

Unraveling Demographic Profile and Individual Dynamics of Juvenile Delinquents - A Mixed Method Approach

Farrukh Iqbal^{1*}, Naumana Amjad²

Abstract

The previous studies have implied that socio-economic, personality and societal factors play a key role in the development as well as deterrence from delinquency. The present article is based on two studies from a bigger research project that investigated psychological, social and demographic characteristics associated with juvenile delinquency in Pakistan. The first study analyzed the archival data with the purpose of obtaining some basic demographics of reported delinquent cases in Punjab and compare first time offenders with repeat offenders. Archival data indicated that low income, single parenthood, crime accomplices, crime history and lack of formal schooling were common features of majority of reported cases. The *t*-test analyses showed significant difference in education and age and no difference in income between repeat offenders and first time offenders. The second study was based on in-depth interviews with 6 individuals, revealed an outplay of similar demographics. Content analysis showed that the juvenile delinquents lived in single parent families, with inadequate supervision, demonstrated defiant behavior, desire for lavish life style, association with deviant peers, poverty, and school dropout. Absence of ethical friends and poor religious education also featured as one of the sub-themes from interviews. Based on these two studies, a model is suggested for further investigation. The findings are discussed in light of previous research as well as theoretical perspectives. Implications of these findings are outlined for policy makers, social agencies, educators and parents.

Keywords: Delinquents, Justice System, Juvenile, Narratives, Pakistan

Received: 20 August 2024; Revised
Received: 21 September 2024; Accepted: 23
September 2024

^{1*}PhD Scholar, Institute of Applied Psychology, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.

²Associate Professor (Retired), Institute of Applied Psychology, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.

***Corresponding Author Email:**

rajafarrukh786@gmail.com

Introduction

Ideally, a society aims to have responsible and law-abiding citizens. All parents hope and aspire that their children grow up to be successful, productive and responsible citizens. However, a fair number may not learn rules of proper conduct and commit

certain acts that are punishable by law. Juvenile delinquency is a specific term used for offenses or crimes that are committed by underage persons. The delinquency is a serious concern for all societies since young offenders may become adult criminals if not deterred and corrected. Genetic, societal, family and personal factors have been implicated in juvenile offending among individuals and socio-political and economic factors have been linked to development of delinquency trends in a society. A thorough understanding of both personal as well as societal determinants and precursors of delinquent behavior is needed to design preventive as well as correctional programs. However, we lack in-depth studies as well as summaries of current features of delinquents. The purpose of the studies planned in this project is to remedy this gap in knowledge.

This article is distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non Commercial 4.0 International License (<https://www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>) which permits non-Commercial use, reproduction and distribution of the work without further permission provided the original work is attributed as specified.

© Copyright: The Authors (2024)

Defining Delinquency

Juvenile delinquency refers to the involvement of individuals, typically between the ages of 10 and 18, in behaviors that violate the legal or social norms (Jurczyk & Lalak, 2020). This phenomenon is not only a legal concern but also a social issue that reflects broader problems within society, such as family dynamics, economic conditions, and social structures (Farrington, 2003; Moffitt, 1993, 2006; Moore et al., 2017). Juvenile delinquency encompasses a wide range of activities, from minor infractions like truancy and vandalism to more serious offenses such as theft, assault, homicide and drug-related crimes (Bartol & Bartol, 2014).

Research has shown that the age of onset plays a crucial role in determining delinquency risk, with earlier onset associated with a higher risk of persistent offending (Hanson et al., 1984; Tolan & Thomas, 1995). Longitudinal studies have also demonstrated that offending can persist from childhood to late middle age, highlighting the importance of early intervention and prevention (Farrington et al., 2023). A recent study found that recidivist juvenile offenders started their criminal career significantly earlier, had more average number of charges/cases, and spent more time in custody as compared to their counterparts (Irfan & Rafique, 2022).

Explaining Delinquency

According to Strain theory, people may engage in crime to reduce or escape from the strain they are experiencing (Agnew, 1992; Robert, 2018). Another view is that social disorganization undermines or hinders informal social controls within the community and neighborhood, thus allowing high rates of crime to occur (Brown & Jennings, 2014; Kubrin & Mioduszewski, 2019). According to Social learning theory juveniles learn to engage in crime in the same way they learn to engage in conforming

behavior: through association with or exposure to others. Primary or intimate groups like the family and peer group have an especially large impact on what we learn (Bandura, 1977). In fact, association with delinquent friends is the best predictor of delinquency other than prior delinquency (Irfan & Rafique, 2022; Xu et al., 2023). Labeling theory is a sociological approach to the development of crime and deviance that focuses on social labeling. While deviant behavior can arise from various causes and contexts, once people are classified or characterized as deviants, they frequently confront new challenges due to self-and other reactions to negative preconceptions (stigma) associated with the deviant label (Lemert, 1967; Warr, 2002). These issues can make it more likely for deviant and criminal behavior to become steady and chronic.

Empirical Evidence

Strands of research from many related disciplines- Criminology, Psychology, Peace studies, Law and Sociology- has indicated role of both societal as well as personal factors in development of delinquent trends and offending. These include poverty, childhood neglect, lack of education, inadequate parental supervision, broken family structure, neighborhood influence, media and inadequate justice system (for a review see). These are implicated in studies across societies, hence not limited to one country (Farrington, 2010; Gupta et al., 2022; Idrees, 2022; Laub & Sampson, 1988; Mohammad & Nooraini, 2021; Panezai et al., 2019; Shehzad & Perveen, 2010). The investigation of delinquency started much earlier in North America, particularly in USA after World War II, due to rising cases of young offenders in certain urban areas. Such trends are inevitably linked to societal economic shifts. A classic longitudinal study that has led to many subsequent research and application was conducted by Gluecks as early as 1934. In 10-year, study of

delinquents on multiple parameters, including physique, socioeconomic profile, neighborhood, family features, relationships, school, education, personality indicators that were predominantly present in delinquents but not in non-delinquents. Study identified predictors of continued criminal conduct as opposed to desisting from crime. Maladaptive behavior from early age, defiance, impulsivity, destructiveness stood out as personality features whereas, dysfunctional Family environment, lack of parental affection and attachment, inadequate supervision and certain body types were seen as core sociological differences between delinquents and non-delinquents. Gluecks emphasized that majority of boys in same impoverished and risky neighborhoods did not end up as delinquents hence area of residence can not be construed as a major factor (Glueck & Glueck, 1950). Later studies have used his data to run further multivariate analyses and found that mother's supervision, parental styles of discipline, and parental attachment are the most important predictors of serious and persistent delinquency. On the other hand, background factors (e.g., parental criminality and drunkenness, broken homes, crowding) have little or no direct effect on delinquency, but instead operate through the family process variables, family relationships and social bonds (Laub & Sampson, 1988). Individual factors identified have been prenatal and perinatal problems, psychological concerns such as hostility and hyperactivity, and diminished verbal IQ. Social variables encompassed dysfunctional family structures, insufficient parenting, large family size, and peer influences. Community factors involved negative neighborhood settings and harmful school policies. Shader emphasized that understanding these factors was crucial for developing effective intervention and prevention programs tailored to at-risk youth

(Shader, 2003). It was highlighted in a book published by the National Research Council (2001) that antisocial behavior resulted from a complex mix of biological, genetic, and environmental factors starting from fetal development and the interactions were multifaceted. Economic deprivation can compel juveniles to commit crimes out of necessity or desperation, such as theft to provide for basic needs (Irfan & Rafique, 2022). These offenses are often a direct response to immediate financial pressures rather than a long-term pattern of behavior (Khan et al., 2021). In regions with high poverty rates, juveniles may engage in delinquent acts as a means of coping with or escaping from their economic realities (Shagufta et al., 2015).

A point about type of offense must be made here. Violent crimes especially murder can have underlying factors, triggers and motives very different from theft and drug dealing or sex offending. Hence many studies have addressed these specifically in terms of risk factors, situational determinants and intervention plans for example sexual frustration and lack of moral education is implicated in sex offenses (Panzai et al., 2019) whereas inadequate parental supervision, violent family environment and gang influence are critical factors in the emergence of violent juvenile offenders (Ahmed et al., 2020). Poverty and deprivation may be more relevant in theft and robbery.

Both qualitative as well as quantitative studies have been conducted in Pakistan examining juvenile delinquency in relation to various aspects. Juvenile Justice system (Abbas et al., 2022; Malik & Shirazi, 2010; Shah et al., 2020) age distribution (Iqbal, 2009; Qazi & Khan, 2022; Tolan, & Thomas, 1995), socio-economic and sociological factors (Ahmed et al., 2020; Khan et al., 2021; Shehzad & Perveen 2010; Umair & Murtaza, 2016), personality traits

and latent factors (Shagufta et al., 2015), family relationships (Kausar, 2017; Sidra et al, 2023), and recidivism (Irfan & Rafique, 2022). It seems that poverty, unemployment, and social inequality is related to the rates of juvenile crime in Pakistani just as elsewhere in the world. The youth from impoverished backgrounds are more likely to engage in delinquent behaviors as a means of survival or coping with their harsh realities. The studies by Irfan and Rafique (2022) and Umair and Murtaza (2016) note that juveniles from impoverished backgrounds are more susceptible to gang recruitment as gangs promise economic stability and an escape from the harsh realities. Overall, it can be said that there is no linear relationship between poverty and delinquency and role of other crucial factors is indicated in many studies. Some of these key variables are family bonds, parental supervision, personality, peers and continued education. In this study, available information was collected on variables of interest so a profile can be comprehensive. Much can be learned from existing data available in archival sources such as criminal records, Jail Information systems and reported cases in press. These do not involve direct contact with offenders but allow for some demographic features to be documented such as income/poverty, education, family history, age, circumstances and type of crime. Archival data only provides a profile and points the way to explore further in individual cases. Individual stories on the other hand delve deeper into situational and real-time scenario of delinquent act while enabling the researcher to glean insight into unique personal dimensions.

Rationale

The need for studies planned in this project are two-fold; first to compile updated information on reported cases in prison data in view of changing scenario of societal factors linked to crime. Secondly, the police

and prison data is minimal and at best only helpful for profiling thus necessitating in-depth exploration of individual circumstances over and above basic entries. The mapping of indicators from archival data to details extracted from individual cases is very useful in developing a comprehensive model. In view of various perspectives and empirical literature globally as well as locally, it seems that an overall model linking social, demographic and psychological factors will be valuable addition to the field. This will help focus the prevention of delinquency at societal and policy level and inclusion of all levels of associated (risk as well as protective) factors contribute to planning effective rehabilitation initiatives for young offenders.

Study one

Objective

The purpose of first study was to develop an overall socio-demographic profile of juvenile delinquency cases reported in Pakistan based on archival data.

Method

Sample and Data

The data of reported cases of juvenile delinquent acts, and offenses by underage children recorded in police stations, prison information and management system, courts and juvenile jails in the last three years (2016-2018) were recorded to document age, type of offence, area, parent's education, gender, income, and family history of crime. Sample consisted of 100 juvenile offenders under the age of 18. Inclusion Criteria was set as those with incarceration meaning confined in a juvenile ward/section/barrack or Borstal Institutes and availability of records in the official system. The juveniles confined in solitary confinement or punishment blocks, and those with incomplete data in PIMS were recorded.

Ethical Considerations

Permission protocols and confidentiality were strictly followed, with participants

providing verbal consent after being informed of the study's objectives. Concerns about data use were addressed with the help of a psychologist, ensuring trust before

Analyses

Descriptive analyses were carried out. Table 1 presents the demographic and family details of the 100 cases. Further, the independent sample *t*-test was computed to compare repeat offenders ($n = 67$) and first-

accessing files and PMIS records. Data collection proceeded only after establishing rapport and ensuring compliance with prison regulations.

time offenders ($n = 33$) on income, school years and age. Table 2 presents the findings. The difference in family constellation was also explored through Chi-square analyses. Table 3 shows frequency of delinquents living with single parent and both parents.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample (N=100)

Characteristics	M	SD	f	%
Age	16.90	0.90		
Education	3 years			
Range = 1- 11 years				
Monthly Income	9129.0	9568.5		
Range = PKR 9000- 60000/-				
Type of Offence				
Murder			10	10.0
Robbery			36	36.0
Theft			53	53.0
Acid Crime			1	1.0
Previous History				
Yes			67	67.0
No			33	33.0
Living With				
With Father			27	27.0
With Mother			55	55.0
With Both			18	18.0

The sample mean age was 16.9 years ($SD = 0.9$). Their education ranged from 1 to 12 years, with a mean value of 2.84 years ($SD = 2.4$). Monthly income varied widely, from PKR 500 to PKR 60000/- with a mean of 9,129 ($SD = 9568.5$). The number of siblings was between 1 to 11, with average of 4 to 5 siblings. Previous crime history showed that 67% of juveniles had prior criminal records,

with 53% involved in theft, 36% in robbery, 10% in murder, and 1% in an acid crime. None of the 100 delinquents had formal religious education. However, 35 percent had basic Quranic education and rest 65 percent had not obtained Quranic literacy. In terms of family structure, 55% lived with their mothers only, 27% with their fathers only, and 18% lived with both parents.

Table 2*Independent sample t-test comparing repeat offenders and first-time offenders*

	First time		Repeat offender		<i>t</i> (98)	<i>p</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Age	16.46	0.94	17.03	0.85	2.924	.004	-0.64
Education	2.36	2.01	3.70	2.63	2.578	.013	-0.57
Monthly Income	9774.63	9976.66	7818.18	8678.94	-.961	.339	0.21

Note: *M* = Mean, *SD* = Standard Deviation,

As the Table 2 shows, there is a significant difference in education and age but no

difference in income between repeat offenders and first time offenders.

Table 3*Chi-square Test between the Previous History of Crime and Single Vs Both Parents (N=100)*

		With Father	With Mother	With Both Parents	Total
Previous history	NO	9	18	6	33
	YES	18	37	12	67
Total		27	55	18	100

The variables included whether the individual had a prior history (Yes/No) and living arrangement (living with father, mother, or both parents). The results indicated a non-significant association between repeat offenders and family

constellation (X^2 (df = 2) = 0.0041, $p = .99$, $p < .05$). These results suggest that the distribution of previous history is independent of the living arrangements of parents in this sample.

Second study

Objective

The main aim of second study was to obtain in-depth insight and illustrative examples through case studies of individual delinquents and identify social and personal factors. It was a sort of zoom in onto individuals, by accessing their stories.

Method

Second study was qualitative in nature and for this purpose in-depth interviews of

juveniles were conducted in jails. This is similar to case study method used in clinical and forensic research. Six individuals were selected across the age range of delinquency and type of crime. In selecting these the demographic profile was used as guide. So as per frequency of offenses in official database, 4 cases of theft, one of murder, and one of robbery were included. Distribution of age in these individual cases was also similar to our demographic profile.

Procedure

An interview guide was prepared with the help of previous literature, theoretical background and pilot interviews. The research questions were:

1. Do life circumstances of individual offenders reflect the demographics of larger archival data profile? This included their personal and family details like education, family constellation, poverty level, available social and community support, and information on family environment and neighborhood.
2. Is their history of crime in family and previous offenses by participant?
3. What are their own perception and intentions about their crime?

Ethical Considerations

The study followed APA guidelines, ensuring necessary permissions and secure data collection. Participants gave verbal consent after being informed of the study's purpose and significance. Confidentiality,

withdrawal rights, and adherence to prison regulations were maintained. Interviews were conducted with institutional approval at agreed-upon locations, with no recordings allowed.

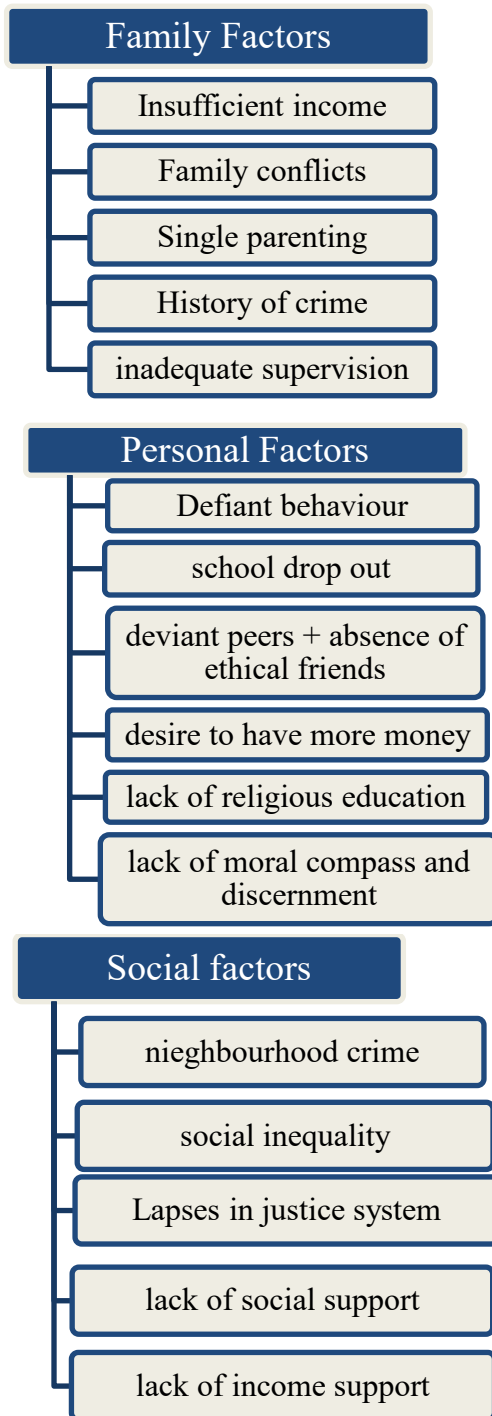
Analyses

Information from each case is organized under specific headings that are standard for case study method. The headings are; Demographic information, Family constellation and history, History of crime, personal perception, future intentions, summary of case. Summary of this information is presented in table 2. The interviews were content analyzed further for emerging themes that could be used in a predictive model. As per aims of this study, we distributed the themes into social/societal, personal and family factors that were explicitly mentioned or could be inferred from the narratives in the interviews.

Table 4
Basic Profile of Participants (N=6)

Person age	Formal education	Family structure and environment	Family poverty	Religious education	Parental /family supervision	Type of crime	Accomplices	Family history of crime
Mr. A, 15 years	A, 9 years	Both parents Parental clashes	Financial debts and hardship	Basic Quran	Poor	Murder by shooting	None	Father petty thief and addict
Mr. 14.5	A.K, none	Single mother works as maid Often away	Insufficient income	none	Very poor	Petty theft	Friends	Father petty thief
Mr. Z, 17 years	17 4 years	Single father, mother deceased	Insufficient income	none	Poor	Abduction	friend	none
Mr. I, 16 years	16 6 years	Both parents, 8 siblings/ strained with family	Can make both ends meet. He wanted more expenses	Basic Quran	Supervised yet defiant	street crime, mobile snatching	Friends	none
Mr. A, 17 years	17 5 years	Widowed mother, older brother. Family conflict over his addiction and crime	Brother supports the family	none	Defiant to authority of elder brother	theft	drug buddies	Self-substance abuse, drug dealing
U.R	2 years	Single mother, father Abandoned	mother works as maid, single income, borrowing, debt	Basic Quran	Run away from home, mother negligent	Drug selling, gambling	friends,	No family history

Figure 1
Family, Personal, and Social Factors



Discussion

The issue of delinquency was approached from two different angles in this research.

Archival data provided a basic profile of reported delinquent. It was found that low income, single parenthood, crime

accomplices, crime history and school dropout were common features of majority of reported cases. Only 18% of delinquents were living with both parents and average years of education was 2-3 years. Repeat offenders had lower education, and were younger than first time offenders. Earlier studies have also found age difference in recidivists and non-recidivists (Irfan & Rafique, 2022) and early onset is linked to life course criminology (Hanson et al., 1984; Tolan & Thomas, 1995).

The interview analyses mapped out very well with the initial profile which was obtained from the prison data. Five of the 6 individuals came from low-income families and struggled with daily expenses. All 6 of them had deviant friends and resided in neighborhoods where high number of adolescents were involved in petty crimes. All but one, lived in single parent household and all but one was school drop-outs. Religious education was very basic and whichever parent they lived with, provided inadequate monitoring. Apart from these common characteristics, some unique personal circumstances also appeared in interviews. The emerging factors are classified in three categories, family, personal and societal. Figure 1 present graphically the grouped themes.

Family Factors

Insufficient Income

“Hamaray ghar main hamaisha paisay kum hotay thay, kabhi kiraya naheen, kabhi ration naheen”

(Our household always had problem of meeting expenses, for rent for groceries) as one respondent U.R expressed.

“jub bhi paisay mango, amman naheen daiti thi” (whenever I asked my mother for money, she refused). Mr. A.K

The above narratives also indicate desire to have money and peer influence.

Inadequate Supervision

“Ammie ko 4 ghar main kaam karna hota hai, wo buhat kum ghar hoti hain. Main bahir phirta rahta tha”

(My mother has to work in 4 houses as maid, she is hardly at home so I roamed around a lot in streets) Mr. U.A

Abba nay khabi roka naheen, wo khud bhi dostoon main rahtay hain, agar late aaoon to kuch naheen kahtay, kahan thay”

(My dad never forbids me from what I enjoy. He is also mostly spending time with friends. If I come home late, he doesn't scold or ask where I was). Mr. Z.

Family Crime

“Abba nasha bhi kartay hain or ek do dafa chori bhi ki hai” (my father is addicted to drugs and few time he has committed theft) A.A

Family Conflict

“Abu aur Amman ki aksar larai hoti hai. Khabi paision per kabhi rishtay daroon pay” (my parents often argue and fight, over money, over relatives' behaviour). Mr. A. A

Personal Factors

Desire to Have Money

“aur lakon ki tharha main bhi pocket money laina chahta tha, laikin milnay naheen that” (like other boys I also wanted pocket money but I never got it)

Defiant Behavior

“Mera bara bhai meray dostoon say milnay say mana karta hai. Main chup kay nikal jata hoon” (My elder brother forbids me to meet my friends, I sneak out). I.S

Crime Circumstances

“Behan beemar thi aur medicine laini thi, to meray dost nay kaha car ki battery utha laitay hain”

(my sister was sick and needed medicine, my friend suggested to steal battery from a car). U.R

Mujhay mobile laina tha, ghar say paisay naheen milay to dost kay saath mil kay bike chori ki”

(I wanted a mobile and didn't get money from family so I stole a bike with help of a friend)
Mr. I.

“Mehndi ka function tha aur wahan log drink bhi kar rahay thay aur hawai firing bhi. Main nay apnay abu say gun lee aur ek class fellow jis say larai thi, us pay fire kar deeya”

(it was a wedding event, people were drinking and also doing firing in the air. I borrowed gun from my father and shot at a class fellow with whom I had had a fight earlier). Mr. A.A.

Religious and Formal Education

“school teesri class main chor deeya tha, Quran ka qaida parha tha, laikin aur kuch naheen”

I dropped out of school in class 3, I completed Quran basic, but nothing more) Mr. U.R, Mr. A.K

Lack of a Moral Compass

In the interviews, it was noted that 5 of the young offenders lacked a moral understanding of wrongness of their conduct. They seemed to have justification such as needs, or escaping law, and similar conduct among their peers

“paisay na hon to phir bunda kya karay”
(if you do not have money, what else can you do) Mr. A.K

“agar pakray na jao to theek hai”
(if you do not get caught, its fine) Mr. Z.

“buhat log kartay hain, kuch chhez utha li”
(many others also do petty thefts). Mr. I.

Societal Factors

As was noted in these interviews, the young persons lived impoverished life, had no income support for family emergencies and little access to reliable social support that could provide a buffer for misconduct. In two cases the boys had gone wayward (murder and abduction) not due to poverty but poor moral compass, social influence, parental negligence and inadequate supervision. The delinquents were also awaiting trial for months if not years and meanwhile lived in company of repeat offenders. Earlier studies

have also indicated that experience of young offenders in with justice system leaves much to be desired (Kupchik, 2007).

It is true that in many studies worldwide in many cultures and societies low income and difficult economic situation has come up as one of the factors linked to Juvenile Delinquency. Further, industrialization, increasing urbanization, and existing working-class conditions have contributed to Pakistan's juvenile delinquency problem. Social disparities, such as divergent rates of urban and rural growth and unemployment, have emerged in Indo-Pak region that have enhanced the economic challenges for low income families (Gupta et al., 2022; Shehzad, & Perveen, 2010; Sidra et al, 2023). As the literature summarized in introduction demonstrates, many studies have pointed to poverty as a bedrock for certain crimes.

The data obtained from the archival sources in our study 1, showed that the income range was low; over sixty percent of the delinquents were unable to meet their everyday expenses. This does not prove that poverty was a causative factor as in about fifteen to twenty percent of cases the income was not below the average salaried or manual labor class in Pakistan. In many households with similar income, the school going children and hardworking single or both parents with no delinquent record or incidence are found. Among the delinquents who were living in single families and among those single families, majority were living with their mothers who were working in petty jobs to meet the expenses of the families. Children were often neglected and on their own, hence open to influences from deviant peers. In interviews those with theft offenses reported that they were motivated to steal and rob so that they could have some money on their own because mothers never had enough money for them. The question why all children in similar economic hardship will not go into delinquency is deliberated by the

studies in this article and many previous researchers (Farrington & Welsh, 2010; Umair & Murtaza, 2016). When parental supervision is intact and social bonds are strong, crime has a higher cost for a child. Motivation towards a crime is fueled by many factors and economic need is only a weak role to play. Poverty on insufficient income on its own is not an explanation for delinquent behavior.

A point must be made about profile of delinquents in our archival data. It is definitely skewed towards lower income groups. This is also may mean that adolescents from low income, and socially powerless families are arrested more often and held to trial more often than high income and affluent families. This is a societal and structural issue. Rich and well-connected families can often keep their children out of legal system unless it is a high visibility case. The type of crimes may have different triggers and determinants. Some may be common across crimes (theft, robbery, murder, vandalism) whereas others are more specific. The one case of murder by 17 years old clearly indicated accessibility to gun. A father who was negligent and irresponsible of his adolescent son. Murder occurred in a social gathering where people were using alcohol and celebrating by firing in the air. The boy was in a situation where he could turn the gun borrowed from father on a class fellow with whom he had a fight. All these factors do not point to poverty but poor upbringing and social influence. The influence can come from media watching TV dramas in which people can shoot others as an act of revenge or anger. This one case brought home to us that bad parenting and deviant peers and media influence can lead to a heinous and senseless crime. In case of murder and sexual crime like rape or kidnapping or acid attack, the crime is certainly not linked to poverty and it has other

motives and influences which can include all those listed above.

One factor may be religious education which lays down the rules for bad and good conduct and helps a person distinguish between wrong and right. It is not so much the absolute poverty or income level but what poverty does to an individual and family as Laub and Sampson (1988) point out. The social bonds are weakened that act as deterrent for young crime. The individual cases of this study found that mothers are forced to work long hours, fathers are absent, child neglect increases, education is unaffordable and supervision is minimal. The corner stone of stable childhood is thus compromised and deviant influences can take hold. This scenario although found across all cultures (Idrees, 2022) nevertheless, has added features in specific cultural context. In Pakistan, definitely poverty is not equal to criminal status. More importantly, education also includes religious education that is always considered a buffer for transgression as it has a heavy component of morality and accountability. Both Pakistani culture and religion relies heavily on parental respect and responsibility for good conduct of children. The schools take up moral training in an informal way. Hence lack of religious education, inadequate parental supervision coupled with lack of schooling severely compromises the moral compass of the growing child.

Model Derived from Findings

Personal, societal and family level variables that emerge from our two studies combine into a model for further investigation. At personal level these include Education (both formal and religious-moral). Family level variables would be parental supervision, family atmosphere, family bonds and family history of crime. Social factors implicated are poverty level, neighborhood culture, peer culture and media influence. This could be

used in cross-sectional study as well as longitudinally.

Limitations and Recommendations

The sample size in qualitative study was small due to prison system restrictions, limited time frame for interview and few consenting and sharing individuals. A major obstacle in qualitative study was face to face access to inmates within a limited time frame allowed by prison regulations. It was decided to reach out to a larger sample but consent was only received from only few. In this study, six cases were included in which participants were more sharing, and provided a unique perspective that added aspects to our analyses. There were many repeated themes and similar circumstances.

Further due to nature of data in archival records, interactions could not be statistically verified. If data could be obtained in 2 or more times over 2 years, it would have added to interest and scope of study as well as help in rehabilitation plans.

In further studies, longitudinal design should be employed. Same individuals can be tracked for at least 5 years to see how crime story ends. The authors of this study witnessed 3 delinquents in their community who were arrested for robbery in university community. Eight years later, one of them is completing post graduate degree and is an active sports and community participant. He has never offended again. The second boy was nominated for cyber crime 2 years later and third one was sent abroad by his family and never returned so there is no further information on his crime record. This story was interesting and a further longitudinal study is planned in future on current study sample.

One variable that may be tested in further studies may be character strengths such as self-regulation and prudence, empathy and compassion. Not many studies of violent crime take that into account. In the in-depth interviews, In the in-depth interviews, it was

observed that the person committing the crime was not thinking about the other person, only of their own need or impulse satisfaction. This is a character flaw that inhibits or overrules human compassion.

Implications

The study clearly has implications for educators, parents, families and policy makers. To start with, more specific policy recommendations for focused action are outlined here. Juvenile education should be more systematic and character based. Foster care possibility should be introduced so juvenile with dysfunctional or deviant families can be placed in better environment. Alternate care in the society is much needed as many households provide inadequate parenting. The Child Protection services of Pakistan is one such system but it needs a better model of child education. Income support programs are insufficient and should be a priority for both federal and provincial governments. Child education programs should be implemented at community level, out of school children should be identified and offered schooling. Such social services have never been systematically implemented. Religious institutions such as mosques can be an effective milieu and modus operandi for child moral education and life coaching.

Justice system can devise speedy court trails and follow up procedures so juveniles can resume life and be rehabilitated. Mentoring has indeed shown a significant impact on delinquency as observed in metanalyses (Tolan et al., 2014). Prison department of Pakistan in partnership with educational institutions need to design and implement such mentoring programs.

Follow up procedures should mandate school enrollment and correctional programs. A further insight was given by the warden of Central Jail Lahore. The gentleman advised placing inmates into class category (a practice he witnessed in prisons abroad) as per their potential for education, severity of

crime and productive work and then providing them dedicated and customized activity plan within prison so they feel useful and realize their potential into employable skills. Above practices also avoid the labelling that increases re-offending risk among delinquents.

Contribution of Authors

Farrukh Iqbal: Conceptualization, Investigation, Methodology, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, Writing – Original Draft
Naumana Amjad: Methodology, Writing - Reviewing & Editing, Supervision

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest declared by the authors.

Source of Funding

The authors declared no source of funding.

Data Availability Statement

The datasets of the current study are not available publicly due to ethical reasons but are available from the corresponding author [F.I.] upon the reasonable request.

References

- Abbas, F., Chughtai, A. M., & Hussain, R. (2022). Juvenile justice system in Pakistan: Challenges and reforms. *Journal of Criminal Justice Studies*, 45(3), 245-259. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.53575/irjei.v3.01.8\(22\)76-92](https://doi.org/10.53575/irjei.v3.01.8(22)76-92)
- Agnew, R. (1992). Foundation for a general strain theory of crime and delinquency. *Criminology*, 30,47-87. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-9125.1992.tb01093.x>
- Ahmed, S., Barech, N., & Farooq, M. (2020). The impact of family environment and gang affiliation on violent juvenile offenders. *Journal of Criminology and Forensic Studies*, 12(4), 190-205.
- Bandura, A. J. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Bartol, C. R., & Bartol, A. M. (2014). *Juvenile delinquency and justice: A psychological approach*. Pearson.
- Brown, W., & Jennings, W. G. (2014). A replication and an honor-based extension of Hirschi's reconceptualization of self-control theory and crime and analogous behaviors. *Deviant Behavior*, 35, 297–310. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01639625.2013.848114>
- Farrington, D. P. (2003). Developmental and life-course criminology: Key theoretical and empirical issues-the 2002 Sutherland Award address. *Criminology*, 41(2), 221-225. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-9125.2003.tb00987.x>
- Farrington, D. P. (2010). Risk factors for conduct disorder and delinquency: Key findings from longitudinal studies. *The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 55(10), 633-642. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511730290.047>
- Farrington, D. P., Piquero, A. R., Jennings, W. G; Jolliffe, D. (2023). *Offending from childhood to late middle age: Recent results from the Cambridge study in delinquent development*. Springer Nature.
- Farrington, D. P., & Welsh, B. C. (2010). Preventing delinquency and later criminal offending. In J. M. Brown & E. A. Campbell (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of forensic psychology* (pp. 376–383). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511730290.047>

- Glueck, S., & Glueck, E. T. (1934). *One thousand juvenile delinquents*. Harvard University Press.
- Glueck, S., & Glueck, E. (1950). *Unravelling Juvenile delinquency*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Gupta, M. K., Mohapatra, S., & Mahanta, P. K. (2022). Juvenile's delinquent behavior, risk factors, and quantitative assessment approach: A systematic review. *Indian Journal of Community Medicine, 47*(4), 483-490.
https://doi.org/10.4103/ijcm.ijcm_1061_21
- Hanson, C. L., Henggeler, S. W., Haefele, W. F., & Rodick, J. D. (1984). Demographic, individual, and family relationship correlates of serious and repeated crime among adolescents and their siblings. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 52*(4), 528.
DOI: 10.1037//0022-006x.52.4.528
- Idrees, W. M. (2022). Juvenile delinquency: Why minors turn into monsters. *International Journal for Studies on Children, Women, Elderly and Disabled, 17*, 48-58.
- Iqbal, K. (2009). Judging Juvenility: Determination of age of Juvenile Offenders under Pakistan's Juvenile Justice System. *Pakistan Journal of Criminology, 1*(3), 105-118.
- Irfan, A., & Rafique, R. (2022). Mental Health and Criminological Profile of Juvenile Recidivists: An Indigenous Exploration of Juvenile Recidivism in Punjab Prisons. *Journal of Professional & Applied Psychology, 3*(2), 230-240.
<https://doi.org/10.52053/jpap.v3i2.107>
- Jurczyk, M., & Lalak, D. (2020). Aggressive and delinquent behavior among youth: An empirical study in Poland. *Violence and Gender, 7*(4), 188-199.
DOI:10.1089/vio.2019.0065
- Kausar, A. (2017). Parental supervision and its role in preventing juvenile delinquency. *Journal of Social and Behavioral Sciences, 15*(2), 98-115.
- Khan, M., Raheed, A., & Hussain, S. (2021). Financial pressures and their impact on criminal behavior: A socio-economic analysis. *Journal of Social Issues, 45*(2), 123-140.
- Kubrin, C. E., & Mioduszewski, M. D. (2019). Social disorganization theory: past, present and future. *Handbook on crime and deviance, 197-211*.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20779-3_11
- Kupchik, A. (2007). The correctional experiences of youth in adult and juvenile prisons. *Justice Quarterly, 24*(2), 247-270.
doi:10.1080/07418820701294805
- Laub, J. H., & Sampson, R. J. (1988). Unraveling families and delinquency: A re-analysis of the Gluecks' data. *Criminology, 26*(3), 355-380.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-1745-380>
- Lemert, E. M. (1967). *Human deviance, social problems, and social control*. Prentice-Hall.
- Malik, N., & Shirazi, S. (2010). An analysis of juvenile delinquency in Pakistan. *Asian Journal of Social Science, 38*(2), 112-128.
- Moffitt, T. E. (1993). Adolescence-limited and life-course-persistent antisocial behavior: a developmental taxonomy. *Psychological Review, 100*(4), 674-701.
- Moffitt, T. E. (2006). Life-course-persistent versus adolescence-limited antisocial behavior. In D. Cicchetti & D. J. Cohen (Eds.), *Developmental*

- Psychopathology*, (Vol. 3, 2nd ed., pp. 570-598). Wiley.
- Mohammad, T., and Nooraini, I. (2021). Routine activity theory and juvenile delinquency: the roles of peers and family monitoring among Malaysian adolescents. *Child Youth Services Review, 121*, 105795. DOI:10.1016/j.chilyouth.2020.105795
- Moore, A., Silberg, J., Roberson-Nay, R. & Mezuk, B. (2017). Life course persistent and adolescence limited conduct disorder in a nationally representative US sample: Prevalence, predictors, and outcomes. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology, 52*. DOI: 10.1007/s00127-017-1337-5
- National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. (2001). *Juvenile crime, juvenile justice*. National Academy Press.
- Panezai, S., Panezai, H., Wassan, A. A., & Saqib, S. E. (2019). Exploring juveniles' delinquent behavior and associated factors: A cross-country comparison of Pakistan and Thailand. *Journal of Geography and Social Sciences, 1*(1), 57-71.
- Qazi, S., & Khan, A. S. (2022). Juvenile delinquency, age of majority, and protecting juvenile rights in Peshawar: A legal analysis. *Pakistan Journal of International Affairs, 5*(4), 494. <https://doi.org/10.52337/pjia.v5i4.692>
- Robert, A. (2018). Stability and change in crime over the life course: a strain theory explanation. In: *Developmental theories of crime and delinquency*, Ed. T. Thornberry (London: Routledge), pp. 101–132.
- Shader, M. (2001). *Risk factors for delinquency: An overview*. US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
- Shagufta, S., Ahmed, R., Khan, M., & Ali, S. (2015). Economic realities and juvenile delinquency: A regional study. *Journal of Youth Studies, 20*(3), 250-267. DOI: 10.1108/JFP-08-2014-0026.
- Shah, M., Khan, A., Ali, S., & Hussain, M. (2020). The impact of socio-economic factors on juvenile delinquency in Pakistan. *International Journal of Law and Society, 9*(1), 50-65.
- Shehzad, S., & Perveen, K. K. (2010). A sociological analysis of juvenile delinquency with special focus on Pakistan. *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities, 49*(1), 55-67. <https://doi.org/10.46568/jssh.v49i1.259>
- Sidra, G., Afzal, D. S., Ahmad Gillani, S. M., Farah, N., & Sial, M. A. (2023). Relationship between Parental Supervision and Juvenile Delinquency: A Qualitative Study of South Punjab Pakistan. *VFAST Transactions on Education and Social Sciences, 11*(2), 76–83. <https://doi.org/10.21015/vtess.v11i2.1549>
- Tolan, P. H., Henry, D. B., Schoeny, M.S., Lovegrove, P., & Nichols E. (2013) Mentoring Programs to Affect Delinquency and Associated Outcomes of Youth At-Risk: A Comprehensive Meta-Analytic Review. *Journal of Experimental Criminology, 10*(2), 179-206. doi: 10.1007/s11292-013-9181-4
- Tolan, P. H., & Thomas, P. (1995). The implications of age of onset for delinquency risk II: Longitudinal data. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology, 23*(2), 157–

181. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01447087>
- Umair, A., & Murtaza, A. (2016). Factors Affecting Juvenile Delinquency in Punjab, Pakistan: A Case Study Conducted at Juvenile Prisons in Punjab Province. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 7. DOI: 10.5901/mjss.2016.v7n4p372
- Warr, M. (2002). Applying Peer Explanations of Delinquency. In: *Companions in Crime: The Social Aspects of Criminal Conduct*. Cambridge Studies in Criminology. Cambridge University Press; 91-118.
- Xu, S., Yu, J., & Hu. Y. (2023). Formation mechanism and prediction model of juvenile delinquency. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, 1087368. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1087368