A Qualitative Study of Socioeconomic Factors Contributing Towards Juvenile Delinquency. A Case of Borstal Institute and Juvenile Jail Faisalabad, Pakistan

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Abstract:
The main purpose of the present research was to explore the socio-economic factors contributing towards juvenile delinquency. The present study is an exploratory study which has been conducted to identify the socioeconomic factors of juvenile delinquency. For the present study, 12 cases were sampled. Purposive sampling was used to access the sample. In-depth interview was used as a technique, an interview guide was used as a tool to collect detail information. After the data collection, the data was analyzed through thematic analysis of the interviews. The major findings showed that social factors like family factors and peer group are a more contributing factor to promote juvenile delinquency. Economic factors like family income, family expenditures and lack of resources at household level were also responsible for promoting juvenile delinquency. The present study suggests that there should be some steps to minimize juvenile delinquency with the help of proper socialization and social support by the parents, local community members, community representative and Government.

Keywords: Juvenile Delinquency, Social Factors, Economic Factors.

INTRODUCTION

Juvenile delinquency refers to antisocial or illegal behavior by children. So the juvenile delinquency is the term used for offense committed by children under the particular age limit. According to the united nation convention on the right of the child (UNCRC), 1989 ‘Juvenile’ refers to a person under the age of 18 years (Nahid Firdousi 2011).

When individual commit crime at their early age (before 18 years) this is called Juvenile Delinquency and the person called Juvenile delinquent. A juvenile is a person who is not yet old enough to be considered an old. Delinquency is unacceptable behavior according to the moral code of society. Juvenile delinquency refers to a criminal act performed by juveniles. It is either violent or non-violent crime committed by a person who is usually under the age of eighteen. Juvenile delinquency and crime impairs the overall development of the nation, undermines peoples spiritual, social and material well-being. Thus compromises human dignity and creates a climate of fear and feared that rods the quality of life. The world community has been focusing on combating crimes such as illicit trafficking of drugs and weapons, economic crimes (Khalid Mahmood 2004).

Juvenile delinquency has become a global epidemic and is spreading in developing, and developed societies in organized and semi-organized manners. In any civilized society, the criminal justice system has the highest premium, and it guarantees the rule of law and fair play to its citizen. In fact, economic growth is unthinkable in a country where there are civil strife and fears of one’s life and property. In Pakistan money, land, sexual assault, illiteracy, honor killings, old enmity, and drug addiction are the main factors causing increase juvenile crime. The recent emergence of militancy “Deeni Madrasas” (Religious education institutions) has further exacerbated the situation. These institutions impart instruction in militancy and sectarian hatred to the young person below eighteen years (M.A. Malik and R. A. Shirazi 2010).

Youth crime or Juvenile delinquency is a popular issue of social research. It slows down the development of a society. Crime always remained a major problem for society. Crimes violate the scared customs, laws, and values. Crimes interrupt the smooth operation of the social and political orders. The cited factors responsible for juvenile delinquency are broken home, delinquent community environment, a bad company of peer/school group, slums with the criminal neighborhood, poverty, and unemployment. Children from the poor and...
working class background are much more likely to engage in delinquent behavior (A. Shamim, Z. Batool, M. I. Zafar and N. Hashmi 2009).

It is a worldwide phenomenon. Until recently Pakistan authorities have realized the magnitude of the juvenile crime and evinced keen interest in scientific an empirical studies on juveniles crime, its causes, prevention, and rehabilitation. Thus, the juvenile delinquency would be a serious threat to the social and moral fabric of the society in the near future. Juvenile delinquency is becoming a serious social taboo. The social dimension of the problem has serious repercussion on the social fabric of the society. The family unit tearing apart and parents are generally worried about the future of their offspring’s (K. Mahmood and M. Asghar Cheema 2004).

In perspective of Pakistan juvenile delinquency reaching epic proportion, the greater part of these delinquent are “street children” who are increasing rapidly in direct proportion to rapid population growth, urbanization and above all poverty and other main factors are mental health educational and social disabilities have often been inadequately assessed or addressed (Ghouri and A. Mujahid 2010).

In Pakistani juvenile delinquency incredibly high and continue to rise. There are certain socioeconomic factors which considered responsible for Juvenile Delinquency in Pakistani society like illiteracy, Family Factors, media, peer group, poverty and family income. The previous study showed that these are all responsible for promoting juvenile crime in Pakistani society. In Pakistan recently authorities realize that scientific and systematic work should be done on juvenile delinquency, its causation, prevention, and control (Khalid Mahmood 2004). The research is mainly focused on the socioeconomic factors of Juvenile Delinquency. Socioeconomic factors have a great influence on the juvenile delinquency. In Pakistan there are many socioeconomic factors like money, land, illiteracy, Ghairat (honor), old enmity, and drug are considered the cause of juvenile delinquency (M.A. Malik and R. A. Shirazi 2010).

1.2 Socio-economic Factors

Behind any criminal activity, there are factors it can be social or economic factors like a broken home, delinquent community environment, a bad company of peer/school group, slums with criminal neighborhood, poverty and unemployment children who commit a crime at their early age mostly suffer from a variety of social and economic factors. Mostly children who commit crime belong to the low socioeconomic class. Social and economic factors play a significant role in the involvement of children in crimes (A. Shamim, Z. Batool, M. I. Zafar and N. Hashmi 2009). According to another study In Pakistan money, land, sexual assault, illiteracy, honor killings, old enmity, and drug addiction, poverty, unemployment are the main social factors causing increase juvenile delinquency (M.A. Malik and R. A. Shirazi 2010)

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

To explore the socioeconomic factors contributing towards Juvenile Delinquency.

RESEARCH QUESTION

The Main research question of the present study was to know the socio-economic factors of juvenile delinquency.
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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MATERIAL AND METHODS

This chapter deals with the research methodology opted by the researcher. It provides information on study design and describes the methodology, sampling procedure and achieved sample for the study. The methodology is the one who ensures the scientific validity of the research. This chapter points to the research procedure followed by the research in conducting present research. The population of the present study consisted of all Juvenile delinquents in Borstal Institute and Juvenile Jail Faisalabad, Pakistan. The target population of the present study was convicted juvenile age between 14 to 18 years and imprisoned in Borstal Institute and Juvenile Jail, Faisalabad, Pakistan (At least from three months). The element of the study includes the characteristics, Convicted Juvenile Age between (14 to 18 years) and Juvenile Imprison in Borstal Institute and Juvenile Jail, Faisalabad, Pakistan (At least from three months). The researcher used nonprobability sampling and to ensure data collection. Within nonprobability sampling, purposive sampling technique was used for collecting information by juvenile delinquents. A sample size of 12 respondents was selected from the population with the help of purposive sampling technique by using a qualitative approach. In-depth interview used as a technique of data collection. The interview guide was used as a tool for data collection. Pre-testing was proved very helpful for the data collection, and on the basis of the result of pre-testing, certain changes incorporated an interview guide. The researcher conducted qualitative research and done thematic analysis after writing a number of verbatims that was taken by the different respondent to analyze data.

MAJOR FINDINGS

The findings of the study lead to conclude:

- The adolescent age between 15 to 18 years is more probable to commit crimes as compared to those with younger age.
Respondents involved in criminal activity due to the lack of parental control, parental harsh and ignoring behavior.

- Improper socialization is a main contributing factor toward juvenile delinquency.
- Low education and poor economic conditions push them towards crimes.
- The parental conflict was a strong family factor of delinquency.
- The finding also showed that peer group plays an important role to promote juvenile delinquency.
- The findings showed that those children who spend most of the time with other depressed children or companions are most of the time become delinquent.
- Media promote crime among children and delinquent behavior.
- Violent program on media promotes the violent behavior in children.
- Low economic statuses push children towards criminal activities.
- Family income is a main economic factor of juvenile delinquency. Findings of the study showed that low family income promotes delinquency in society.
- Poverty is also a cause of juvenile delinquency.
- Lack of resources forces children to commit a crime. More than half of the respondents argued that due to lack of resources they used illegal means to fulfill their family needs.

**CONCLUSION**

The study aimed to explore the socioeconomic factors contributing to juvenile delinquency. Results indicate that low parental supervision, parental conflict, the negative influence of peers, media, low literacy level and lack of resources at the household level are the main cause of juvenile delinquency. Lack of parental control and less supervision increase the chance of children involved in crimes. Findings of the study also show that negative influence of peers and poverty also major causes of juvenile delinquency. It Concluded that the juvenile was young male belonging to poor, joint families. The findings of the study also concluded that adolescent age between 15 to 18 years is more likely to commit a crime as compared to those with younger age. Respondents belonged to the low socioeconomic class families, and their income was too low. More than half of the respondent’s father occupation was a laborer. Present study concluded that Family factors, peer group, media, illiteracy, family income, family expenditures and lack of resources at the household level are the major socioeconomic factors of juvenile delinquency. The issue of Juvenile delinquency no doubt has contributed a social problem to the society. However, if proper mitigation measures are taken, we can minimize the chances of children to become a delinquent.

**SUGGESTION/RECOMMENDATION**

The researcher made some suggestion and recommendation on the bases of the present study. The researcher collected data from the field develop rapport, probing and on the bases of field experiences the following step should be needed to think on these:

- Lack of parental control is the basic cause of delinquency. So, parents should be careful about their children and check their daily activities.
- Parents should increase their supervision of children, and family ties should be strong. The parental attitude should not be corrective coercive rather it should be loving and encouraging. Father should handle their children with great care and love and protect from social evils.
- The conflict between the parents is also another cause of delinquency. Parents should avoid conflict attitude in front of children’s.
- Fathers and mothers education matter a lot. In present study majority of respondents parents and respondents were illiterate. It is emphasized to encourage education.
- Bad companions are the reason for delinquency. So, parents should be careful about their children’s relationship with friends.
Educational level should rise, especially in ruler areas and free of cost education should be provided to the children, who belong to the poor families.

Electronic media also have a negative impact on children behavior. The television through cable network shows violent movies, horror movie full of action, showing murder which has a negative impact on young minds. Civil society and Government should control media to avoid such type of program.

Poverty and low income force the poor children to towards theft, stealing and other crimes to enhance their family income. The government should play a role in reducing poverty through poverty alleviation zakat funds.

The study showed that lack of resource is another cause of juvenile delinquency. Numbers of children commit a crime to fulfill their family and own needs. Due to the low family income, they use illegal means for the fulfillment of their needs. Government should provide job to poor people and support them financially.

Civil society, especially NGO’s should play proactive role in creating healthy environment for children’s, so it will helpful to minimize the chances of children involvement in bad deeds.

Recreational and youth development program should be lunched. Healthy and planned exercises and good program in sports are helpful in keeping children away from the crime.

REFERENCES


