

The social connotations of tattoos at juvenile delinquents

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Abstract:

The phenomenon of tattooing has existed in Algerian society since ancient times. In the past, women would adorn their faces with tattoos, symbols with well-known connotations among the people of the region. They were a form of adornment or a sign of fertility. Some women wore them to ward off the evil eye and envy, while others wore them to heal themselves from illnesses. Tattoos were also common among sailors and fishermen, demonstrating their strength and lack of fear of sailing. Tattoos were also known as a feature of prisoners and deviant individuals, expressing their strength and terrorizing their opponents. They also expressed their repressed feelings. This study aimed to identify the types of tattoos prevalent among the juvenile delinquents, the meanings these tattoos carry, and the reason that prompted them to tattoo them. The results reached were that most of the minors got tattoos to imitate their colleagues while they were in prisons, rehabilitation institutions, or high schools, as all of them only got tattoos inside these centers, and tattoos, according to their point of view at that time, were an expression of their repressed feelings and an expression of their psychological and social status.

Keywords: The juvenile; Delinquent; Juvenile Delinquent; Tattoo; tattoo's connotations

Introduction:

Today's delinquent is likely to be tomorrow's criminal if not addressed at all social and psychological levels, as well as legally protected for this important segment of society. Rehabilitation and social integration must be on shoulder of whole society in the first degree in addition institutions has established specifically for this purpose, most notably the rehabilitation and re-education centers spread across different regions of the country, which receive delinquent youth and subject them to well-thought-out rehabilitation programs aimed at modifying their behavior and socially rehabilitating

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them. However, the degree of response and influence of these programs varies, as shown by some of them rebelling against the educators within the center, and their refusal to participate in programs and activities. Some of them even learn new deviant behaviors, and this is where the danger lies. Below, we will try to know if that negative phenomena prevalent within the rehabilitation and re-education, which is tattooing. Is its spread due to imitation among minors, or does it truly express the tendencies and repressions of the minors who wear tattoos? This is done by trying to find girls who have tattoos and have passed through these rehabilitation centers or prisons.

1-Defining concepts:

1-1- The juvenile: Psychologists and sociologists has defined it as the young person throughout the stages of his life, beginning from birth until he reaches psychological and social maturity, and the elements of adulthood are integrated. So the legal definition of 'juvenile' is neither fixed nor universal in criminal justice systems around the globe. Variations in the legal construction of the age-bounded status of a 'juvenile' in regard to delinquency and criminality reflect differences in historical, political, ideological, and economic developments that drive the evolution of youth justice models and institutional structures. (Abrams, 2018, p. 02)

1-2- Juvenile Delinquent: A young person who has reached the age specified by law for discernment, but has not exceeded the age specified for adulthood, and who commits an act that the law considers a crime, such as theft, murder, rape, or any other act punishable by law for harming the safety and security of society. This is way Tannenbaum argued that delinquents are not inherently different from non-delinquents. Rather, it is the process of defining someone as a juvenile delinquent that arises out of conflict over the definition of particular activities or situations (usually involving relatively minor forms of infraction by the young person concerned) which is important. Over time this leads to a hardening of local opinion, and attitudes change not just toward the behaviour concerned but also toward the young person. The changed attitudes lead to changes in behaviour – in interaction between the community and the young person in

an extremely negative environment (Tim, 2017, p. 213) And we can give more definition of this concept by the united nations has mentioned it as encompasses all public wrongs committed by young people between the ages of 12 and 20. Sociologists view the concept more broadly, believing that it covers a multitude of different violations of legal and social norms, from minor offences to serious crimes, committed by juveniles (NATIONS, 2003, p. 190)

1-3-Tattoo: These are drawings engraved on the prisoner's body by inserting needles into the body to create holes in the skin. Kohl powder or brick powder is then applied to the chosen drawings engraved on the body. We have seen many definitions of it .the most prominent of these definitions that is defined as tattooing is integrated into the social fabric of community and religious life. And typically speaking. It is a cultural. Clan .or family-mandated ritual that anchors societal values on the skin for all to see. The tattooed dermis is a potent source of pride. Precisely because it reenact ancestral or mythological traditions in many societies (Krutak, 2016, p. 2)

2- Features of delinquent behavior in juveniles.

Indications of delinquent behavior are symptoms that appear in a juvenile's behavior. If present, they indicate that the juvenile is on the path to delinquency and delinquency. These manifestations include:

Poor school performance, stealing displayed items, assaulting others, alcohol and drug use, use of weapons to steal cars, robbery and theft with violence, and deliberate destruction of public and private property. Some also include chronic pathological lying, forgery, begging, deviant sexual behavior, and homelessness. Research studies on delinquency and delinquency also agree that there is a set of characteristics that characterize delinquent or juvenile offenders, which distinguish them from non-delinquent individuals of their age. These characteristics can be summarized as follows: Juvenile offenders are generally described as constantly moving, hyperactive, impulsive, and aggressive, showing no concern for others. They exhibit defiance, resentment, hostility, recklessness, and rebellion

against authority. They tend to use actual and direct expression, rather than symbolic expression, to solve their problems. They also exhibit extreme and unusual sensitivity toward others, characterized by psychological tension and fear

Emotional states, accompanied by changes in feelings toward a particular person, resulting from conflicting desires, such as mood swings, such as psychological distress, sadness, and despair.

The presence of a compulsive state of ambition and superiority. The presence of such a tendency in the subconscious can be inferred from the juvenile's pleasure at any recognition and his fear of failure.

In this regard, the researcher Gisela Konopka points out that the girls is moving out from the family toward interdependence in three areas: with his peers, her own generation; with her elders, but now on an interacting or a rebellious level instead of a dependent level and with younger children, not on a play level but on a beginning-to-care-for-and nurture level.

This process of moving away from dependency creates tension and emotional conflicts. Consciousness of self in interaction. The development of self and the searching for self starts in childhood, but the intellectual as well as the emotional consciousness of self in interaction with others is particularly characteristic of adolescence. It is a time when personal meaning is given to new social experiences. The girls person defines for himself what he is experiencing in his relationships with others. Her "meaning" may be different from that of those with whom he is interacting, but so long as it makes sense to him he can grow and move forward. The kind of categories she used as a child to figure out the world begin to break down. What may have been clear and explicable may suddenly become inexplicable (Konopka, Pitt Open Library Publishing., 2020, p. 134) So in this situation we can explain the deviance by two reasons. The first one are represented by two factors, which are doubt and loneliness. You see that the girl in her adolescence needs acceptance,

sympathy and recognition from family, relatives and friends, but if the bonds of friendship with these people are damaged, the girl will resort to people through whom she satisfies her sexual desires, and thus resist isolation. If she tries to return to family and relatives, she will be met with rejection, and thus she will suffer more and feel inferior.

3- Field Study:

3-1 The Methodology Used in the Study: A scientific study requires the researcher to choose a specific research method for their study, which they will rely on from the beginning of their research until its conclusion. In our study, we relied on the descriptive-analytical method. We relied on this method through our exploratory and field studies, which identified the various dimensions and aspects of the subject under study. Accordingly, our study was descriptive-analytical, following this method, which relies on both quantitative and qualitative methods in processing data. We found that Qualitative data might be in the form of interview transcripts or hand written notes of research observations. Sociologists' data might also be in some other format. Some sociologists, for example, use visual imagery in their analyses, so they have collections of photographs or videos to analyze. Additionally, they should be sure to clean the data (Stolley, 2005, p. 209). that what make us use Qualitative expression describes the phenomenon and clarifies its characteristics, while quantitative expression gives it a numerical description, clarifying the magnitude or size of this phenomenon and the degree of its connection with other various phenomena."

3-2 Methodological techniques and tools used in the study: In this study, we relied on various methodological tools and methods that helped us identify the forms of tattooing prevalent among minors and the reasons for their tattooing. These tools are as follows:

- Observation: We relied on direct observation for our field study at the Girls' who has made tattoos when they were in Re-education Center or in the prison or in high school. Over time, and through my presence with the

respondents and gaining their trust, and not focusing solely on asking questions about the study topic, but also engaging in conversation with them about topics they suggested,. This helped me observe some of the actions and behaviors they exhibited, and they showed me some of the tattoos on their bodies.

- Interview: The interview is an important research technique that allows us to discover the respondents' opinions and perceptions within this interactive relationship with them regarding the research topic. So In Quantitative research is more structured than in Qualitative research. In a structured interview, the researcher asks a standard set of questions and nothing more (Sufian, 2015, p. 93) and through the interviews, we tried to ask questions about the meanings of tattoos, the details of their application, and the purpose of them, i.e., the symbols and connotations that the tattoo carries.

3-3 Study sample: In our field study, we relied on the snowball sampling, you start by identifying a few respondents that match the criteria for inclusion in your study, and then ask them to recommend others they know who also meet your selection criteria. For instance, if you wish to survey computer network administrators and you know of only one or two such people, you can start with them and ask them to recommend others who also do network administration (Bhattacharjee, 2012, p. 63).so The research units are chosen deliberately by the researcher. When he goes down to the research field, he chooses the vocabulary that he believes will serve his research, that it has the characteristics and features that he has previously determined. each one leads us to another . During the period of our visiting in order to conduct field research, we were able to study 8 cases that met the conditions of our research sample, which is that all of them had tattoos on their bodies.

4- Study results:

Through the study, we found that none of the sample members (8 cases) had tattoos on their bodies when we had used the snowball. All of

them had gotten tattoos inside that institutions according to them . All of the respondents confirmed that they had gotten tattoos in imitation of their colleagues, and their conviction in the connotations and meanings of the tattoos encouraged them to do so. We had noticed that the forms of tattoos differ from one minor to another, but the most common is the dot tattoo, and the meaning of each tattoo varies according to the number of dots tattooed, as shown in the table attached to the study. The reason for minors' interest in this type of tattoo is due to several considerations, including the ease of tattooing it, as it is not complicated and does not require a lot of time, In a similar vein, Sanders' ethnographic account of the modern-day tattoo shop reveals how the social response to tattooing has been affected by its redefinition as "art" in recent

decades . Following Becker's model , he shows how this formerly subcultural practice has been appropriated, rearticulated, and commodified as a legitimate art form by middle-class artists and consumers or it also has deep connotations that are compatible with the psychological and social status of those who have the tattoo (david, 2011, p. 14) . For example, one dot, which means "solitaire," is widespread, especially among minors of unknown parentage, as an expression of their feeling of loneliness , and that no one cares about them. It also indicates to the rest of the minors that they do not need companions. The two-dot tattoo is also widespread among them, which means "against contempt," that is, against injustice and oppressors, and is an expression that she has already been subjected to injustice, whether by specific individuals or by society as a whole. The three-dot tattoo is also widespread, meaning "against the state" or against the law, and is an implicit expression that they belong to a subculture that hates the law and its enforcement symbols, such as the police and gendarmerie, and thus is an expression of their rebellion against society. And about its laws and customs, because this society, in their opinion, did not provide them with any significant support or containment. All they received was ostracism, marginalization, and exclusion. Also, the four-dot tattoo is widespread among minors, meaning "no father, no mother, no

basket, no visit,” when they had been at prison or rehabilitation and meaning no one comes to visit her or care about her, so she feels alienated. This tattoo is widespread among illegitimate children, as the minors who were inside the prison or rehabilitations receive visits from their families, they have said: during which they bring them clothes and food, console them in their ordeal, and provide them with moral support to overcome their ordeal. That visits take place on weekends, when the prison or rehabilitations's yard is filled with incoming visitors. However, there is a category of minors who do not receive any visits, including illegitimate children, which saddens them and makes them feel inferior, lonely, and lost. As for the five-dot tattoo, it means “Milieu's loneliness,” meaning that the owner of the tattoo practices prostitution and sends a message to those around her that she does so, which makes it easier for her to attract those who want to practice it. and that tattoo is considered as labeling theory posits that people take on deviant

identities and play deviant roles because they are strongly influenced into doing so by the application of stigmatizing labels to them. This line of thinking has been applied most commonly to juvenile delinquents, as well as the mentally ill, rapists, nudists, homosexuals, ex-convicts, shoplifters, and people struggling to manage their weight. Sociologists have also examined the ways stigmatized identities and groups organized around them have become the source of political consciousness and attendant social movement activity (TURNER, 2006, p. 140). Along with these mentioned forms, tattoos of letters that indicate the first letter of a certain name are spreading among minors inside the prison. This is often for the minor's lover, and it is an expression of her attachment to him and the sincerity of her feelings towards him. Our attention when they talk was drawn to a tattoo on one of the minors that was a question mark “?” "The tattoo on her arm, according to her statement, indicates that she no longer understands anything about her life, that her future has become uncertain, and that her entire life has become a question mark: Who am I? What will my future be like? The respondent is confused and these questions plague her, and instead of constantly thinking about these questions, she decided to get this tattoo.

What we also noticed was the absence of complex tattoos among minors. This is due to the lack of necessary facilities and tools within the prison, as well as their lack of experience and skill in drawing complex tattoos. Therefore, most minors resort to simple tattoos. Although tattoos are prohibited within the places where they were in that duration, they are widespread. When we inquired with girls, about the widespread phenomenon of tattoos among minors, they confirmed that they learned it within the center, imitating their friends. It consists of drawings and symbols as an expression of the repressed feelings within them, and messages are sent through the tattoo's connotation of strength, lack of fear, and various feelings. Their resort to tattoos is also a declaration of a break with society. This is highlighted by the symbolism of tattoos, based on their failure to adhere to the social contract of their society, and their lack of moral and ethical commitment to its established norms. We found in many studies the tattooed individuals under investigation were already diagnosed and labeled as psychopathological, or were convicted of committing a criminal act. Thus, the association made between tattoos and criminality has been at times spurious (Kosut, 2015, p. 34) Recourse to tattoos indicates a loss of identity and belonging to society, a weakened emotional bond within the family, and a failure to connect with the general behavioral framework of society. Furthermore, disfiguring the body in this way is a form of revenge against the body image, a primary expression of self-denial. They also symbolize the failure to place the body within the framework of the social value of the body's morality, in addition to making it a recent chronicle of the intense crises or situations they have experienced, which remain engraved in their bodily memory. The tattooed person considers the body a window to the outside world, through which they interact with others and with the life framework in general. It is what expresses the person before he expresses himself through words or other means. The skin represents the preferred exchange area for the tattooed person with the surrounding world, as the body turns for the tattooed into a notebook of memories and an album of drawings and a means to display a number of feelings such as love and hate, betrayal, and treachery. It permanently

carries the symbols of life and symbols of death. For prisoners, their bodies are lived as an existential experience, and their intentions, purposes, and existential suffering appear on them. The tattoo and the images it carries are nothing but a reflection of the prisoner's view of his existence and his self-worth. Tattooing in the penal environment is an expression of identity because most of the drawings that prisoners engrave on their bodies indicate a certain affiliation, which is contrary to the general trend of society, and it is an affirmation of the self this is way we can say the tattoos is not just drawing but tattooing has always been a signifier of 'outsiderness', often overshadowed by symbolic associations with marginalized groups and subcultures. but now they are for antisocial person . Even though tattoos have been cleaned up – symbolically, esthetically, and culturally – and hold more positive cultural capital today than at any point in modern history, they are still tethered to forms of social marginality (Kosut, 2015, p. 35)

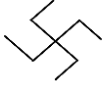
Below are pictures of some of the tattoos they got while they were in these institutions.

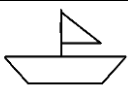
Question mark tattoo "?" to signify loss and questioning identity	Four dots tattoo: "No father. No mother. No basket. No visitor."	Three dots tattoo "against the state" And a tattoo of the letter N, the first letter of her lover's name
		

As part of our research, we identified a number of tattoo designs that are common, particularly among juvenile delinquents and criminals. These are illustrated in the following table:

Dictionary of Tattoo Meanings:

Meaning and Connotations	Common Places for Tattoos	tattoos
Solitaire," meaning the tattooed person is alone in this world, and no one cares about her. This tattoo is comm on amongillegiti mate children	On the hand	● One
"Against Indignity," meaning she hates injustice and oppressors, and it also indicates that she has suffered injustice.	On the hand	● ● Two points
Against the State," meaning the tattooed person disrespects the laws of the state, rebels against them, and refuses to obey them.	On the hand	● ● ● 3 points
"No father, no mother, no basket, no visit." No one comes to visit her or cares about her. She feels alienated. This tattoo is common among illegitimate children.	On the hand	● ● ● ● 4 points
Homeless girl meaning that the tattooed woman is practicing prostitution, sending a message to those around her that she is doing so.	On the hand	● ● ● ● ● 5 points
"Pardonnez-moi, j'ai oublié," meaning that the tattooed woman was betrayed by her lover, but despite that, she cannot forget him.	on the shoulder	P.P.O.J
"My mother before everyone else," signifies the tattooed woman's attachment to her mother.	on the shoulder	M.A.T

"Tout passe," meaning that the difficult situation the tattooed woman is living in will pass and her circumstances will improve.	on the shoulder	T.P.S
""Against the Arabs," meaning that she hates Arabs, but in reality, she means her hatred and resentment toward members of society.	On the hand or shoulder	 Swastika,Nazi symbol
Lesbian," meaning that the tattooed woman is practicing lesbianism. Through this tattoo, she is sending a message to lesbians seeking to get closer to her.	On the hand or shoulder	 Swastika with four points inside
We don't rejoice." The owner of this tattoo indicates that she is as dangerous as a scorpion, distrusting even those who are kind to her.	on the shoulder	 scorpion
"Where do we go to live?" The butterfly symbolizes freedom. After being trapped in its cocoon, it emerges in its best form to live and go wherever it pleases. This is the case of the owner of the tattoo, who is trapped in the center and longs for freedom and to do what she wants.	on the shoulder or down of the back	 butterfly
"Where do you throw me? I'll cling?" indicates that the owner of the tattoo can adapt to various situations, no matter how difficult. She finds solutions to all her problems, even if these solutions involve deviant behavior.	lowerleg	 viper

"I love nightlife." The star is distinguished by its appearance only at night and its brilliance in the sky. The owner of the tattoo indicates that she loves nightlife and loves to shine there like a star.	In the hand, in the neck under the ear	 star
"Like a boat." The owner of the tattoo indicates that she is engaged in prostitution. She is sending a message to those who seek her help that she does not mind as long as the reward is money...	on the shoulder or down of the back	 boat
"Love of freedom." The owner of the tattoo longs for freedom.	on the shoulder	 A heart behind which the sun rises
"Wounded by Love." This tattoo indicates that its owner has gone through an emotional experience that broke her heart.	On shoulder	 heart pierced by an arrow
The heart represents love, and the letter inside it represents the first letter of the name of the person she loves, expressing her love and loyalty.	On shoulder	 Heart in sideit
It also represents the first letters of the names of her friends, expressing her attachment to them.	On the hand or the shoulder	S , M , Y , H

Conclusion:

Rehabilitation and rehabilitation centers and prisons are closed environments established by the state to reintegrate minors and rid them of the delinquent behaviors that led to their admission to the center. This is done through programs and activities designed for this purpose. However, the reality we discovered through our field study is that this institution has failed in its mission. It has been transformed into a school for minors to learn more deviant behaviors after interacting with their fellow residents. According to the researchers, we found many forms of deviant behavior, such as tattooing, which they had not experienced before their admission to the center. Instead, they practiced it inside, imitating the center's inmates and expressing their resentment and pent-up feelings about the social situation they are experiencing.

It is worth noting that tattooing in our society is religiously forbidden, unacceptable, and frowned upon by custom. Nevertheless, this phenomenon remains widespread in our society, especially with the development of tattooing tools and the opening of specialized tattoo shops, where many individuals embrace it as a form of adornment and fashion.

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