more than 7 yrs. | | 4.7 | . | | | | |
| | Total | | 3.9358 | 0.90375 | | | | |
| Number Of Times | once | | 0 | 0 | 2.012 | 0.038 | 67.665a | 0.137 |
| | 3 times | | 4.0549 | 0.74254 | | | | |
| | 5 times | | 3.8808 | 1.15655 | | | | |
| | more than 5 times | | 3.6304 | 0.99838 | | | | |
| | Total | | 3.9358 | 0.90375 | | | | |

Source: Survey Data (2016)

Findings indicated that $F(3, 95) = 0.309$, $p > 0.05$ shows that there are no significant differences between the effect of the life skills training on the age groups of the delinquents, while $\chi^2(2, N = 100) = 123.859$, $p < 0.05$ indicates that life skills training are related with age groups of the delinquents. The findings concurs with Cauce *et al.*, (2002) that age has role to play in help seeking process, these studies have shown that adolescents underutilize life skill training services.

There was association between life skills and the time spent in rehab by the delinquents as shown by (χ^2 (2, N = 100) = 100.111, $p < 0.05$). Moreover findings showed that there are no significant differences between the effect of the indicates that the effect of the sports programs is equally not distributed according to the number of years in rehab (F (2, 96) = 0.526, $p > 0.05$). This is because more stay in rehab allows juvenile delinquents the opportunity to work on the root causes of the addiction. In order for juvenile a delinquent to successfully overcome an addiction, he must understand why he is addicted. Unlike shorter programs, a longer rehabilitation program allows the addict to explore his reasons for becoming dependent on a substance.

The study also showed that there are significant differences between the effect of the life skill training and the frequency of law transgression (F (2, 96) = 2.012, $p < 0.05$) and that life skill training and the frequency of law transgression are related (χ^2 (2, N = 100) = 67.665, $p > 0.05$). This indicates that those delinquents with high frequency of law transgression are likely to receive less attention from the counselors.

Life Skills Training on Behaviour Modification

The second objective of the study was to establish how life skills training among juvenile delinquent affect their behaviour modification. Thus, the study first assessed if there are any life skills training in the rehabilitation centres under the study.

Attendance of Life Skills Training

The findings for number of juvenile delinquents who have attended life skills training programs are presented in fig. 1

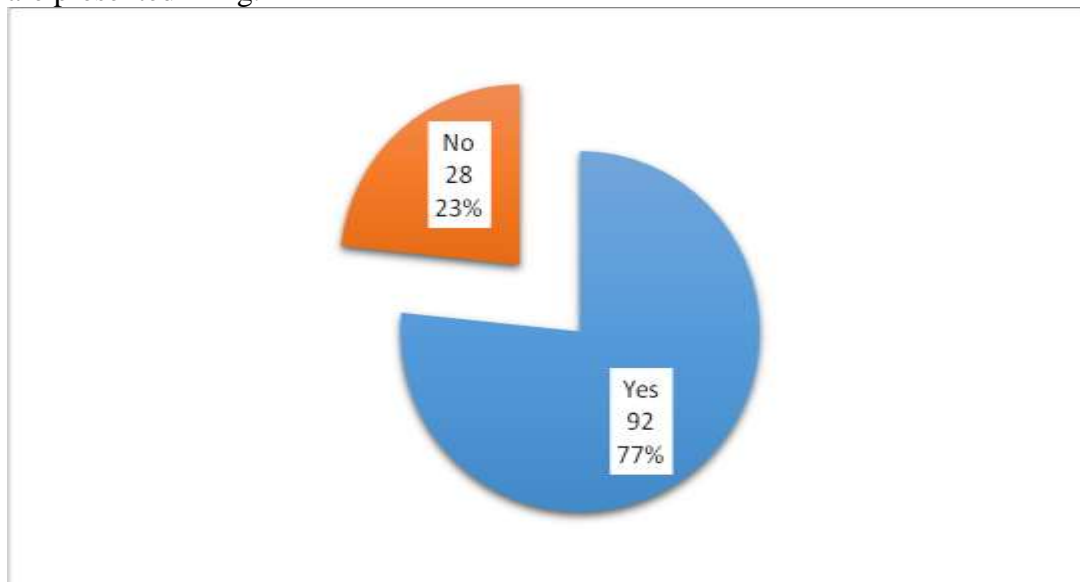


Figure 1 Number of Delinquents attending life skill training

From figure 1 it can be noted that most 92(77%) of the juvenile delinquents had received life skills training. While 28(23%) had not experienced any life skill training. In addition, various life skill training attended by juvenile delinquents was presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Life Skill Training Approaches attended By Juvenile Delinquents

| | Frequency | Percent |
|------------------|-----------|---------|
| Pictures | 97 | 80.8 |
| Animals | 56 | 46.7 |
| Humans | 45 | 37.5 |
| Symbols | 44 | 36.7 |
| Poems | 66 | 55 |
| Drama activities | 94 | 78.3 |
| Bible | 69 | 57.5 |

Source: Survey Data (2016)

From table 3, the life skill training attended by Juvenile delinquents were on pictures 97(80.8%), drama activities 94(78.3%), the Bible 69(57.5%), Poems 66(55%), animals 56(46.7%), humans 45(37.5%) and symbols 44(36.7%).

Life Skills Training interventions

Life skills training is associated with declined verbal aggression, physical aggression, fighting and delinquency (NREPP, 2008). In light of this, the researcher found it necessary to establish the effect of life skills training on behaviour modification among the delinquents. Table 4 highlights the results. As evidenced in the findings, the training the respondents have received using pictures has helped them to remember many things they need to change in their life (mean = 4.37, SD = 0.869). By using animals or humans as examples in teaching, their correction officers make them comprehend things easily (mean = 4.18, SD = 0.898).

Table 4 Life Skills Training on Behaviour Modification

| | | SD | D | N | A | SA | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|--|-------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|-------------------|
| The training I have received using pictures, help me to remember many things I need to change in my life | Freq. | 2 | 4 | 7 | 42 | 65 | 4.37 | 0.869 |
| | % | 1.7 | 3.3 | 5.8 | 35 | 54.2 | | |
| By using animals or humans as examples in teaching, my corrections officers make me comprehend things easily | Freq. | 1 | 7 | 12 | 49 | 51 | 4.18 | 0.898 |
| | % | 0.8 | 5.8 | 10 | 40.8 | 42.5 | | |
| When my correction officers use drama activities in teaching us, am able to spell and write words | Freq. | 2 | 8 | 15 | 43 | 52 | 4.13 | 0.984 |
| | % | 1.7 | 6.7 | 12.5 | 35.8 | 43.3 | | |
| We are trained by use of poem which help me to construct sentences easily | Freq. | 4 | 13 | 19 | 30 | 54 | 3.98 | 1.163 |
| | % | 3.3 | 10.8 | 15.8 | 25 | 45 | | |
| Am train using symbols, am able to pronounce words | Freq. | 0 | 9 | 13 | 37 | 61 | 4.25 | 0.928 |
| | % | 0 | 7.5 | 10.8 | 30.8 | 50.8 | | |
| We are encouraged to role play, which increase my cognitive skills | Freq. | 4 | 5 | 12 | 28 | 71 | 4.31 | 1.035 |
| | % | 3.3 | 4.2 | 10 | 23.3 | 59.2 | | |
| We attend church service outside the home, which has helped me to read Bible and understand religion | Freq. | 5 | 1 | 7 | 21 | 86 | 4.52 | 0.961 |
| | % | 4.2 | 0.8 | 5.8 | 17.5 | 71.7 | | |
| We are allowed to interact freely with our neighbors, which enhances my self esteem | Freq. | 1 | 3 | 7 | 42 | 67 | 4.43 | 0.785 |
| | % | 0.8 | 2.5 | 5.8 | 35 | 55.8 | | |
| We are normally engaged in collecting waste in adjacent estates which has helped me become responsible | Freq. | 6 | 13 | 14 | 27 | 60 | 4.02 | 1.23 |
| | % | 5 | 10.8 | 11.7 | 22.5 | 50 | | |
| We are offered some vocational training such as carpentry and others | Freq. | 2 | 2 | 2 | 29 | 85 | 4.61 | 0.759 |
| | % | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 24.2 | 70.8 | | |

Source: Survey Data (2016)

Further, when their correction officers use drama activities in teaching, the respondents are able to spell and write words (mean = 4.13, SD = 0.984). As well, they are trained by use of poem which helps them to construct sentences easily (mean = 3.98, SD = 1.163). They are also trained using symbols hence they are able to pronounce words (mean = 4.25, SD = 0.928). The findings

agrees with WHO (2010) that life skills training is an evidence-based substance abuse and violence prevention program designed to be implemented in juveniles delinquent. Life skill training incorporates age-appropriate and culturally relevant information, facilitated discussion, and structured activities at the rehabs. In addition to helping delinquents resist drug, alcohol, and tobacco use, life skill training effectively help to reduce violence and other high-risk behaviours. In addition, delinquents are encouraged to role play, which increases their cognitive skills (mean = 4.31, SD = 1.035). Besides, church service attendance has helped them to read the Bible and understand religion (mean = 4.52, SD = 0.961). Delinquents are also allowed to interact freely with their neighbours hence enhancing their self-esteem (mean = 4.43, SD = 0.785). Other than interacting freely with neighbours, they are engaged in collecting waste in adjacent estates which has helped them to become responsible (mean = 4.02, SD = 1.23). Additionally, they are offered vocational training such as carpentry and others (mean = 4.61, SD = 0.759). In so doing, their social and emotional competencies improve. Various studies have been carried out by different scholars on the effects of life skills. Majority of these scholars have concluded that life skills training at different ages (especially teens) were effective and cause to the fundamental changes in their character. Navidi (2006) argued that due to the complexity of the current society, counseling services do not completely reach to the targets of moral, spiritual, cultural, social and psychological necessary growth and, most importantly, do not acquire the required preparation to practice the responsibilities and experiences of adult life. Therefore, it is necessary that juvenile's delinquents acquire necessary abilities and skills to achieve the stated goals. Among these Life Skills Training program is a valid program that in the primary prevention level emphasis on enhancement and strengthen of social abilities.

Concurrently, a report by WHO, (2009) revealed that interventions for making good life skills can aid young people to get rid of violence by providing them with employment activities. Similarly, Rezaei, Malekpour and Arizi (2009), stipulate that teaching life skills has led to controlling stress in the juvenile. Further, Barati *et al.* (2011), note that life skill training reduces use of drugs and practice of delinquent behaviour. Similarly, according to WHO (2009), life skills can prevent aggression, improve social skills, boost educational achievement and improve job prospects. Further, an empirical study conducted by Nazarpour, Poureisa and Daghighi (2010), concluded that attendance of LST workshops has great impact on cognitive skills development and therefore is necessary for all.

Trainers reported that some life skills training offered helped the juveniles to:

- i. *Broaden the juvenile's self-knowledge*
- ii. *To create awareness of factors which influence the self-concept*
- iii. *To allow juveniles to reflect on how their contact with the criminal justice system has influenced their self-concept*
- iv. *To promote and motivate self-acceptance and a positive attitude towards oneself*
- v. *To make juveniles aware of the importance of responsible decision-making*

- vi. *To make the correlation between decision-making and crime, self-concepts and assertive behaviour*
- vii. *To examine the influence of peer pressure on decision-making*
- viii. *To begin the process of constructive decision-making and planning for future goals*

This is true based on Alami (2008) argument that teaching life skills to help the individual gain control of his/her life, self-assertion, and self-confidence as well as alter the individual's motivation is highly beneficial, and is helpful to prepare the individual to make substantial changes in addictive behaviour in order to reach balance in his life. On the same note, Gussak, (2007) contended that life skill programs through creativity improve the mood and well- being of inmates significantly compared to those who don't receive an arts treatment, (as well as art programs) reduce depression of inmates. Also, inmates might enjoy themselves while creating art. Through experiences and training individuals can learn to manage the complex relationship between behaviour, feelings and thoughts. To change the behaviour of a person it is necessary to first change the way they think.

However, despite the life skills training services being available in rehabilitation centres in Kenya, information derived from the interview schedule indicated challenges faced in implementing the programme. For example one of the trainers expressed that:

"Some of the problems we face here is poor facilities such as buildings set up and instruments which have stood for a long period as a challenge to implementation of life skills such as drama. Even if I want to use music to train the children, there is no musical instrument"

One probation officer said that:

"Creative arts workshops are working on the goals and life-skills, but they're not having them clear. The officer also says that in his opinion the volunteers didn't seem to have a clear understanding of what the goals are, and how to work towards them, it was never communicated. It looked like the goals for the day were randomly chosen, there was no structure for the program interventions."

Another Probation Officer said that:

"Working towards achieving life-skills through arts is good because the boys are working with the topic in a creative way, so they have to think about it"

Life Skills and behaviour modification

Furthermore, Daemi (2009) posits that life skills can organize a person in a way to bring that person in terms with good behavior. This means that life skill training reduces violence, aggression and destructive behaviour. According to the study findings, the training the respondents have received using pictures has helped them to remember a number of things they need to change in their life. The use of animals or humans as examples in teaching has made it easier to comprehend things. As well, the use of drama activities in teaching by the correction officers has made it possible for the juvenile delinquents to spell and write words. Poems are also used to construct sentences easily and symbol to pronounce words. Delinquents are encouraged

to role play which has increased their cognitive skills. Reading the bible has made them understand religion. Delinquents are also offered with vocational training such as carpentry and are allowed to interact freely with neighbors. In so doing, delinquents have become responsible since they engage in collecting waste in adjacent estates.

CONCLUSION

Also, study findings have shown that life skills training have a positive and significant effect on behaviour modification. Life skills training are effective in enabling individuals to decide whether or not they should engage in certain behaviours. It lessens stress, prevents risky behavior and preventing alcohol and drug abuse. Moreover, life skill training reduces the use of drugs and practice of delinquent behaviour. The studies have shown that life skills are of great importance to juvenile delinquent behaviour modification.

Recommendations

Life skills training have positive effect on behaviour modification. It enables delinquents to make their decisions with alertness, make relationships effectively and prevents risky behaviour. There is thus need for life skill training so as to reduce violence, aggression, and destructive behaviour in adolescents. In order to make it easier to construct sentences easily and symbols to pronounce words there is need to use poems. Further, role play can be used to increase the cognitive skills in delinquents. In the same way, vocational training will go a long way in helping delinquents change their behaviour. Likewise, there is a need to revive the technical studies in the juvenile centers to occupy juveniles who are not interested in pursuing formal education such that on their resettlement to their former families they are useful persons and independent. Policymakers will have to be assisted by experts in evidence-based practices in designing and implementing the reforms required. To empower the juvenile offenders with these life-skills it is very important that all the volunteers and staff-members are informed. They have to know which life-skills have to be achieved and how to work towards achieving them. Also there should be a test or tool to measure if the participants have actually achieved the life- skills.

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