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### **Maladaptive Behaviour among Young Larceny Offenders**

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Studies suggested that Larceny or theft crime appear fairly common among adolescents and young adults associated with addictive, antisocial and environmental influences. For better insight the Crime needs to be divided into separate behaviour categories and investigated. The objectives of the present study were to determine maladaptive behaviours predominant among young offenders committing theft crimes and to identify familial risk factor for acquiring their maladaptive behaviours. The study comprised a sample of 50 young male adults committed theft crimes in the age group 18years to 23years. Purposive sampling technique was used to collect data. Problem Behaviour Survey Schedule (PBSS) was used to study maladaptive behaviours in 11 domains. Percentage analysis was done for domain analysis. The Findings indicate presence of externalizing problem behaviours. The domain analysis, revealed highest frequency and intensity of maladaptive behaviours based on severe and clinical significance, were reported for Antisocial behaviour(70%), Violent -destructive behaviours (60%), Any Others(62%) and Misbehaviour with others(48%). The least number of problem behaviours were reported for temper tantrum and fears. Familial factors were identified using content analysis. The predominant expectations of young offenders from their parents were: love, care and give affectionate, followed by fulfilling their needs; not abuse alcohol and fight, but be responsible role model, guide and friend; to check their maladaptive behaviours through firm parenting and not strict parenting thereby protecting their self-respect. Lack of any of these qualities in their parents could be high risk factors for their maladaptive behaviour.

**KEYWORDS;** Maladaptive behaviours, Larceny offenders, familial factors

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## **INTRODUCTION**

A large epidemiological study of adults found that 11.3% of the general population admitted to having shoplifted in their lifetimes<sup>1</sup>. This finding is consistent with estimates by the National Association of Shoplifting Prevention that 1 in 11 (9.1%) people have shoplifted during their lifetime<sup>2</sup>. Stealing in adults has been associated with other antisocial behaviors, psychiatric comorbidity (e.g., substance use disorders, pathological gambling, and bipolar disorder), and impaired psychosocial functioning<sup>1</sup>. Larceny means the wrongful taking and carrying away of the personal goods of another from his or her possession with intent to convert them to the taker's own use<sup>3</sup>. One of the major ways that deviant youth become even more deviant is through unrestricted interaction with deviant peers<sup>4</sup>. The habitual thief may appear to suffer from a compulsion 'kleptomania'. He may be seen as resorting to stealing as a way to "feel better" while coping with depression or adverse circumstances over which he has no control. Perhaps a person steals to boost his self-esteem<sup>5</sup>. Socrates says that no one knowingly commits an evil action, evil is turned into good in the mind. The thief, like the pedophile, who convinces himself the child really wants to make love to him, convinces himself that he has a right to the object he desires. He needs it more than the other does. It is rightfully his. It is easier to steal from someone who seems well-endowed, has so much more<sup>6</sup>.

Behaviourists believe firmly that all behaviours – whether skill or problem behaviours – both are learned. The maladaptive or problem behaviours are learnt as a function or benefit which the indulger receives through his or her behaviour from the environment<sup>7</sup>. Some common benefits derived by a person from people or their environment may be tangible reward, attention, praises, edibles, money, preferred activities etc., Sometimes behaviours are learned if it helps them to escape the burden of doing something which they dislike or do not want to perform. Behaviourists strongly believe that appropriate environmental manipulation can indeed alter any or all behaviours<sup>7</sup>. To get better insight the Crime needs to be divided into separate behaviour categories and investigated not as legal abstraction<sup>8</sup>. It is the purpose of the present study to investigate theft as a type of behaviour that presupposes the psychosocial background exhibiting a syndrome that is different from other antisocial acts.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### ***Objectives***

The objectives of the present study were (i) to determine the maladaptive behaviours predominant among young offenders committing theft crimes between the age group 18yrs to 23yrs

and (ii) to identify the familial factors which could have been the risk factor for acquiring their maladaptive behaviours.

### ***Sample Selection and Sampling Technique***

The study comprises a sample of 50 young male adults belonging to the age group between 18years to 23years. Inclusion criteria: offenders who have committed theft crimes. Offenders from Remand or under trial for having committed only theft crimes and expressed willingness for modification of their behaviour were included. Exclusion Criteria: crimes including burglary, murder, rape, incest and unwilling offenders were excluded. This offense was selected instead of others because of (i)its great prevalence,(ii) It generally marks the first commencement of criminal career.(iii) it rules out presence of great abnormalities expected in other crimes like murder, rape, incest etc., Purposive sampling technique was used to collect the data. Ex-post facto Research Design was used.

### ***Description of the Tool***

The Assessment tool Problem Behaviour Survey Schedule(PBSS) by <sup>3</sup>(Venkatesan, 2015) consisting of 104 items was used to study maladaptive behaviours for the following 11 domains :Violent -Destructive Behaviour\*, Temper Tantrum\*, Misbehaviour with others\*, Rebellious Behaviour\*, Antisocial Behaviour\* Self-injurious behaviour+, Repetitive Behaviour+, Odd Behaviour+, Hyperactivity+, Fear+, and Any other (\*symbol Indicates externalizing problem behaviour and +symbol indicates internalizing problem behaviour).

The familial background and expectations from their parents were explored and identified by asking two open ended questions.

### ***Reliability and Validity***

Cronbach's alpha correlation coefficients of reliability between domains varied between 0.18 and 0.89.The internal consistency for overall scale was 0.55.

### ***Statistical Analysis***

Percentage analysis was done for domain analysis.

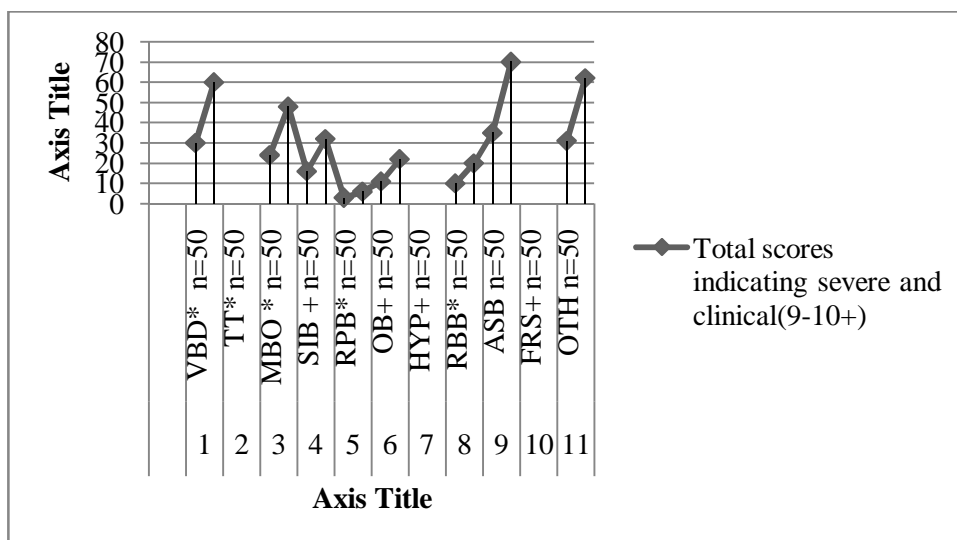
Familial factors and expectations from their parents were identified by analysing the responses given by the young offenders to the two open ended questions.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

**Table 1 Shows Frequency Scores based on Domain analysis for 50 larceny young male offenders in age group 18 to 23yrs**

S . N o	PBSS Domains	Frequency Scores and Interpretation based on PBSS Norms					Total scores (indicating severe and clinical)(9-10+)		
		Below 5	5 - 6	7 - 8	9 - 10	10 +			
		Normal	Mild	Moderate	Severe	Clinical			
1 .	VBD* n=50	6	7	7	6	2	4	3	0
	V B D * %	1 2	1 4	1 4	1 2	4	8	6	0
2 .	TT* n=50	4	5	5					
	T T * %	9 0	1 0						
3 .	MBO* n=50	1	0	4	1	2	5	1	9
	M B O * %	2 0	8	2 4	1 0	3	8	4	8
4 .	SIB+ n=50	2	2	6	6	6	1	0	1
	S I B + %	4 4	1 2	1 2	1 2	2	0	3	2
5 .	RPB* n=50	2	0	1	5	1	2		3
	R P B * %	4 0	3 0	2 4	2	4		6	
6 .	OB+ n=50	1	8	9	1	2	8	3	1
	O B + %	3 6	1 8	2 4	1 6	6	6	2	2
7 .	HYP+ n=50	4	5	5					
	H Y P + %	9 0	1 0						
8 .	RBB* n=50	2	1	1	0	9	7	3	1
	R B B * %	4 2	2 0	1 8	1 4	6	6	2	0
9 .	ASB n=50	5	2	8	6	2	9	3	5
	A S B * %	1 0	4	1 6	1 2	5	8	7	0
1 0 .	FRS+ n=50	4	3	6	1				
	F R S + %	8 6	1 2	2					
1 1 .	OTH n=50	7	4	8	6	2	5	3	1
	O T H %	1 4	8	1 6	1 2	5	0	6	2

(KEY: (VBD: Violent-Destructive Behaviour; TT: Temper Tantrums; MBO: Misbehaviour with Others; SIB: Self Injurious Behaviour; RPB: Repetitive behaviours; OB: Odd Behaviours, HYP: Hyperactivity; RBB: Rebellious Behaviour; ASB:Anti-Social Behaviours; FRS: Fears; OTH: others) \* indicate externalizing problem behaviours; + indicate internalizing problem behaviours)



**Fig 1 Frequency scores and their percentages on Domain Analysis of young offenders**

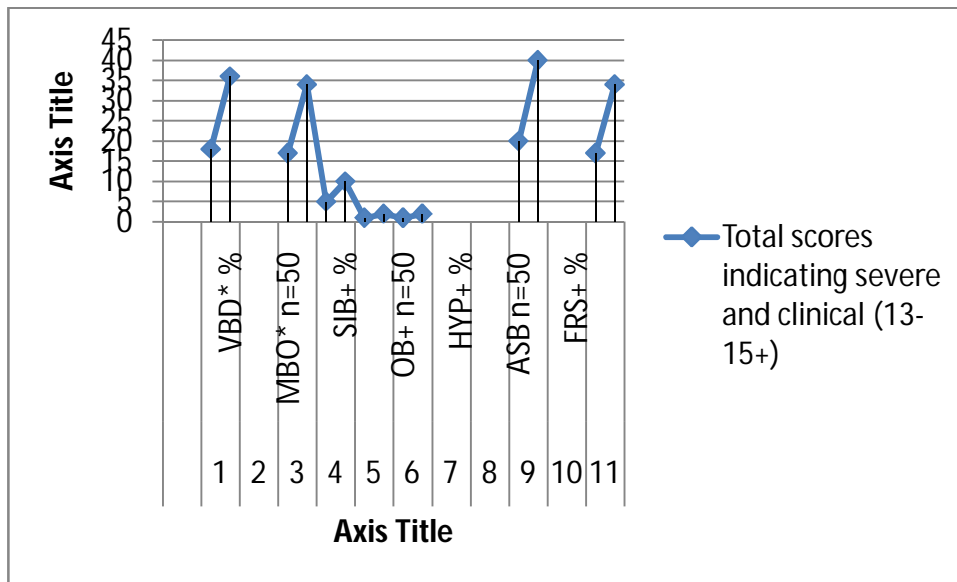
The table 1 depicts the Frequency Scores and their corresponding percentage with the Interpretation based on the Norms of PBSS. The frequency percentage was found to be highest in Anti-Social Behaviour (N:35 out of 50; 70%), followed by Other Behaviours (N:31 out of 50; 62%), Violent-Destructive Behaviour (N:30 out of 50; 60%), Misbehaviour with Others (N:24 out of 50; 48%) and Self Injurious Behaviour (N:16 out of 50; 32%). Frequency percentage in the severe and clinically significant levels was found to be least in Hyperactivity, Temper tantrums, Odd behaviours, Repetitive behaviours, Rebellious Behaviour and Fears domains though found to be present in mild and moderate levels.

The Externalizing problem behaviours frequency percentages were found to be higher than Internalizing problem behaviour in the severe and clinically significant levels.

**Table 2 Shows Intensity Scores based on Domain analysis for 50 larceny young male offenders in age group 18 to 23yrs**

S . N o	PBSS Domains	Intensity Scores I/SCS and Interpretation based on PBSS Norms					Total scores indicating severe and clinical (3-15+)						
		Below 8	9 - 10	11 - 12	13 - 14	15 +							
		Normal	Mild	Moderate	Severe	Clinical							
1	V B D * n=50	2	0	6	6	5	1	3	1	8			
	V B D * %	4	0	1	2	1	2	1	0	2	6	3	6
2	TT * n = 50	5	0										
	TT * %	1	0	0									
3	MBO * n = 50	2	6	5	2	7	1	0	1	0	1	7	7
	M B O * %	5	2	1	0	4	1	4	2	0	3	4	4
4	SIB + n=50	3	4	6	5	5					5		
	S I B + %	6	4	1	2	1	0	1	0		1	0	0
5	RPB * n = 50	4	7	1	1	1					1		
	R P B * %	9	4	2	2	2					2		
6	OB+ n = 50	3	9	8	2	1					1		
	O B + %	7	8	1	6	4	2				2		
7	HYP+ n = 50	5	0										
	H Y P + %	1	0	0									
8	RBB * n = 50	4	0	7	3								
	R B B * %	8	0	1	4	6							
9	ASB n = 50	1	5	6	9	8	1	2	2	2	0	0	0
	A S B * %	3	0	1	2	1	8	1	6	2	4	4	0
10	FRS+ n = 50	5	0										
	F R S + %	1	0	0									
11	OTH n = 50	1	9	6	8	9	8		1	7	7		
	O T H %	3	8	1	2	1	6	1	8	1	6	3	4

-(KEY: (VBD: Violent-Destructive Behaviour; TT: Temper Tantrums; MBO: Misbehaviour with Others; SIB: Self Injurious Behaviour; RPB: Repetitive behaviours; OB: Odd Behaviours, HYP: Hyperactivity; RBB: Rebellious Behaviour; ASB: Anti-Social Behaviours; FRS: Fears; OTH: others) \* indicate externalizing problem behaviours; + indicate internalizing problem behaviours)



**Fig 2 Intensity Scores and their percentages of Domain Analysis of young offenders**

The table 2 depicts the Intensity Scores and their corresponding percentage with the Interpretation based on the Norms of PBSS. The intensity percentage was found to be highest in Anti-Social Behaviour (N:20 out of 50; 40%), followed by Violent-Destructive Behaviour (N:18 out of 50; 36%), Other Behaviours (N:17 out of 50; 34%), Misbehaviour with Others (N:17 out of 50; 34) and Self Injurious Behaviour (N:5 out of 50; 10%) Intensity percentage in the severe and clinically significant levels was found to be least in Hyperactivity, Temper tantrums, Odd behaviours, Repetitive behaviours, Rebellious Behaviour and Fears domains though found to be present in lower intensity levels.

The Externalizing problem behaviours Intensity percentages were found to be higher than Internalizing problem behaviour in the severe and clinically significant levels.

**Table 3 A & 3 B shows the identified familial factors which could have been the risk factor for young offenders in acquiring the maladaptive behaviours 3A:Expectations from mother**

S . N o	Expectations from mother as they expressed	No. of responses
1	L o v e	2
2	A f f e c t i o n	9
3	F u l f i l t h e i r n e e d s	3
4	B e c a r i n g	2
5	P r o v i d e g u i d a n c e	1
6	A d v i c e	8
7	C o r r e c t t h e m	8
8	S e e t h e m a s G o d d e s s	8
9	B e h a p p y	5
1 0	Should not give up their wards while speaking with others	4
1 1	T r e a t a l l t h e i r c h i l d r e n e q u a l l y	4
1 2	B e t r u t h f u l	3
1 3	S o n s h o u l d t a k e c a r e o f h i s m o t h e r	2
1 4	B e f r i e n d l y	1
1 5	S h o u l d f o r g i v e	1
	<b>T o t a l</b>	<b>1 2 1</b>

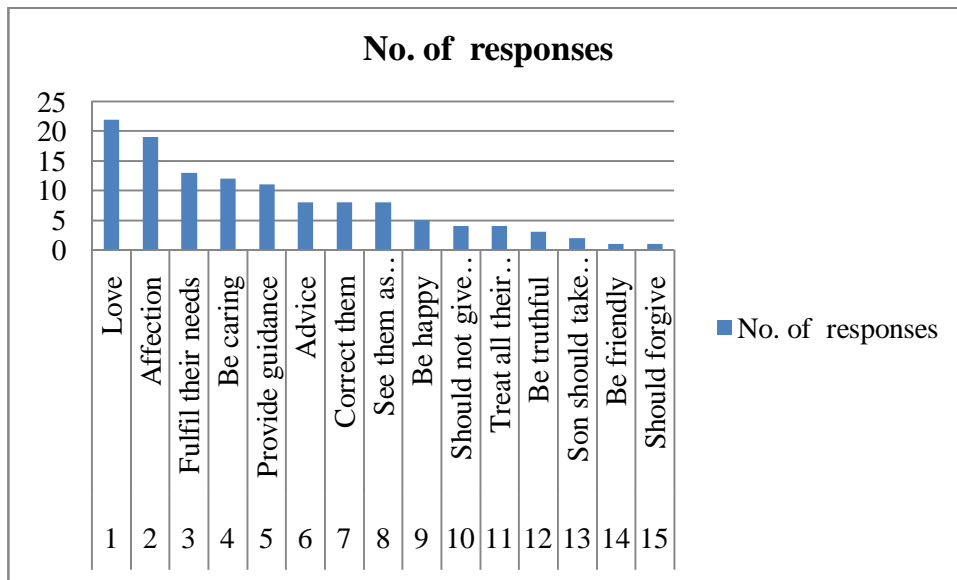


Fig 3 Expectations from mother by young male offenders

Table 3A indicated that Mothers were expected to show love and affection by 22 and 19 responses. This seems to be the predominant expectation from mothers. Followed by satisfy their needs(13), caring (12),guiding(11) ,Advising (8), Correct them(8), Happy(5), maintain their wards self respect(4), Treat all siblings equally(4) be trustworthy(3), Son should take care of mother(2), Be friendly and forgiving(1) are the least expectations.

3B:Expectations from father

S . N o	Expectations from fathers as they expressed	No.of responses
1	M o v e f r i e n d l y	3
2	Should not have addiction towards alcohol or any other substances	3
3	S a t i s f y t h e i r n e e d s	0
4	A f f e c t i o n a t e	9
5	S h o u l d b e r e s p o n s i b l e	8
6	S h o u l d n o t b e a t	7
7	E x p i r e d	7
8	B e c a r i n g	6
9	B e a r o l e m o d e l	5
1 0	f a t h e r i s l i k e G o d f o r m e	4
1 1	G i v e g u i d a n c e	4
1 2	B e s t r i c t a n d c o r r e c t u s	4
1 3	L o v e	3
1 4	G i v e p r o t e c t i o n	3
1 5	Should not give up in front of others	1
1 6	Should not have illegal relationship	1
1 7	B e i n n o c e n t	1
	<b>T o t a l</b>	<b>9 9</b>

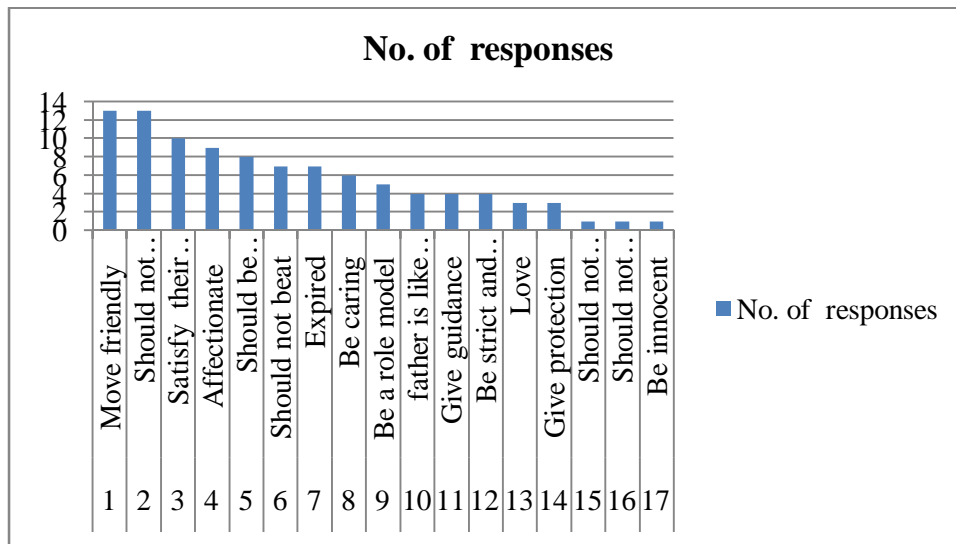


Fig 4 Graphical representation of expectations from father by young male offenders

Table 3B expresses that Fathers were expected to be friendly(13) avoid substance abuse and fights at home(13)fulfil needs(10), love and affection (9), Responsible (8), should not beat(7), expired( 7),caring (6),role model(5)father is like God, be firm, guiding(4), love, protective(3),should not degrade children in front of others , avoid illegal relationship and be innocent (1) are the least expected.

### FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. The frequency percentage was found to be highest in Anti-Social Behaviour (N:35 out of 50; 70%),followed by Other Behaviours (N:31 out of 50; 62%), Violent-Destructive Behaviour(N:30 out of 50; 60%), Misbehaviour with Others(N:24 out of 50; 48) and Self Injurious Behaviour (N:16 out of 50;32%).
2. Frequency percentage in the severe and clinically significant levels was found to be least in Hyperactivity, Temper tantrums, Odd behaviours, Repetitive behaviours, Rebellious Behaviour and Fears domains though found to be present in mild and moderate levels.
3. The intensity percentage was found to be highest in Anti-Social Behaviour (N:20 out of 50; 40%),followed by Violent-Destructive Behaviour(N:18 out of 50; 36%), Other Behaviours (N:17 out of 50; 34%), Misbehaviour with Others(N:17 out of 50; 34) and Self Injurious Behaviour (N:5 out of 50;10%)
4. Intensity percentage in the severe and clinically significant levels was found to be least in Hyperactivity, Temper tantrums, Odd behaviours, Repetitive behaviours, Rebellious Behaviour and Fears domains though found to be present in lower intensity levels.
5. The Externalizing problem behaviours Frequency and Intensity percentages were found to be higher than Internalizing problem behaviour in the severe and clinically significant levels.



6. The predominant expectations of the young male offenders from their parents were: Parents should be loving, caring and affectionate, followed by fulfilling their needs, parents should not abuse alcohol and fight but be responsible, role model, guide and friendly. They also expect their parents to check their maladaptive behaviours through firm parenting and not strict parenting protecting their self-respect. Lack of any of these qualities in their parents could be high risk factors for their maladaptive behaviour

## CONCLUSIONS

The frequency and intensity percentages were found to be highest in Anti-Social Behaviour, followed by Other Behaviours, Violent-Destructive Behaviour, Misbehaviour with Others and Self Injurious Behaviour indicating Externalizing problem behaviours to be higher than Internalizing problem behaviour in the severe and clinically significant levels.

The predominant expectations of the young offenders from their parents were: Parents should be loving, caring and affectionate, followed by fulfilling their needs, parents should not abuse alcohol and fight but be responsible, role model, guide and friendly. They also expect their parents to check their maladaptive behaviours through firm parenting and not strict parenting protecting their self-respect. Lack of any of these qualities in their parents could be high risk factors for their maladaptive behaviour

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