

# *Role Play and Storytelling: Reformative Teaching Tools to Juvenile Offenders with Problem Behaviours at a Junior Boys' Correctional Centre in Agona Swedru, Ghana.*

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## *Abstract*

*The study sought to use role play and storytelling as interventional strategies in the reformation of Juvenile offenders at the Agona Swedru junior boys' correctional centre, in the Central region of Ghana. It highlighted the means of teaching the skills needed to check lack of anger management and low self-esteem, among 6 juvenile offenders at the correctional centre who were purposively selected. Through an action research design, rooted in David Kolb's experiential learning theory. Data was collected through participant observation while implementation of the intervention process was done within a 5-week period. It was found out that both role play and storytelling were instrumental in fostering positive attitudes and teaching new behaviours among juvenile offenders. While storytelling was more effective as an instructional teaching technique, role-play was more effective for assessing learning outcomes. It was therefore recommended among others that both techniques should be considered in juvenile reformation programmes at such centres.*

**Key Words:** *role play, storytelling, juvenile offenders, delinquency, Agona Swedru, correctional centre*

## **Introduction**

All over the world, there is a fraction of humans who are referred to as juvenile. This group of the human population is characterized by a legal age limit which qualifies them as members of the said human population. The legal definition of a juvenile in most African countries is usually restricted to persons under the age of 21 years (Mushanga, 2011). The exact lower and upper age limits differ from country to country. For example, in most of the East African countries, the age is eight years (Mushanga, 2011) whereas in Ghana, as enshrined in its 1992 constitution, juveniles are persons below 18 years (Ashiabor, 2014). In fact, according to Boakye (2012), the human group most fragile and prone to deviance is juveniles. This is because, antisocial behavioural patterns, such as anger and low self-esteem as correlates to offending behaviour, can appear during the first year of life but often peak at the end of the second year after a child's birth. Thus, before age 3, most children often engage in behaviours that would be considered problematic at a later age (Wasserman, Keenan, Tremblay, Coie, Herrenkohl, Loeber, & Petechuk, 2003). Normally, such children are segregated in correctional centres and

supported with reformation strategies to enable them become useful in the communities.

In Ghana, the Akan call such centres *mmofra Bone* school, meaning, school for the recalcitrant children. These recalcitrant children are managed with counselling and talk therapy as treatment programmes, especially, in Ghanaian correctional centres of which Agona Swedru Junior Boys Correctional Centre is one of them. These juvenile offenders are usually charged for a wide range of criminal offences especially, property theft, sexual misconduct and violence but the issue of recidivism is still prevalent in Ghanaian juvenile justice system (Boakye, 2012). Preliminary observations and interactions with the caretakers of the young offenders revealed that some attitudinal traits of the juvenile offenders at the Agona Swedru Junior Boys Correctional centre seem to hinder their effective reformation. It was obvious that lack of anger management was prevalent among the juvenile offenders; in fact it seemed to be one of the most threatening factors to the total reformation of the young offenders. Similarly, the self-esteem of some of the juvenile offenders seemed considerably low.

By its nature, it appears palpable that the talk therapy and the counselling sessions used as strategies for the reformation will have to be combined with other interventions to check and curb the problem as a result of its ineffectiveness. As experts in drama therapy and musical drama, we found it expedient to adapt methods such as role play and storytelling to teach skills of anger management and high self-esteem among the juvenile offenders at Agona Swedru correctional centre. It seems possible that many studies have not been done on how role play can be used to teach the skills necessary for checking the aforementioned problem behaviours in Ghana. Similarly, no known study has been conducted on how storytelling can be adopted in the reformation of Juvenile offenders in Ghana: given the fact that storytelling is an age-old part of the Ghanaian culture. Two questions were therefore addressed in this study. 1) In what way can role play be used as teaching skills to manage anger and raise low self-esteem? 2) To what extent can the use of storytelling become effective as a teaching tool of anger management and high self-esteem among juvenile offenders? The study was therefore carried out to answer these questions. The paper therefore captures the theoretical framework, literature review, methodology, results and discussion of findings and finally draws conclusions.

#### Theoretical framework

The study was hinged on the experiential learning theory by Kolb (1984). He explains experiential learning theory as “the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience” (p.41). Thus, knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience. The theory is characterized by learning through experience and reflection on doing. In fact Experiential Learning Theory according to Ballou, Bowers, Boyatzis and Kolb (1999), provides a holistic model of the learning process and a multilinear model of adult development, both of which are consistent with what we know about how people learn, grow, and develop.

The theory is called experiential learning to emphasize the central role that experience

plays in the learning process. As this study is focused on transferring knowledge from one source to the other through unconventional learning methods, the connection between the study and experiential learning theory is quite striking. More so the arts most probably embody experiential learning due to the practice-based nature of the creative discipline. For instance, Boggs, Mickel and Holtom (2007) were of the view that looking to art and arts education for idea stimulation is appropriate because arts have traditionally implemented a more experiential approach to learning in comparison to other fields such as management. They were of the view that, art's ability to engage its audience mentally, physically, and emotionally may be one of its most powerful uses in education. In using the theory, new values and ways of overcoming behavioural problems were presented to the juvenile delinquents at the Agona Swedru Junior Boys Correctional centre in a practical way through active participation by doing, observing reflecting and learning, through role playing and storytelling.

Finally, Kolb's experiential learning theory according to Boggs, Mickel & Holtom (2007), sets out four learning styles which are based on a four-stage learning process or what is occasionally referred to as the training cycle. The cycle of learning is considered as a central principle in the experiential learning theory. Kolb's four stage learning circle includes: Concrete Experience - (CE), Reflective Observation - (RO), Abstract Conceptualization - (AC) and Active Experimentation - (AE) all of which are evident and core throughout the learning process of this study. Thus, learning, in which immediate or concrete experiences through role playing and storytelling provide a basis for observations and reflections by the juvenile participants. These observations and reflections are assimilated and distilled into abstract concepts, producing new implications for action as for as anger, self-esteem and conformity issues are concerned, which can be actively tested, in turn, creating new experiences towards their reformation.

## Literature Review

### *Use of Role play*

According to Farmer (2014), role play is the foundation of all dramatic activities. It is the chance to suspend disbelief by taking on other roles and experiencing other feelings and perspectives. Due to the dramatic and playful nature of role play, it can be used to help children to develop a more sensitive and accommodative understanding of a variety of perspectives whilst sharpening their own viewpoints. Farmer also added that, by adopting different roles, children and adolescents can step into the past or future and travel to any location and in the playful yet impactful process, deal with issues on both moral and intellectual levels. This dramatic technique as opined by Farmer (2014) is based on the assumption that individuals may gain greater understanding of their behaviour and that of others, as they act out various aspects of their lives and others. Children as well as young people are said to be able to acquire social skills through acting out a story or by participating in drama either as a player or actor. The writers have the view that as humans take on different roles either similar to or other than

themselves or pretend and imagine themselves as the role they play, they often gain new insights and sympathies. Obviously, it can be argued, but it seems possible that role play can be an effective teaching technique for learning rehabilitation and reformation purposes in criminal justice systems. Role play has spread to many other fields such as education in many countries (Gangel, 2005). In this case, it is adapted as a teaching technique right from the primary to highest level of education.

The flexibility of role playing allows its partakers to make mistakes in a safe, relaxed and playful environment: through role play, people can test the potency of several solutions to very realistic problems (Gangel, 2005). This makes it most effective for learning in general. In fact, according to Harbour and Connick (2004), subconsciously, many humans tend to use role play as a basic tool of life. That is, whenever one projects into the future in uncertainty with an imaginary 'what if' scenario, he or she is indirectly indulging in role play to an extent. This is because, as one projects him or herself into the world of an imaginary situation where there is an anticipation of an uncontrollable outcome, role play makes it possible to 'rehearse' one's, actions and inactions in order to influence the outcome. Most importantly however, Harbour and Connick (2004) further added that, when it comes to learning environment be it formal or informal, role play can be a very flexible and effective tool for teaching and learning. They believe that, 'I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand' the authors considered very applicable in this context.

### *Anger*

Many scholars have given exposure to anger (Frey, 2003; Kokko & Pulkkinen, 2000; Lazarus, 1991; Lochman, Palardy, McElroy, Phillips & Holmes, 2004; Puskar, Grabiak & Bernardo, 2009; Sukhodolsky, Kassinove & Gorman, 2004). These scholars were of the opinion that anger is one of the six basic human emotions along with emotions such as sadness, happiness, disgust fear and surprise. They added that, it is an emotion that is typically experienced by humans irrespective of their cultural background and it may be expressed in two major forms where clients may either be defiant, in which case anger is expressed outwardly and sometimes aggressively or clients may be depressed in which case anger is internalized or kept within without being addressed. They also expressed that anger depicts the true meaning of "fight or flight" response, and so the physiological correlates of anger are expected, in fact according to the researchers, a physiological response research revealed that indeed anger is a response to perceived threatening stimuli but the intensity and type of response differs from one person to the other depending on their assessment of the situation. The aforementioned descriptions and definitions of anger most probably suggest its occurrence as a normal phenomenon but since Juvenile offenders or delinquents tend to exhibit high levels of uncontrolled anger and aggression than their non-delinquent peers (Kokko & Pulkkinen, 2000), it is important that pragmatic measures are put in place to deal with it before they grow up. Similarly, since persistent recidivists in crime reveals an exhibition of some common characteristics of general alienation from others, low self-esteem, low self-confidence,

and hostility (Reasoner, 1994).

### *Story Telling and Self-esteem*

Storytelling is the art of portraying real and or imagined events and characters through either words, images or sounds (Tingöy, Günefler, Öngün, Demira & Koroglu, 2006). The writers further opined that, storytelling is mostly regarded as an important aspect of humanity's growth and total development. Human beings through history turn to use verbal communication to teach, explain phenomena, and entertain. For the fact stated by Tingöy, Günefler, Öngün, Demira and Koroglu (2006), it may be argued that, storytelling can be an effective medium for learning, rehabilitation as well as reformation in various criminal justice systems and correctional institutions in Ghana especially because of the country's strong storytelling tradition. Undoubtedly, storytelling is the oldest form of education, many countries around the world have the tradition of using storytelling to pass on knowledge, cultural believes, norms and even history from one generation to the other (Hamilton & Weiss, 2005). Indeed, storytelling method has become an advanced and significant tool in imparting knowledge and skills in all areas of studies with the assistance of the mass media (Tingöy, Günefler, Öngün, Demira & Koroglu, 2006). More so, there is an Indian proverb which states that: "Tell me a fact and I'll learn. Tell me the truth and I'll believe. But tell me a story and it will live in my heart forever" (Green, 2004). This seemingly simple quote about storytelling justifies its strength in passing on knowledge in either a formal or informal educational setting. As lessons passed on through storytelling will not only be listened to, but can, stick with the learner for a longer period of time due to the creation of vivid mental images.

Like the view by Hefner (2003), storytelling possesses strengths and uses other than just entertainment, this is because, the style of storytelling sometimes presents metaphorical protagonist as template and children in the process of visual learning and conditioning replacement, learn new behaviours. More specifically however, a practical research conducted by Adler, Rosen and Silverstein (1998) on the effects of storytelling therapy in reducing anger related aggression and the enhancement of self-esteem was investigated at an elementary school: students of Ardabil in the school year 2015-2016. 60 students comprising of 30 females and 30 males with high anger related aggression and low-self esteem behaviour problems were assigned randomly in two experimental and control groups. The results were favourable for both anger related aggression in the children as well as their self-esteem. It is worth stating that storytelling therapy reduces the overall anger related aggression in children. Be it verbal aggression, or physical aggression. Hence the effects of storytelling on self-esteem seem to be positive and instrumental in the development of children.

### *Methodology*

An action research design was used for the research, this is because an action-based intervention was required to address the problem identified and at the same time add up to knowledge through research. Like Dick (1993) opined, action research is a

methodology which has the dual aims of action and research thus, action to bring about change in some community, organization or programme and research to increase understanding on the part of the researcher or the client, or both. The target population of this study included 8 juvenile offenders and 3 officers at the Agona Swedru Junior Boys' Correctional Centre. 6 supposedly difficult juvenile offenders were selected for the study. Additionally, all 3 of the officers at the correctional centre were also selected for the study, through a purposive sampling technique. The study lasted for five weeks, as it was conducted during the diagnosis and the assessment sessions of the implementation of intervention process respectively. The diagnosis was done during the first week to establish the evidence of the problem. Before the data collection process, the researchers sent an introductory letter to the principal of the Agona Swedru Junior Boys' Correctional Centre to seek permission for the research to be conducted. The principal subsequently informed the other workers and juvenile offenders at the correctional centre to solicit for their cooperation. The meeting days for data collection and thus the implementation of intervention days were collaboratively scheduled by the researchers and the juvenile correctional officers at the centre. Prior to the observation process, the juvenile participants were informed, and verbal consent was obtained from them before the observation was carried out. Using participant observation, it became possible for the researchers to note the progress of the participants in their natural setting.

#### *Implementation of intervention*

The implementation of intervention process was divided into three phases. Phase one consisted of a one-week familiarization period which lasted for 40 minutes per day. This phase was partly concerned with preparing the juvenile offenders for the whole practice-based exercise and also creating trust and cohesion between the participants and the researchers. The subsequent two phases mainly focused on systematic application of role play and storytelling as interventions to address the anger management and self-esteem among the juvenile participants.

The agenda for both weeks of the second phase, were to attempt to use role play to check lack of anger management, and low self-esteem among the target subset population per each session respectively. In implementing this, the researchers on the first day used role play exercises to:

(1) demonstrate that anger can be managed (2) develop their interpersonal skills for managing both their own anger and that of others through role play. In using the interventions, the researchers participated in an interactive discussion on each participant's typical reaction when angry and what triggers their anger. After this short somewhat expository exercise, the researchers took the following steps in demonstrating that anger can be managed. Juvenile participants were provided with illustrative education on anger, lack of its control, types of problematic anger, their triggers and most importantly practical techniques in controlling anger. After the largely interactive teaching, the six juvenile participants were given role play exercises with the view to observing the interpretation that each participant would bring to their respective roles.

Hence, they were asked to choose partners for the first half of the role-playing intervention. Each paired group was subsequently given two very contrasting roles to act out with one role superior over the other. With this first round of role playing, the superior roles were the perpetrators of anger. E.g. a headmaster versus a junior high school prefect, a parent versus a child, a senior at school versus his/her junior.

The following gives the gist of the first role play:

*The headmaster of a Junior High School walks into the class of the school's head prefect and finds an almost empty class during class hours. He becomes furious upon seeing the head prefect; he yells and virtually calls him incompetent for not being able to control his peers. The head prefect tries to tell the headmaster that his peers were sent out of the class for not being able to pay their school fees but the head master would not hear him out. He orders him to go and kneel down in front of the class where everyone could see him. In rage, the school prefect yells back at the principal and walks out on him. After each enactment, the actions were discussed with specific focus on the types of anger displayed and the flaws in the release of anger.*

With this role play, suggestions were invited, and the various roles were re-enacted in line with the new suggestions from the participants. The post-test for this role play centred observing the various comments that each participant gave after the different enactments with the aim of assessing if indeed the participants learned anything from both the interactive lecture period and the first role play exercise. Again, the researchers flipped the storylines around so much so that, the somewhat inferior roles are the perpetrators of anger and the superior roles succeed in controlling the situation instead of compounding it as seen in the activity above. After this exercise, the participants were asked to share how they felt after this round of role playing and their various comments were noted and observed. In order to further assess the participants on the various topics discussed, the researchers asked each participant to share the anger management technique they believed would best work for them in conjunction with how they typically react to anger and what triggers it. During the assessment, they indicated alternatives in reacting to anger by the participants. After the day's activities, the participants were tasked to prepare their own stories for role playing for the first session of the following week's activities. They were tasked to develop the scenarios with their partners. They were also encouraged to present the scenarios in connection with the various anger management techniques that were discussed earlier that day. This assignment was implemented to aid the researchers to further observe any progress in the various character interpretations and presentations after few days break in anger management-based exercises.

The second meeting day of the implementation process on the other hand, focused on the use of role play activities in promoting positive self-esteem among the juvenile participants. The specific objectives of the day were to: (1) encourage the participants to practice positive self-talk through role play. (2) Give the participants the chance to practice how to boost and promote a positive self-esteem. Before ensuring the

implementation of both objectives (1) and (2), the researchers asked the participants to share how they feel about themselves with the group and indicate why they think they feel the way they do. After this, the researchers engaged the participants in an interactive lecture on the different levels of self-esteem, the things that have negative influences on self-esteem as well as simple steps to take in developing a positive self-esteem. In order to achieve objective (1), a role play exercise developed by the researchers called, “my mirror role play game” was implemented. With this exercise, the participants were asked to pair themselves, with one partner playing the role of the mirror reflecting the other partner. They were asked to face each other with one talking to himself in the “mirror” with encouraging words depending on the previous comments they made about how they feel about themselves. After this, roles were switched, and the action was repeated. The aim of this exercise was to awaken the spirit of empathy in the participants and promote positive self-esteem through positive self-talk. This exercise largely depended on dramatic distance which was enhanced with the use of mask to give participants the chance to make use of theatre metaphor to confront themselves indirectly. After this exercise, the participants were encouraged to share how they felt with the group and their comments and body language were observed. During the second half of the role-playing exercise, the participants were paired up by the researchers in the bid to achieve objective (2). Accordingly, each group was given various roles to play with self-esteem related themes. For instance, the first roles consisted of two friends: Role 1: a young man who always puts his friend down and Role 2: the other friend who decides to stay away from the emotionally abusive friend in order not to further get his self-esteem bruised.

The events in each enactment were discussed and the participants were encouraged to each share how they felt about the enactments and any lessons they might have learned. During this final discussion process, the researchers got the chance to assess the effects of the interactive lecture on the participants. In concluding the events for the day, the participants were tasked to keep practicing positive self-talk and prepare to share any effect it might have on them with the whole group during the second meeting day of the following week. In order to bring the second face to an end, we met with the participants during three different sessions for the presentation of assignments for the second half of the first phase. Therefore, during the first session of the week, each paired group was asked to present their own stories for role playing in connection with the various anger management techniques that were discussed from the first session of this phase. There were three presentations and the scenarios were tailored around: the technique of counting to ten before speaking when angry, the technique of not avoiding polite confrontation when angered and the technique of taking a walk to cool off when angered to unsure an unaggressive confrontation. During the exercises, the various character interpretations and presentations were observed. Additionally, after each enactment, open discussions were made and the session was brought to an end. For the final assessment day, the participants were encouraged to share how they feel about themselves after practicing positive self-talk. An open discussion was made on the



aspect of their lives they feel have improved through positive self-talk. During this exercise, the body language of the participants was observed and any improvements in self-confidence were also observed.

The third phase of the implementation period was centred on using storytelling to check lack of anger management, and low self-esteem among the juvenile participants. In implementing this intervention, the researchers on the first day took the necessary steps to achieve the following objectives:

- (1) revise the lessons on anger management techniques through a storytelling format.
- (2) reinforce the implications of lack of anger management through storytelling. In order to achieve both objectives (1) and (2) with one story, the researchers told the participants a short story about a set of identical twins. Below is the gist:

*These identical twins had two different ways of expressing their anger. The first twin "Panyin" usually avoids polite confrontations when angered so he hides his anger most of the time which results in him compounding the emotion overtime. "Kakra" the younger one, however, reacts to anger more aggressively than his brother, he would yell and destroy things when angry. "Panyin" eventually explodes in an uncontained anger towards his twin brother after hiding the emotion for so long. "Kakra" being as aggressive as he usually is, reacts to his twin brother in an even more uncontrollable way and both brothers end up physically hurting each other so severely that, they both end up in a coma for a period of two market days. While in the coma, the boys were summoned by "odomankoma" the supreme God. He severely rebuked the twins for not being able to emulate his forgiving ways and provided them with three magic tricks to help guide them to be able to harmlessly and positively express anger. After his teaching, he ordered them to go back into the physical world and share the magic tricks with their entire village, hence the boys regained full consciousness.*

After the storytelling session, questions were invited from the participants and the events of the narrative were discussed, each participant was asked to point out the lessons they learned from the lives of the twin brothers and how they react to anger. The various comments of the participants on the story were observed. In concluding the day's activities, the researchers asked each participant to think about which of the twin brothers they could most relate to, and prepare to share with the group, a personal story to that effect, for the first meeting day of the following week. With this assignment, the researchers were able to get the participants to directly talk about their anger management problems and get positive suggestions to dealing with them.

Still on storytelling, the researchers on the second day, made use of a storytelling technique to further address low self-esteem among the juvenile participants. In implementing this, the researchers worked at achieving the following objectives: (1) help the participants to confront themselves and break away from any memory that may be having a negative effect on their self-esteem. (2) promote positive self-esteem through a sense of creating a story together as a group spontaneously. For the reasons above, the

researchers told the participants the story of a timid caterpillar, who, blossomed into a beautiful butterfly and shocked everyone who undermined and made fun of it.

After the story, the participants were asked to pick the characters they could relate to the most and share the reasons behind their selection with the whole group. This storytelling intervention was implemented to help the participants to ultimately confront and make peace with some of the past events that may still have a hold on their self-confidence. During this process, the characters that each participant relates to were observed. Additionally, to achieve objective (2), a story group storytelling method was used. This method required that, all participants and the researchers, selected a theme from the storyline box of themes which was provided by the researchers. The theme that was selected was, "greed can lead to sin". The main aim of this storytelling format was to boost the confidence of the juvenile participants through the sense of creating as well as building upon their interpersonal trust as they learn to trust themselves enough to participate in the communal story telling session freely. Any notable improvements in their confidence were observed. In closing however, the researchers asked each participant to think about and prepare to share how they feel about themselves after hearing about the story of the caterpillar and practicing positive self-talk for the following week's second meeting session. This assignment was given to the participants to make it possible to assess and observe any improvements in their self-image and esteem.

## Results

Obviously, the researchers' interaction with the juvenile offenders showed the problem with evidence of low self-esteem. Also, the self-condemnation and feeling of isolation came across as quite disturbing. The researchers also observed signs of physical and psychological symptoms of low self-esteem among the selected participants of the study. All the selected juvenile participants made efforts to avoid eye contact while talking. They always spoke with bowed body posture with a sense of hesitancy in opinion and idea sharing. It was also observed that the boys had major problems with assertive self-expression and verbal communication. For instance, all of them showed signs of fear and hesitancy in their willingness to take part in the three-day familiarization process and thus suggesting their avoidance of challenges and new opportunities for the fear of failure or disappointment. As far as the psychological symptoms of low self-esteem are concerned, persistent signs of sadness, anxiety, and frustration among all six selected participants were prevalent.

On the first day of the first assessment week, the researchers made use of a role play assignment to assess the effect of the technique as a teaching tool on lack of anger management among the participants. As part of the assessment of the participants were made to prepare and present their own role play scenarios to the group. This assignment was implemented to aid the researcher to further observe any progress in the various character interpretations and comprehension of the anger management techniques taught through role play. The assessment period with the role play indicated.

Thus, enactments were tailored around: the technique of counting to ten before speaking when angry, the technique of not avoiding polite confrontation when angered and the technique of taking a walk to cool off when angered to unsure an unaggressive confrontation. During this round of role playing, the researchers observed that, there was a sense of cohesion among each group as compared to their first role playing as a group. The researchers also observed that, the various character interpretations by the juvenile participants were calmer and controlled. After all three enactments and discussion of scenarios, the researcher observed that, the participants seemed more conscious of their actions as far as anger provocation and responses were concerned. Incidents of angry outburst per the researchers' observation reduced considerably as compared to the previous implementation sessions of this first phase. More so, the researcher also observed that, all 6 participants seemed more relaxed during this assessment role playing exercise. They seemed to have better control of what they say and how they react to what their partners say.

The researchers also observed that, 4 out of the 6 participants showed better understanding of the various anger management techniques used in the role-playing scenarios as compared to the interactive lecture process of the first role play implementation day. The results of the implementation also showed that on the second assessment, the second phase, the researchers made use of a role play assignment to assess any progress on the self-esteem of the 6 juvenile participants as influenced by their encounter with role play activities. As part of their assessment, the researcher asked the participants to keep practicing positive self-talk and prepare to share any effect it might have on them with the whole group. Through an open discussion, the researcher observed that, the participants were very enthused about positive self-talk. All 6 participants attested to the fact that, they got more comfortable practicing with the exercise because of the full facial masks that they were given to experiment with. Throughout the discussions, the researcher also observed slight improvements in the self-confidence of 5 of the juvenile participants. Unlike the diagnostic period and sessions before, participants 1,2,4,5 and 6 were much more relaxed during this session. They made eye contact while talking, they interacted with each other more and they contributed to group discussions without fear or uncertainty. All the aforementioned participants became more open and outspoken at this stage. Through this discussion, the researchers observed that, more than half of the participants understood the preliminary interactive lecture on the different levels of self-esteem, the things that have negative influences on self-esteem as well as simple steps to take in developing a positive self-esteem.

Furthermore, a storytelling assignment was implemented in order to enable the researchers to observe the effects of storytelling on the lack of anger management of the juvenile offenders. Each participant was asked to tell the group which of the twin brothers in the storytelling segment of the first storytelling section they could relate with the most. They were then asked to share a personal story to that effect. During this

period the researchers observed that participants 2, 3, 4 and 6 could relate with the character “Kakra” in terms of anger expression whereas participants 1 and 5 related more with the character “Panyin”. However, when all 6 participants were asked to share a story of their most recent expression of anger through either avoidance or aggression, the researcher observed that, the participants shared stories that happened before the first assessment day of phase two. Thus, suggesting the positive effects of the anger management interventions from the first phase to the second. Also, the researcher observed a very open, expressive and interactive attitude of the participants during the storytelling session. During and after the various personal stories, the researchers observed that, all the participants were more attentive during each storytelling segment as compared to the other interactive teaching sessions used before. They got engrossed in the storytelling process so much that, there were no notable distractions or interruptions from the participants, neither were there excuses to sit out the storytelling process. The researchers also observed that, unlike the first anger management session where only 4 of the participants got an understanding of the anger management techniques in theory, all 6 of the participants attested to getting a clearer understanding of the anger management techniques in theory through the story of “Kakra” and “Panyin”.

On the second assessment day of phase 3, each participant was tasked to prepare and share how they feel about themselves after hearing about the story of the caterpillar and practicing positive self-talk. Here again, the researchers made use of storytelling as an assessment tool on the effects of the technique on low self-esteem. Through this, the researchers noted that, the participants could talk positively about themselves and one another and they were more reflective and pragmatic with their life expectations. The participants showed improvements in their self-confidence, thus they made more eye contact while talking, their body posture was not bowed, and they expressed their ideas freely and willingly without indecisiveness. The researchers also observed that, participant 4 in particular showed significant improvements in self-confidence because unlike the preliminary stages of the implementation process, the said participant did not, for once, self-condemn himself during or after the storytelling process.

### Discussion of Results

It was revealed in the research that the participants developed a sense of sympathizing with their partners which could be considered as empathy. This was developed through role playing and identifying with other characters and circumstances. As Farmer (2014) corroborated, role play as a teaching method is based on the assumption that individuals may gain greater understanding of their behaviour and that of others, as they act out various aspects of their lives and others. Children as well as young people are said to be able to acquire social skills through acting out a story or by participating in drama either as a player or actor. As humans take on different roles either similar or other than themselves and pretend and imagine themselves as the role they play, they often gain new insights and sympathies. In addition, the authors believe that, partakers in drama,

can also practice and internalize life skills through role play. They may pick up and practice new ways to communicate. Per the results, role play provided the participants with a playful and healthy medium to address personal conflicts without violence. Like Talbot and Thornton (2010) addressed, role play offers different ways to manage conflict.

Also, it became obvious in the research that concepts of anger control could not have been completely understood by the participants without the opportunity to physically practice it. Harbour and Connick (2004) similarly agree that, role play is often used as a way of making sense of a theory, gathering concepts together and transforming them into a practical experience. The belief that, 'I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand' the authors considered very applicable in this context. Finally, the notable improvements in the comprehension of the anger control techniques in theory through role playing suggests that, role play is an essential tool in giving students or in this case, juvenile participants the chance to actively practice what they learn in theory to ensure complete understanding and a better chance of practice in real life. This finding is sync with the thoughts of Deffenbacher, Lynch, Oetting and Kemper (1996) that, it is not sufficient to only teach or talk about the various skills used in anger control because participants need to practically rehearse and subsequently demonstrate their ability to put their learned skills into practice and the best way to achieve this is through role plays.

In terms of the effects of role play on the self-esteem of the juvenile participants, results gathered during the implementation period reveal that, the role play activities during the assessment stage provided a playful and non-judgmental environment for the participants to break out from self-condemnation and explore new ways of expression and communication. More so, the results suggest the practical nature of role play, created an avenue for the participants to work at building up their self-confidence through creating and performance.

The analysis of the data collected on the effects of storytelling on the two problem behaviours concerned with this study first of all revealed that, storytelling is more instrumental in teaching and discussing the various techniques of anger in theory as opposed to a verbal lecture. The results also suggested the efficacy of storytelling in passing on theoretical knowledge from one source to the other. These findings agree with Hefner (2003), opinion on storytelling which states that, the style of storytelling sometimes presents metaphorical protagonist as template and children in the process of visual learning and conditioning replacement, learn new behaviours. More so, the above findings justify the Indian proverb which states that, "Tell me a fact and I'll learn. Tell me the truth and I'll believe. But tell me a story and it will live in my heart forever."

This finding concurs with many views on the usefulness of storytelling. For instance, Tingöy, Günefler, Öngün, Demira and Koroglu, (2006) opined that, storytelling is mostly regarded as an important aspect of humanity's growth and total development. Finally, the general effects of storytelling on the anger control of the juvenile delinquents suggest

its strong effects on the problem behaviour of the participants, because of its didactic nature. This finding coincides with the research finding of Adler, Rosen and Silverstein (1998) on the effects of storytelling therapy in reducing anger related aggression and the enhancement of self-esteem, among elementary school children of Ardabil in the school year 2015-2016. The results showed that storytelling therapy reduces the overall anger related aggression in children. Be it verbal aggression, physical aggression or communicative aggression.

Also, per the implementation of intervention results, it was evident that, there were notable changes in the self-esteem and confidence of the participants. This is because, at this stage, the participants exhibited none of the symptoms opined by Fennell (2009) as the manifestations of low self-esteem. There were no signs of bowed body posture, avoidance of making eye contact, hushed voice and hesitant posture. Neither were there notable signs of persistent sadness, anxiety, guilt, shame or frustration. More so, the show of respect for others views and the development of trust among the participants as observed through the group storytelling activity all go to suggest a general positivity in the self-esteem of the participants because, according to the Centre for Integrated HealthCare, (2013) a positive Self-esteem is a way of human thinking, feeling, and acting that reflects that one accepts, respects, and believes in him or herself.

Generally, the effects of the group storytelling technique were very instrumental in teaching the participants interpersonal trust and confidence. This was because storytelling gave the participants the chance to discuss embarrassing or difficult aspects of their lives. Through such a creative communication and expressive medium, the participants got the chance to get positive suggestions to their problems and learn to detach themselves from negative memories which were toxic to building up their confidence and self-esteem. The finding therefore demonstrates that, indeed, techniques such as anger control, alternatives to responding to angry situations and maintaining a positive self-image can be taught with the continuous storytelling method, where children or participants are given the chance to start a story and the facilitator continues the story with the same characters in order to teach a specific technique of dealing with the emotion or emotions expressed by the child (Poinier & Zisook, 2011).

## Conclusions

The study revealed that role play is practical and playful enough to encourage hands-on learning and practice of learned techniques in anger control and positive self-esteem among juvenile offenders. Due to its practicability, role play is instrumental in fostering positive change through practice and observation in an experiential learning setting. Additionally, storytelling has a strong potential in encouraging change and motivating positive behaviour among juvenile offenders due to its didactic and metaphoric nature. More so, due to the interactive and captivating nature of oral storytelling, the technique is perfect for teaching new behaviours and specific techniques of anger control, and positive self-esteem. The findings are very instrumental in anger control and reformation as it fosters respect, selflessness and effective conflict resolution. Per the analysis of the

results, it is also clear that, storytelling provided a channel through which the juvenile participant's personal and sensitive topics were discussed and evaluated to make way for learning new behaviours and expressions in relation to anger control. Indeed, Storytelling maybe considered as an artistic means of expressing or sharing experiences, emotions and ideas in different forms of knowledge transfer. It is therefore recommended that Role Play and Storytelling are used as reformative teaching tools to deal with all forms of problem behaviours among juvenile offenders in correctional centres.

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