

**EVALUATING DELINQUENT JUVENILES'
REHABILITATION PROGRAMS IN THE
JUVENILE WELFARE DEPARTMENT IN ABU
DHABI**

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UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA

2025

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by

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**Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

May 2025

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Praise be to Allah, lord of the world. And prayers and peace be upon our prophet, Mohammed, peace be upon him. I am thankful to Allah for granting me the strength and patience to finalize the Ph.D. journey.

My dear father and the greatest man in my life and dear to my heart, my support in life, my dear mother, the tender chest and the only refuge when I am weak., My brothers and sisters, my honorable family, and everyone who helped me, even a little, in my academic career. Thank you for standing and supporting me on my educational journey.

I would like to express my warm gratitude and appreciation to my supervisors. I also extend my thanks and gratitude to Datuk Professor Dr. Azlinda Azman and Associate Professor Dr. Paramjit Singh Jamir Singh, they were responsible for my academic trip, and their supervision and giving me time was a great support in presenting my thesis today before you. Thank you for your guidance and advice; they are essential in completing my academic studies.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

WD	Welfare Department
UAE	The United Arab Emirates
JDP	Juvenile Delinquency Programs
HCFA	Health Care Financing Administration
SLT	Social Learning Theory
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
USM	Universiti Sains Malaysia
HRP	Hate Crimes Programs
STAT	Statistical Software for Data Science
RE	Responsiveness and Empathy
JR	Juveniles' Rehabilitation

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**KAEDAH KIMOMETRIK DAN PENGIKTIRAFAN DENGAN
PERMOHONAN UNTUK KAJIAN HUBUNGAN KERJASAMA ALAM
SEKITAR DAN KUANTITATIF**

ABSTRAK

Kenakalan juvana adalah masalah rumit yang memerlukan perhatian yang teliti. Mencegah tingkah laku delinkuen dalam kalangan golongan muda adalah penting dan melibatkan menangani faktor-faktor yang berbeza dan pendekatan yang berpotensi. Khususnya, di Emiriah Arab Bersatu, sebuah negara dengan populasi yang agak muda di mana kanak-kanak merupakan 50% daripada warganegara, kenakalan juvana telah mendapat perhatian khusus. Negara ini telah melaksanakan undang-undang khas untuk juvana dan menubuhkan institusi untuk menjaga delinkuen juvana. Sungguhpun begitu, nampaknya kurangnya minat untuk menilai program-program untuk memulihkan pesalah juvana. Penyelidikan ini memberi tumpuan kepada perkara pentingbertujuan untuk menilai program pemulihan juvana di Jabatan Kebajikan Juvana di Abu Dhabi, Emiriah Arab Bersatu. Program-program ini termasuk penilaian dan penjagaan psikologi, penglibatan sosial dan aktiviti pembinaan komuniti, bimbingan rohani dan pendidikan agama, latihan disiplin dan pendidikan warisan budaya. Penyelidikan ini bertujuan untuk menjana hasil positif dan cadangan untuk meningkatkan tahap kelayakan program-program ini. Kajian ini juga menyelidik program pemulihan untuk pesalah juvana di Jabatan Kebajikan Juvana di Abu Dhabi. Objektif utama termasuk mengkaji keberkesanan program pemulihan juvana terhadap tingkah laku delinkuen juvana di Jabatan Kebajikan Juvana Abu Dhabi, menilai kesan kecekapan kakitangan (kualiti perkhidmatan) ke atas tingkah laku mereka, menyelidik hubungan antara persekitaran persekitaran kemudahan pemulihan dan mereka. tingkah

laku, dan meneroka kesan penyederhanaan faedah program terhadap hubungan antara program pemulihan dan tingkah laku delinkuen juvana di Jabatan Kebajikan Juvana Abu Dhabi. Data dikumpul menggunakan soal selidik berstruktur secara empirikal dan teori yang disokong oleh literatur sedia ada. Data yang dikumpul telah diteliti menggunakan SPSS dan Smart-PLS for Structural Equation Modelling. Sebagai permulaan, kajian ini telah mengkaji pengaruh Program Pemulihan Juvana terhadap hasil kenakalan juvana (tingkah laku). Program yang direka bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kebajikan juvana dan pembangunan tingkah laku, dan hasilnya menunjukkan bahawa program ini memenuhi objektif utama mereka dengan berkesan. Kesan kompetensi kakitangan (Kualiti Perkhidmatan) terhadap hasil (tingkah laku) kenakalan juvana, menimbulkan persoalan tentang kebolegunaan dan keberkesanan prestasi kakitangan dalam mendidik dan menjaga tingkah laku juvana. Seterusnya didapati bahawa persekitaran yang disediakan oleh Jabatan Kebajikan Juvana Abu Dhabi memainkan peranan penting dalam pembangunan tingkah laku juvana. Perubahan positif dan membina dalam tingkah laku mereka adalah disebabkan oleh persekitaran yang menyokong yang diberikan kepada kanak-kanak. Akhir sekali, kesan penyederhanaan faedah program dalam hubungan antara program pemulihan juvana dan hasil kenakalan juvana (tingkah laku) juga kekal tidak ketara. Oleh itu, dapat disimpulkan bahawa pusat pemulihan yang serba lengkap dan menyokong emosi memainkan peranan penting dalam menggalakkan kesejahteraan emosi penghuninya dan mengurangkan tahap tekanan mereka. Selain itu, aktiviti yang bertujuan untuk mengganggu rangkaian kenakalan dan menyediakan strategi pencegahan berulang dalam komuniti menyumbang kepada kejayaan penyepaduan semula pesalah juvana ke dalam masyarakat. Kajian ini menekankan kepentingan faktor peringkat komuniti. Dengan mengutamakan amalan berasaskan bukti dan menawarkan sokongan

menyeluruh sambil menggabungkan faktor peringkat komuniti, pembangunan tingkah laku dan kesejahteraan yang positif boleh dipromosikan dalam kalangan juvana, menyumbang kepada komuniti yang lebih selamat dan masa depan yang lebih optimis

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ABSTRACT

This research focused on this important point, aiming to evaluate the juvenile rehabilitation programs in the Juvenile Welfare Department in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. These programs include psychological evaluation and care, social engagement and community-building activities, spiritual guidance and religious education, discipline training and cultural heritage education. The primary objectives include examining the effectiveness of juvenile rehabilitation programs on the behaviour of juvenile delinquents in Abu Dhabi's juvenile welfare department, assessing the impact of staff competence (service quality) on their behavior, investigating the relationship between the environmental setting of rehabilitation facilities and their behaviour, and exploring the moderating effect of program benefits on the relationship between rehabilitation programs and juvenile delinquents' behaviour in Abu Dhabi's juvenile welfare department. The research used a quantitative design with surveys to collect data from juveniles in rehabilitation programs at the Abu Dhabi Juvenile Welfare Department. The study focused on a sample of juveniles, including participants of various nationalities and age groups (11-17 years). The location of the study was within the rehabilitation centers in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure representation of different subgroups, such as age and nationality, within the overall sample, allowing for accurate and diverse data collection. The stratified random sampling technique was applied by first dividing the overall population of juvenile

delinquents in Abu Dhabi's juvenile welfare department into specific subgroups based on key characteristics, such as age and nationality. These subgroups, or strata, were carefully chosen to reflect the diversity of the population, ensuring that the sample included respondents from each relevant category. This approach ensured that all significant subgroups were adequately represented in the final sample, allowing for a more accurate assessment of the rehabilitation programs' effectiveness across different juvenile demographics. The data was gathered using a structured questionnaire empirically and theoretically supported by existing literature. The gathered data was scrutinized using the SPSS and Smart-PLS for Structural Equation Modelling. The results indicated that these programs effectively fulfil their primary objectives. The effect of Staff Competency (Service Quality) on Juvenile Delinquency Outcome (behaviour) remained insignificant, raising questions about the applicability and effectiveness of staff performance in educating and caring for the behaviour of juveniles. It was further found that the environmental setting provided by Abu Dhabi's juvenile welfare department plays a critical role in the behavioural development of juveniles. The positive and constructive changes in their behaviour were attributed to the supportive environment provided to the children. Finally, the moderating effect of Program Benefits in the relationship between Juvenile Rehabilitation Programs and Juvenile Delinquency Outcome (behaviour) also remained insignificant. Thus, it is concluded that a well-equipped and emotionally supportive rehabilitation centre plays a vital role in promoting the emotional well-being of its residents and reducing their stress levels. By prioritizing evidence-based practices and offering comprehensive support while incorporating community-level factors, positive behavioural development and well-being can be promoted among juveniles, contributing to safer communities and more optimistic futures for these young individuals.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The phenomenon of juvenile delinquency (i.e., youth crime) is an important problem disrupting social order worldwide. It has been and continues to be a fruitful topic for research, especially given the rising rates of juvenile delinquency in most countries worldwide (Reimer & Cresswell, 2018). The impact of this phenomenon can affect individuals and wider society and its development. It results from several factors that have led researchers and experts from different disciplines to search for relevant data to help adequately address the phenomenon or at least mitigate the severity of its negative impact (Al-Karbi & Mai, 4).

According to the United Nations (2010), Juvenile Delinquency Juvenile Delinquency is an intricate and multifaceted problem that demands careful consideration. Preventing delinquent behavior among juveniles is important and requires addressing various factors and potential approaches. Today's young people face challenges that question traditional family, school, and work relationship patterns. The socialization process is being disrupted, and their life paths are becoming more diverse and unpredictable.

Several factors contribute to these challenges. Changes in the labor market, extended periods of young adults relying on their families, and limited opportunities for independent adulthood all affect relationships with family, and friends, education, employment, leisure activities, and lifestyle choices. These issues are not exclusive to developing countries, as developed nations also face pressures on young people during their growth from childhood to independence. In developing countries, rapid population growth, lack of housing and support services, poverty, unemployment, and

the disintegration of family and community structures are some burdens young people must cope with. At the same time, developed countries can have the same scenarios depending on other factors (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2011).

Regardless of gender, social background, or country of residence, today's juveniles face individual risks and opportunities. Some opportunities can be positive, while others may lead to harmful outcomes. Unfortunately, some young individuals resort to illegal activities, drug addiction, and violence against their peers. According to Young et al. (2017), addressing juvenile delinquency is a significant national concern, and tackling it demands understanding the various complexities and circumstances that influence young people's behavior. This includes acknowledging the societal changes affecting their lives and working towards providing them with constructive opportunities and support systems.

Similarly, the problem of juvenile delinquents is one of psychological and social issues facing families, schools, and society, and is of concern to psychologists, sociologists, educators, and legal scholars (Loeber et al., 2003). This problem seems to be increasing and requires interventions for prevention and treatment (Kourgiantakis et al., 2019). Hoffmann and Dufur argue that there are different opinions in the field of juvenile delinquency about the meaning of this term (Hoffmann & Dufur, 2018). From a psychological perspective, a juvenile delinquent is a person who commits an act that goes against the agreed patterns of behavior for normal people of their age and in the same environment because they suffer from psychological conflicts that lead them to commit acts such as theft or aggression. Li and Xia (2018) emphasize that juvenile delinquency is a maladjustment to the social system in which the delinquent lives, in a way that is detrimental to himself, his life, his society, and

his future. The juvenile delinquent suffers from mental disorders, a lack of social awareness, emotional weakness, and difficulties in establishing relationships with others (Li & Xia, 2018; Li et al., 2022; Spruit et al., 2016).

Despite the efforts made in various countries around the world to combat the problem of juvenile delinquents, this problem is constantly increasing in both developed and developing countries (Pechorro et al., 2022; Zakaria et al., 2022). Surong and Lyngdoh emphasized that the increase in this phenomenon varies from society to society, depending on the different social structures and economic systems of each society. The importance of this phenomenon lies in the fact that it affects the category of youth, which is considered the basis for the progress and development of societies (Surong & Lyngdoh, 2020). The presence of such a group in society and the importance of the stage in which they live make it necessary to highlight the effective aspects and methods of psychological care for juvenile offenders in youth welfare institutions, which may not receive adequate attention from the community despite the importance of psychological care and its great influence on rehabilitating delinquent youth and changing their behavior (Ntshangase, 2013).

In the context of the Emirates, a nation with a relatively young society where children make up 50% of the citizen population, the issue of juvenile delinquency has attracted special attention represented in the issuance of a special law for juveniles and the opening of institutions that take care of juvenile delinquents (Hourani et al., 2020a). A juvenile was defined in the UAE law on juvenile delinquency as a person under eighteen years of age at the time of committing the act subject to accountability or his presence in a state of homelessness (Xu et al., 2023). The law also stated that a criminal case should not be instituted against a delinquent juvenile who did not reach the age of seven full years, where the juvenile cannot be sentenced to the death penalty,

imprisonment, or financial penalties. The prison sentence for which a juvenile is sentenced is executed in special places where the means of social care, education, and vocational training are available. For this purpose, the Comprehensive Juvenile Welfare Department was established in Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, and recently in Fujairah, to provide the care guaranteed by the law to juveniles. Bergseth and Bouffard (2018) emphasized that most of the previous studies focused on the issue of juvenile delinquency in general (Kennedy et al., 2020) and did not focus on dealing with ways to surround this phenomenon and limit its spread through the scientific and objective interpretation of this issue based on a deep study of Emirati society and its characteristics (Hourani et al., 2020a; Litz et al., 2020a) Accordingly, the current study investigates the evaluating of delinquent juveniles' rehabilitation programs in the juvenile welfare department in Abu Dhabi.

Given the fact that the United Arab Emirates takes care of all its children, the various state agencies have endeavored to preserve delinquent youngsters and work to re-evaluate them since the first years of the state's inception (Junger-Tas et al., 2010). The Juvenile Delinquent and Homeless Law was issued in 1976, which required the care of delinquent juveniles by appropriate correctional institutions seeking to rehabilitate them and modify their behavior (Alamgir et al., 2018). The creation of comprehensive care units for juvenile delinquents by the Ministry of Social Development in 1980 came to work seriously to take care of juvenile delinquents in institutions that take into account their circumstances and work to guide them and their parents to appropriate methods that prevent juvenile delinquency in the future and provide them with the care that ensures their reintegration into society (Congote et al., 2018)

In 1996, by a decision of His Highness Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan (may God have mercy on him), a juvenile care center was opened in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, under the supervision of the General Administration of Correctional and Punitive Facilities in Abu Dhabi Police, and with the cooperation of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Justice (Al-Karbi & Mai, 2018a). After that, the activities and tasks of the comprehensive unit in Abu Dhabi were integrated into the activities of the Juvenile delinquent care center at Abu Dhabi Police (Al-Karbi & Mai, 2018a). This program aimed to rehabilitate juvenile delinquents and integrate them into society to be happy children who are safe in their society and aware of their rights (Roberts, 2004).

The rehabilitation centers provide, through their staff (Holder et al., 2022), educational programs that work to develop juveniles' skills in Arabic language, mathematics, sociology, health awareness, and office activities (Al-Mansouri, 2010). The units also provide religious programs through which they provide directions, advice, explanation, and interpretation of the verses of the Qur'an and strengthen the religious sentiment that has a prominent effect in treating juvenile delinquency and modifying their behavior, In addition to the social programs and activities that are prepared by the supervisor and the social worker, such as recreational trips, visits and group meetings inside and outside the unit that develop the juveniles' skills and abilities (Al-Mansouri, 2010).

The essence of these programs is to turn the lives of juveniles into a better and better life different from the deviant life they had in the past (Murhula & Singh, 2019). This is best contextualized through the Good Lives Model (GLM). The Good Lives Model is a rehabilitation model that focuses on enhancing the capabilities and well-being of offenders. It specifies that the goal of rehabilitation programs should be to

enhance the capabilities to pursue their interest, meet their needs, and therefore live fulfilling and happy lives (Murhula & Singh, 2019; Vandala & Vandala, 2019; Walgrave et al., 2019).

The Good Lives Model posits two categories of good that need to be imbibed in delinquents. This includes primary human goods and the secondary goods. The primary human goods are general human desires and goals in terms of personal characteristics, states of mind, and experiences that are beneficial intrinsically and sought for their own sake (Murhula & Singh, 2019; Walgrave et al., 2019). The secondary goods, on the other hand, as the name implies, are secondary and imply concrete and specific actions and activities human beings take to obtain the primary human goods. Thus, the secondary goods are the means to the end (primary human goods). This means can either be appropriate or inappropriate. One of the objectives of the rehabilitation program is, therefore, to imbibe the appropriate secondary good into the delinquents to enable them to achieve the primary human goods legally, morally, and appropriately afterward (Mallion & Wood, 2020; Murhula & Singh, 2019).

More specifically, the GLM envisages a rehabilitation program assisting each delinquent to harbor a good life plan likely to ensure their well-being, good life, and happiness thereby eliminating the tendency of dynamic risk factors such as criminogenic needs or committing additional offense (Basanta et al., 2018; Mallion & Wood, 2020; Vitopoulos et al., 2019). This is achieved by engaging the delinquents in the rehabilitation process thereby promoting desistance from offenses (Murhula & Singh, 2019; Nixon, 2020; Petrich, 2020). Thus, the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs leads to a reduction of delinquents' recidivism (risk to society) and enhances their well-being (Baglivio et al., 2018; Beaudry et al., 2021; Brunner et al., 2019;

Kettrey & Lipsey, 2018; Khan et al., 2019; Kithaka, 2018; Mallion & Wood, 2020; Turner et al., 2019).

Thus, it is very important to evaluate rehabilitation programs including those for juvenile delinquents from time to time (Carl et al., 2019) to ensure that they achieve their primary goal of bettering the lives of the delinquents after the rehabilitation. Accordingly, this study seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of juvenile rehabilitation programs in Abu Dhabi's Welfare Department to propose ways of improving the behavior of juvenile delinquents toward better lives.

1.2 Problem Statement

The issue of juvenile delinquency is a complex and multifaceted problem facing societies (Baglivio et al., 2018; Cacho et al., 2020). The repercussions this issue holds for the future of delinquent juveniles and, ultimately, the future of society give more importance to this issue in the context of education, the justice system, and social development (Alduraywish, 2021). Despite juvenile delinquency primarily affecting young people, its consequences also adversely reflect on their families and society at large, making juvenile delinquency a serious threat to the future of societies (Hourani & Litz, 2018). The consequences of juvenile delinquency extend to human resources and their energy and production contributions to society (Li et al., 2020). Therefore, the threat of juvenile delinquency potentially extends to include possible economic implications. Losses incurred due to juvenile delinquency affect the body, mind, and emotions of those affected, as well as affecting human relationships of intimacy, friendliness, and peace among people (Siegel & Welsh, 2018).

In response to the issue of juvenile delinquency, relevant government institutions and legislators all over the world are always working to establish facilities

and develop relevant rehabilitation programs. These programs are designed to promote personal responsibility and provide juvenile offenders with the necessary skills, knowledge, and behaviors that would help them lead a sustainable future and become positive members of society (Kubik & Boxer, 2020). However, developing and delivering such rehabilitation programs aimed at promoting behavioral reformation is a significant challenge (Siegel & Welsh, 2016). One of the major issues facing rehabilitation programs is the lack of understanding among adolescents about the reasons they are being committed to rehabilitation facilities/institutions and their lack of comprehension of the value of rehabilitation (Anderson, 2014). Numerous research efforts targeting programs or types of programs dedicated to rehabilitating juvenile offenders have been conducted in the global context due to the rise of the juvenile delinquency issue (Molnar et al., 2020). These efforts have resulted in an extensive and growing body of work about programs and types of programs that are helpful in significantly reducing recidivism of juvenile delinquents (Schroeder et al., 2010). This rise in relevant empirical evidence has resulted from the rise of the quantitative meta-analytic methodology and its application to juvenile rehabilitation programs and the expansion of the rehabilitation programs evaluation base (Friedlander, 2013).

Many relevant research investigations attempted to explain the antecedents of delinquent juveniles and suggest potential solutions to the problem of juveniles through rehabilitation programs (Agarwal, 2018; Ozen et al., 2005; Yablonsky, 2016). However, research efforts to evaluate juvenile rehabilitation programs' effectiveness or propose potential approaches to improve existing programs have been limited, especially concerning examinations beyond highlighting the contrasting impacts of different types of juvenile rehabilitation programs (e.g., cognitive vs non-cognitive) (Lipsey et. al., 2010). This is especially true in the context of the UAE.

The number of juvenile cases in UAE was 208 in 2019, 175 in 2020, 137 in 2021, and 116 in 2022 (UAE Public Prosecution, 2023). Though this shows a declining trend in cases, the number of those involved is still alarming (Barakat, 2019). The juvenile welfare centers in the UAE make great efforts to rehabilitate juvenile delinquents and reform them (Hourani et al., 2019). However, Al-Karbi and Mai (2018) argued that this great work needs improvement since juveniles lack awareness about the purpose and value of the care and rehabilitation they receive at these centers. Moreover, Xiong et al. (2020), in their study conducted in the United Arab Emirates, referred to the low level of satisfaction of delinquents in the Abu Dhabi headquarters, which provides psychological care for juvenile delinquents (Ryan et al., 2014). This low level of satisfaction is related to the lack of the psychologist's contribution to alleviating the punitive atmosphere prevailing at the headquarters. Although the statistics confirm a decrease in the number of juvenile crimes in Dubai in 2019 compared to previous years, it is still considered a problem that needs further research and studies as part of Dubai's government's overall strategy to improve the standard of living by addressing criminal activity and its various sources, juvenile delinquency being a major contributor to (Alyahyae et al., 2022). Dardas (2022) further suggested that the UAE has a growing juvenile delinquency problem that has been on the rise in recent years (Atrey & Singh, 2023; Zai & Wani, 2020), where everyone who worked in this field knows the nature of this word and its course but does not know the extent of the suffering of those who work in these centers (Dardas, 2022). For them, it is a very difficult issue and requires great responsibility.

By referring to previous studies, it is evident that some of them were interested in studying the effectiveness of a counseling program based on client-centered treatment in improving self-concept among juvenile delinquents ((Mayorga et al.,

2020; Xiong et al., 2020), while others were interested in studying the balance between the controls of running the juvenile and the rules for protecting it from harm (Farrington, 2017). Others were interested in studying the peculiarities of studies of personal juvenile delinquents in punitive institutions (Petrosino et al., 2016). Through the previous presentation of some of the interests of previous studies in the field of juveniles, it is evident that there is a clear dearth of interest in evaluating programs for the rehabilitation of juvenile delinquents (Park & Pierce, 2020; Zai & Wani, 2020), so the researcher was interested in this important research point represented in "evaluating juvenile rehabilitation programs in the Juvenile Welfare Department in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates." These include psychological evaluation and care programs, social engagement and community-building activities, spiritual guidance and religious education programs, discipline training, and cultural and heritage education programs. It will have a positive impact on improving the level of qualification through research outputs and suggested recommendations (Atrey & Singh, 2023).

As well as because the manifestations of juvenile delinquency are mainly related to the youth who are the mainstay of the future in society, their delinquency harms themselves and their society. Many countries have made great efforts to overcome this scourge or limit its spread by conducting numerous research and studies (Abella et al., 2024). This confirms that a gap in the theoretical literature needs to be strengthened. Thus, the problem of this study is to investigate the evaluation of rehabilitation programs for juvenile delinquents in the Juvenile Welfare Department in Abu Dhabi. This justifies the choice of this topic, given the lack of studies that have dealt with evaluating juvenile delinquency programs in the UAE society.

Additionally, the focus on *staff competency* is critical because it is one of the most significant factors influencing the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs. The lack of qualified and adequately trained staff in rehabilitation centers can lead to ineffective rehabilitation efforts, failing to address the core issues behind juvenile delinquency (Abella et al., 2024; Hazra, 2021). If not addressed, the quality of rehabilitation services will remain subpar, which could perpetuate the cycle of juvenile delinquency and reoffending. The staff's understanding of juvenile behavior and their ability to engage effectively with delinquents are crucial to ensuring the success of rehabilitation programs (Al-Karbi & Mai, 2018). Notably, the focus on staff competency in this research is justified by the critical role that rehabilitation staff play in shaping the behavioral outcomes of juvenile delinquents. Staff members, including social workers, psychologists, and counselors, are directly involved in the daily interactions, guidance, and therapeutic interventions with juveniles. Competent staff trained in evidence-based practices, interpersonal communication, cultural sensitivity, and conflict resolution are better equipped to assess and address the unique needs of each juvenile. Their ability to provide high-quality, individualized care is essential for promoting positive behavioral changes and ensuring the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs (Majeed et al., 2020).

Moreover, the moderating effects of program benefits are essential in understanding how different elements of the rehabilitation program may influence the success or failure of the intervention (Pappas & Dent, 2023). In this study, the "moderating effect" refers to how factors such as the psychological and social benefits provided by the program interact with other variables to impact juvenile behavior and recidivism. If these benefits are not maximized or properly integrated into the rehabilitation programs, the overall effectiveness of the rehabilitation will be reduced

(Savatia et al., 2020; Majeed et al., 2020). Addressing these issues can help refine the rehabilitation process, making it more holistic and effective in promoting lasting behavioral change among juvenile delinquents.

1.3 Research Questions

Following an extensive review of relevant literature and after methodically formulating the research problem, the following research questions emerged:

1. What is the influence of juvenile rehabilitation programs' effectiveness on the juvenile delinquents' outcome (behavior) at Abu Dhabi's juvenile welfare department?
2. What is the effect of staff competence (service quality) on juvenile delinquents' behavior in Abu Dhabi's juvenile welfare department?
3. What is the relationship between the environmental setting (condition) of rehabilitation facilities and juvenile delinquents' behavior in the Abu Dhabi juvenile welfare department?
4. What is the moderating effect of the program benefits on the relationship between the juvenile delinquents' rehabilitation programs and the juvenile delinquents' behavior in Abu Dhabi's juvenile welfare department?

1.4 Research Objectives

To answer the research inquiries, the objectives of the present study are as follows:

1. To evaluate the influence of juvenile rehabilitation programs' effectiveness on the juvenile delinquents' outcome (behavior) at Abu Dhabi's juvenile welfare department.

2. To examine the effect of staff competence (service quality) on juvenile delinquents' behavior in Abu Dhabi's juvenile welfare department.
3. To explore the relationship between the environmental setting (condition) of rehabilitation facilities and juvenile delinquents' behavior in the Abu Dhabi juvenile welfare department.
4. To determine the moderating effect of the program benefits on the relationship between the juvenile delinquents' rehabilitation programs and the juvenile delinquents' behavior in Abu Dhabi's juvenile welfare department.

1.5 Research Hypotheses

The hypotheses for this research were developed by drawing upon existing theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence related to juvenile rehabilitation, behavioral development, and the institutional factors influencing these processes. This research aimed to examine the influence of rehabilitation programs on the behavior of juvenile delinquents within the context of Abu Dhabi's Juvenile Welfare Department. To construct the hypotheses, the study examined key elements such as the role of staff competence, the quality of services provided, the environmental settings of the rehabilitation centers, and the moderating effect of program benefits on behavioral outcomes.

Theoretical frameworks like Social Learning Theory and the Rehabilitative Model guided the development of the hypotheses. Social Learning Theory posits that individuals, including juveniles, learn behaviors through observation and interaction within their environments. This theory helped to form hypotheses related to the importance of staff competence and the environment in shaping the behavioral

outcomes of juveniles. The Rehabilitative Model further informed the development of hypotheses that addressed the effectiveness of tailored rehabilitation programs in promoting behavioral change.

Each hypothesis is aligned with specific research objectives. Proposed hypotheses were grounded in both theory and previous research, providing a structured approach to testing the effect of different factors on the rehabilitation of juvenile delinquents.

This research has the following hypotheses as indicated below:

H1: Juvenile rehabilitation programs' effectiveness has a significant influence on the juvenile delinquents' outcome (behavior) at Abu Dhabi's juvenile welfare department.

H2: Staff competence (service quality) has a significant effect on juvenile delinquents' behavior in Abu Dhabi's juvenile welfare department.

H3: There is a significant relationship between the environmental setting (condition) of rehabilitation facilities and juvenile delinquents' behavior in the Abu Dhabi juvenile welfare department.

H4: Program benefits significantly moderate the relationship between the juvenile delinquents' rehabilitation programs and the juvenile delinquents' behavior in Abu Dhabi's juvenile welfare department.

1.6 Significance

The importance of this study comes from the significance of juvenile delinquents in the juvenile welfare department, which represents a worldwide issue and an important area of research. Unfortunately, studies of the evaluation of rehabilitation programs for juvenile delinquents in the juvenile welfare department in

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, are scarce. Therefore, conducting such research on this topic is expected to have a high positive reflection and significance that can be summarized in the following:

1. The significance of this study is evident in the lack of relevant scientific research efforts in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi that address juvenile delinquency, and the effectiveness of the rehabilitation approaches/programs dedicated to addressing said issue. Juvenile delinquents are a considerable threat to the local society, and their crime rate has persisted in the last decade (Mann, 2012).
2. Juvenile delinquency has become a threat to Emirates society, which is one of the young societies concerning the ages of the population, and most of them are in the age of modernity. Therefore, this gives great importance to the study, especially in light of Juvenile crime in UAE society.
3. According to the researcher's knowledge, this study is one of the first studies that seek to know the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs for juvenile delinquents in Abu Dhabi. Therefore, it is the most capable of containing the phenomenon of delinquency.
4. The practical importance of the study is highlighted by the fact that it deals with the analysis of an important category of society, which is the delinquent juveniles that threaten the entity of society with disintegration and endanger the lives of its members; thus, this category becomes unproductive and dependent on society.
5. This study seeks to work on providing information to be used in setting social policies and guidelines to reduce the impact and spread of this

phenomenon. In addition, it helps workers in care and rehabilitation centers, including supervisors and counselors, to review the behavioral counseling program and use it to assist and rehabilitate juvenile delinquents.

6. The benefit of this study lies in the formulation of a new mechanism in line with the new juvenile accountability law to deal with juvenile delinquents on a psychological, social, educational, legislative, and primarily human basis; the researcher also hopes that the results of the study will be used to devise modern methods to prepare the juvenile delinquent as a person capable of reforming himself and serving his country, by changing the perception of stigma with which they deal.
7. The importance of this study also lies in serving this segment of Emirati society by helping and rehabilitating them, which formed a strong motive for adaptation and compatibility and for the researcher to conduct this study and serve them. It also assists workers in care and rehabilitation centers, including supervisors and counselors, in familiarizing themselves with how to evaluate the rehabilitation programs that are provided to juvenile delinquents.
8. Those interested in this study can benefit from its findings and recommendations in conducting deeper studies and developing their performance based on the study's results.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The research study focused on investigating the influence of juvenile rehabilitation programs on the behavior of juvenile delinquents at Abu Dhabi's Juvenile Welfare Department. This study aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of how these programs positively impact the behavior of young offenders, drawing on theoretical insights from criminology and rehabilitation studies (Daigle & Cullen, 2007). By critically examining the effectiveness of these programs, the study sought to offer innovative solutions within the criminal justice system, particularly in the rehabilitation framework for juvenile delinquency in Abu Dhabi. The research went beyond simply evaluating program effectiveness; it delved into the role of staff competence and service quality, providing crucial insights into how the skills and attitudes of personnel shape the outcomes of rehabilitation efforts (Katsiyannis et al., 2008).

In addition, the study explored the significance of the environmental setting within rehabilitation facilities, analyzing how the physical and psychological conditions of these centers influence the behavior of juvenile delinquents undergoing rehabilitation. This environmental factor was examined about its capacity to either support or hinder the rehabilitation process. A key innovation in the study was the inclusion of a moderating variable, which assessed the program benefits and their influence on the relationship between rehabilitation programs and the behavioral outcomes of juvenile delinquents. This approach offered a nuanced understanding of how program benefits could enhance or mitigate the effects of rehabilitation on young offenders' behavior, providing valuable insights for both practice and policy. The scope of this research is thus broad, yet explicitly defined within the context of the Abu Dhabi juvenile justice system. The study contributed significantly by identifying

practical and theoretical gaps in current rehabilitation practices and suggesting improvements that are both realistic and feasible. The research outcomes offered policymakers, stakeholders, and rehabilitation program designers evidence-based recommendations for enhancing service delivery and outcomes in juvenile welfare initiatives. Moreover, this study added to the broader academic discourse on juvenile justice and rehabilitation, advancing behavioral change theories and rehabilitation effectiveness by incorporating real-world evidence from Abu Dhabi's juvenile welfare programs.

This study bridged the gap between theory and practice by aligning the research with established criminological and rehabilitative theoretical frameworks, such as social learning theory and social control theory. The theoretical underpinnings provided a solid foundation for understanding how juvenile delinquency can be mitigated through structured and supportive rehabilitation programs. Therefore, this research not only sought to inform policy improvements in Abu Dhabi's juvenile welfare system but also aimed to contribute to the broader field of criminal justice and rehabilitation studies globally, promoting the well-being of juvenile delinquents and fostering a safer society.

1.8 Organization of the study

This study is based on five (5) main chapters, providing systematic and empirical evidence for the study problem and conclusion. Each of those chapters deals with different research interests; these chapters' disposition will help present key areas of the theses sequentially and systematically as follows:

Chapter 1: This chapter represents the introduction to the study in which the researcher provides background information related to this research. It provides an

overview of juvenile delinquents' rehabilitation programs in the juveniles' welfare department in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates. Additionally, in this chapter, the researcher identified the statement of the problem, the research questions, the research objectives, and its significance.

Chapter 2: This chapter reviewed previous studies and literature on the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs for juvenile delinquents in the juvenile welfare department in the world and studies in the juvenile welfare department in the United Arab Emirates, which will form a strong theoretical basis upon which the researcher builds his study. This chapter starts with an introduction and then provides literature related to the study topic, which would help build a comprehensive and integrated understanding of the research issue and answer its question.

Chapter 3: This chapter delineated the methodology utilized in this research to address its questions. It mainly focuses on the data collection and analysis methods that the researcher utilized to collect and analyze the required data.

Chapter 4: This chapter provided extensive details and discussion about the study's data analysis and results. It provided the data collected and a discussion of the findings that emerged throughout this study.

Chapter 5: This chapter summarizes the research and provides conclusions based on the findings and recommendations that would contribute to future research.

1.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the study background and problem in detail to specify the key theme and area chosen to address in this project empirically and systematically. This chapter also contains study aims, objectives, and hypotheses consistent with the study problem. This study's significance, scope, and structure are also discussed to

highlight the structure of the current project, ensuring an empirical and systematic approach to address the effectiveness of juvenile welfare and development through certain institutions in the United Arab Emirates.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Chapter Introduction

This chapter discusses and highlights the literature providing empirical and theoretical support to the current research project. First, an extensive literature review is conducted on juvenile delinquency, its concepts, and its prevalence worldwide, particularly in the United Arab Emirates. Further, juvenile well-fare programs, types, and importance are discussed in detail. Finally, theoretical support is extensively discussed to narrow the discussion and provide a pathway to determine the most suitable methodological approaches.

2.2 Juvenile Delinquency-Overview and Causes

The concept of "juvenile" in the context of the UAE can be defined as individuals who are under the legal age of adulthood, typically those who are younger than 18 years old. In the UAE, the Juvenile Justice Law (Federal Law No. 9 of 1976) outlines that juveniles are persons who have not yet reached the age of 18 and who are involved in legal matters. The law focuses on rehabilitation rather than punishment for minors who commit offenses, emphasizing the protection of their rights and their potential for reform. Juveniles in the UAE are treated differently from adults in legal proceedings, to reintegrate them into society in a constructive manner.

Similarly, juvenile delinquency was considered a heinous crime and a sin deserving punishment and deterrence. As noted by Fisher and Kennedy (2016), In the past, juvenile delinquency was usually perceived as a heinous and alarming issue by society and the justice system (Mayorga et al., 2020). Young offenders who engaged in criminal activities were viewed with great concern and fear due to the possible

consequences of their actions. High-profile cases and media coverage affected the public's perception of juvenile delinquency as a grave problem, which sometimes portrayed young offenders as dangerous and irredeemable. As a result, there was a strong emphasis on punitive measures and harsh punishments to deter and control juvenile delinquency. Juvenile offenders were often treated similarly to adult criminals, and their actions were met with severe consequences, including imprisonment and lengthy sentences (Wolfson et al., 2021). However, this approach began to evolve as research and understanding of adolescent development and psychology improved. It became evident that a more nuanced and rehabilitative approach was needed to address the root causes of delinquent behavior and offer young offenders a chance for redemption and positive change (Oluwatoyin, 2022).

Over time, society recognized the significance of rehabilitation and addressing the underlying factors contributing to juvenile delinquency. Rather than solely viewing young offenders as inherently bad individuals, the emphasis shifted toward understanding the complex social, economic, and psychological factors that may lead them astray. The realization that many juveniles come from disadvantaged backgrounds, experience trauma or lack positive role models emphasized the need for interventions that foster growth, education, and skill development. Juvenile justice systems worldwide began adopting more rehabilitative approaches, incorporating counseling, education, vocational training, and community-based programs to address the individual needs of young offenders and facilitate their reintegration into society. This shift in perspective acknowledged that juvenile delinquents have the potential for reform and transformation, underlining second chances and restorative justice instead of purely punitive measures (Danisworo & Wangid, 2022; Li et al., 2023). By providing effective rehabilitation and support, society aims to empower young offenders to break

the cycle of delinquency and become productive, law-abiding members of their communities (Brezina, 2015).

For this reason, juvenile delinquency was treated with many types of abuse and cruelty. Thanks to the struggle and perseverance of philosophers and thinkers, and their long struggle with conservative ideas and rigid laws, they were able to transform the idea of general deterrence and revenge into the idea of reform and treatment (Singh & Azman, 2020). The problem of delinquency and crime in Europe was surrounded by cruelty, as the delinquent juvenile was considered a person who was imitated by the spirit of evil, so he/she must be punished, and English courts continued to inflict harsh punishments on children in some misdemeanors, such as murder and liberty (Reid, 2022). However, the contribution of the French Revolution and ideas of freedom and human rights were of the utmost importance in changing the laws and methods of punishing juveniles in various parts of the world, given that juvenile crimes do not represent a mere attack by these young people on the security of society or their departure from social conditions as much as it represents the failure of society and the family to care for their sons and provide them with guidance (Simiyu, et al., 2020).

Researchers have various interpretations regarding the occurrence of juvenile delinquency in some individuals and the non-occurrence of it in others. Some attributed juvenile delinquency to dropping out of school, while others pointed to other factors such as poverty, genetics, etc (Petrosino et al., 2019). Chappell and Piwuerro (2004) argued that the juvenile delinquency process cannot be traced back to only one cause, but rather to a set of environmental, biological, economic, social, psychological, and other causes that control the individual and cause him/her to behave in a perverse behavior. Moreover, there have been many theories that explain the phenomenon of delinquency due to the diversity of circumstances, cultures, and variables in every

society (Barth et al., 2020). Some theories attributed the phenomenon of delinquency to the internal factors of the individual, such as heredity, and mental and psychological formation, and others dealt with the environmental aspect and external factors affecting the individual, where these factors work to create conditions that help to form the tendency of delinquency in the individual (Zakaria et al., 2022). A group of theories emerged that combined the genetic and environmental aspects and attributed delinquency and criminality to factors of interaction between the two sides, which helps in provoking delinquent behavior in the individual (Mallion & Wood, 2020; Walgrave et al., 2019). Notably, it is important to understand and address the root causes of juvenile delinquency for numerous reasons. As noted by Gibson and Davis (2017), understanding juvenile delinquency helps determine the underlying factors contributing to such behavior. These factors include socioeconomic conditions, family dynamics, peer persuasions, substance abuse, mental health issues, and scarcity of educational opportunities (Barth et al., 2020; Wolfson et al., 2021). By recognizing these elements, policymakers and stakeholders can develop targeted programs and approaches that address the specific needs of at-risk youth, breaking the delinquency cycle and promoting positive outcomes. According to Li et al. (2023), early intervention is important in curbing delinquent behavior and deterring future criminal activities. Existing research indicates that delinquency usually starts at a young age, and if left unchecked, it can escalate into more profound criminal behavior in adulthood. By understanding the risk factors and warning signs, parents, educators, and social workers can recognize troubled youth and provide appropriate support and guidance, steering them away from criminal paths.

Furthermore, Donges (2016) considers understanding juvenile delinquency essential for designing a fair and effective juvenile justice system. The technique toward