**Juvenile Delinquency in South Asia with Special Reference to Pakistan**

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**Abtract**

**In recent years, the problem of children in conflict with the law has become an increasing concern for countries in South Asia, specifically in Pakistan. While all countries have distinct procedures for children who commit crimes but no country in the region has fully implemented a separate and different juvenile justice system. This study encompassed direct as well as indirect factors contributing to juvenile delinquency. The major factors were broken homes, poverty, illiteracy, lack of parental control, bad company and discrimination among siblings.**

**Introduction**

**Originally, the term “juvenile delinquency” defined, more or less exclusively to minors having committed offenses, designed by criminal codes (Neumeyer, 1961).**

**Juvenile Delinquency is a psycho-social problem in South Asia which is one of the serious societal problems some children confront on a regular basis. The psychological, physical and financial costs to society as a result of delinquency forever modifies the lives of the offenders and their victims. In current years, children have committed uncounted serious violent offenses that have influenced how people think about crime, its causes and solutions (Regoli & Hewitt, 2006).**

**Juvenile crime is not the domain of children living in any specific country. Children commit crimes throughout the world. Sometimes their crimes are violent and sometimes not. In a developing country such as Pakistan, the problem of delinquency is becoming complex day by day and however it is necessary for a scientific study of the problem in Pakistani context. It is specifically so because, there is dearth of these kind of studies in our society and the workers in the field of delinquency are helpless for lack of scientific information.**

**Objectives**

**The following objectives were the part of this study as:**

* **To find out the causes and factors contributing to juvenile delinquency.**
* **To prepare socio-economic and psychological profile of juvenile delinquents.**
* **To explore the nature of the offences committed by juvenile delinquents.**
* **To enquire the post crime feelings of juvenile delinquents.**
* **To draw recommendations to address the contributing factors to juvenile delinquency.**

**Significance**

**South Asia is a mixture of traditional as well as modern oriented societies like Pakistan. Massive urbanization as well as industrialization has incorporated certain modifications in the infrastructure of the whole set up. Resultantly, new issues are being faced by the society. Some modifications have decreased the social control and thereby increasing number of offences. Advancement in technology has provided new orientations to the young people of the society. These innovations have, no doubt, functional as well as dysfunctional results. Besides it, increasing ratio of population, dearth of parental control, insufficient educational as well as recreational facilities have made the condition more complex. The cumulative influence of all these factors tends to the delinquent behavior of the young generation to an alarming extent. Keeping this state of affairs in mind, the researchers decided to conduct an empirical investigation to dig out the factors underlying the phenomenon. The consequences of the study would shed light on the different perspectives of the accelerating tendency of juvenile delinquency. The current study falls in the area of criminology and partly in the area of sociology of family. So the consequences of the research would be an addition in the present knowledge of both the disciplines. At the same time, the findings of the research study might be beneficial for the policy makers who are working to decrease the juvenile delinquency in the society. It might be the practical utility of the study. However, research seems sociologically important because it deals with a broad population of juvenile delinquents. The consequence of the research might also be indirectly helpful in controlling the crime condition in the society and exploring the important factors of juvenile delinquency which may also assist in prevention of this menace in Pakistani society.**

**Methodology**

**Universe of the present study comprised of male juvenile delinquents confined in District Jail, Lahore. The other sources for data collection were books, journals, articles, thesis, official documents and research appers. In this research, both quantitative and qualitative methods were used. Survey and case study methods were involved. The researcher selected Interview Schedule and interview guide as tools for data collection because a great majority of the respondents were illiterate.**

**Results/Conclusion**

**In this study, researcher examined the juvenile delinquency by using various indicators. Going through whole study, researcher found out following points:**

**Majority of the respondents 72.7% belonged to urban background and 78.8% respondents were from nuclear family structure. 66.7% had (1-10) members in family. 57.6% respondents were illiterate and 48.5% had lack of interest in education. Most of the respondents’ fathers were illiterate. 51.5% respondents’ fathers were laborers. Many of the respondents’ mothers 60.6% were illiterate. Majority of the respondents 75.8% were employee. 84.8% did labor. 78.8% respondents handed over their income to parents. 15.2% respondents fulfilled their needs by theft. Majority of the respondents were not satisfied with their monthly household income. 12.1% respondents parents sometimes and almost never understood the difficulties of their children. 30.3% respondents had (1-4) delinquent friends before committing the offense. 60.6% respondents spent (1-5 hours) daily outside with friends. 27.3% respondents peer group had favorable to crime inclination. 36.4% respondents ever ran away from home. 30.3% respondents ever used narcotics.**

**Majority of the respondents 84.8% watched movies. 33.3% respondents went outside for wandering. 33.3% respondents’ family members had conflicts. 24.2% respondents’ family has conflicts on social issues. 39.4% respondents felt discrimination among their siblings. 54.5% respondents ever physically abused. 45.5% respondents were physically abused by parents. 42.4% respondents’ main reason of being physically abused was disobedience of parents/teachers. 54.5% respondents committed the crime individually. 72.7% committed the crime first time whereas 15.2% respondents’ first crime was theft. 100% respondents did not want to commit crime again. 90.9% respondents’ main motive of not committing crime in future was repentance of crime. 84.8% respondents would adopt some profession after releasing from Jail.**

**Recommendations**

**In the light of the findings of present research, the researcher suggested following recommendations:**

* **Parents should concentrate on their children activities, their friendship and their attachments and correct them where necessary. They should treat their young ones equally so that no one should have feelings of being neglected as well as relative deprivation. Pocket money given by parents to their children should not be too less that they cannot fulfill their genuine needs and think about some other sources. Children should not be physically abused by their parents and teachers. Programmes should be arranged for teaching parents that how to bring up children.**
* **Parents should keep close contacts with the teachers of their children’s educational institutions and more educational facilities should be provided to the rural areas and no child above five years should be kept out of an educational institution. The syllabus should be interesting as well as constructive as per their age.**
* **Family conflicts should resolve in a manner that children should not know about it and should not at all indulge in it by any way. Government should take such children who do not have any relative to look after them, to some welfare institutions where they could be taken care of properly. If one of the parents is available he or she should try not to let the children have feelings of other’s absence.**
* **Population should be controlled as over population is less concentration of parents towards their children which leads them to be delinquents. And arrangements should be done for provision of recreational activities like sports and games etc. This will keep the children busy in a healthy activity and reduce the tension because of congestion as well as over population. They will also learn to co-ordinate each other by game field and their energies would be consumed in a right way.**
* **Separate juvenile jails should be constructed in each district of the Punjab as over\_conjucted jails bring negative effect on delinquents’ minds.**
* **NGOs should take measures to conduct rehabilitation programmes for delinquents.**

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