

## **Contributing Factors of Juvenile Delinquency among Youth of Balochistan**

Samreena Rose\*  
Saima Ambreen\*\*  
Waseem Fayyaz\*\*\*

### **Abstract**

The main aim of the current research is to identify the causal factors of juvenile delinquency among youth of Balochistan, Pakistan. This study was conducted in Quetta, Balochistan and is based on qualitative research technique. The method of data collection was Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), which were conducted with six groups ( $N=45$ ) including juvenile delinquents ( $n=6$ ), Law enforcement personnel ( $n=6$ ), NGO service providers ( $n=6$ ), university teachers ( $n=5$ ) and students ( $n=22$ ). Causes of juvenile delinquency were identified from the gathered information by using thematic analysis. The analysis involved open, axial, and selective coding. The main causal factors of juvenile delinquency in Balochistan that emerged from this analysis were social influence, personality, school related factors, and financial factors. This identification of prevailing context bound causal factors of delinquency can help in devising indigenous strategies to prevent and in turn control rising delinquency rate in Balochistan.

**Key Words:** Juvenile, Delinquency, FGDs, Thematic analysis, open coding, axial coding, selective coding.

### **Contributing Factors of Juvenile Delinquency among Youth of Balochistan**

The words juvenile and delinquency come from the Latin word "juvenis" and "delinquere", which mean a teenager and to abandon respectively. Objectively, it refers to the children or teenagers who have abandoned the lawful living style due to their negative circumstances like parental neglect. Delinquents are defined as

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\* Dr. Samreena Rose is Lecturer in Department of Psychology, University of Balochistan (UOB), Quetta.

\*\* Dr. Saima Ambreen is currently Assistant Professor/ Chairperson, Department of Psychology, UOB, Quetta.

\*\*\* Dr. Waseem Fayyaz is currently Assistant Professor (HOD) in Psychology Department, Govt. Gordon Collage, Rawalpindi.

juvenile offenders who violate the rules and law of any local state. Delinquent behavior has a universal issue of the juveniles, which is often considered as a sign of sick society (Dey, 2014; & Sirohi, 2008).

Delinquents interrupt and violate social norms, values, law and the political order. Juvenile Delinquency is a universal problem. However, delinquent behavior varies from culture to culture. It is becoming a big challenge for social reformers, social planners, and community workers to overcome this problem. The age range of Juvenile delinquency varies from culture to culture. It is usually set until age 18, but in Pakistani perspective the ranges of those children are 10 to 17 (Zafar, 2012).

### **Causes of Juvenile Delinquency**

Researches have indicated several causes of juvenile delinquency. Loeber (1990) identified that the risk factors are social, individual, and of community. Antisocial behavior increased rapidly during the 1960s and now the rate of delinquency is most frequently increased.

Biller (1982) reported that the effect of the family structure especially parental deprivation has been associated with a number of psychological problems in children leading towards delinquency (as cited in Eastin, 2003).

Roberts (2002) reported that the children showing risk factors such as behavioral manifestation and reaction formation of adults, behavior problems and family dysfunction, and lack of school readiness and aggression towards peers lead towards the antisocial behavior. Erickson (2001) found that the drugs are one of the most important factor which leads the juveniles towards crime. Several juveniles claimed to have committed criminal act under the influence of *bhang* (essence of a plant, used for addiction) (as cited in Omtobo, Ondiek, Odera, & Ayugi, 2013). World youth report (2003) suggested motivations for joining a gang for the possibilities of economic and social gain as an important cause.

Zaeema and Khurshid (2003) found that the role of family functioning, peer relationship and psychological problems are the cause's of juvenile delinquency. Researchers further explain that emotional distress, higher stressors and unhealthy communication related to families and low self esteem (as cited in Naqvi, & Nelofer,

n.d). Similarly, Hoeve (2009) found that in different family structure children experiences many forms of participation, attachment, monitoring and supervision receive from their parents (as cited in Parks, 2013). Such researches show that the main factors influencing juvenile delinquency are the family structure and relationship of adolescents with their parents.

Nadeem reported that in Pakistan important contributing factors are sexual assault, illiteracy, money, land, old hostility, honor killings, and drug addiction. Recent emerging militant forces worsen the condition. These institutions are reported to be involved in imparting instruction relating to militancy and sectarianism, inducing hatred and aggression in youth (as cited in Malik & Sharizi, 2010).

Juvenile delinquency is a serious problem which is given great importance by researchers over many years. In one such research, it was found that there is not much difference between the developing and developed countries, as in both teenagers form outstanding portion of society are reported to be indulged in delinquent acts (Alboukordi, Nazari, Nouri, & Sangdeh, 2012). As in many other developing countries, juvenile delinquency is a significant concern for Pakistan. Pakistan's socio-economic and socio-cultural situation has created much frustration in the citizens especially in Pakistani youth. Ethnic, religious, and status biases; lack of opportunities along with unemployment has caused much of this frustration. So, Pakistani youth seem quite prone towards indulging in criminal activity. In Balochistan being the most under developed and poorest province of Pakistan, this proneness is confirmed through continuously increasing youth crime rate. Understanding the dynamics of juvenile delinquency along with its antecedents and consequences can help in controlling this increase in youth crime rate. So identifying the context bound causal factors of criminal tendencies among youth of Balochistan can help in formulation of appropriate preventive and interventive strategies. Hence, this research is primarily aimed at identifying major causes of juvenile delinquency in Balochistan. This study may also guide towards further research in different areas of criminology like criminal profiling and policy making.

## **Method**

The present research is designed to find out the causal factors of juvenile delinquency in Baluchistan's youth and was placed in Quetta. Qualitative research design was used in this research and data gathered through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with juvenile delinquents, police and other law enforcement personnel, NGO service providers, university teachers and students. The term juvenile delinquency means committing a criminal act by a person who did not reach the age of eighteen (Shoemaker, 2010 as cited in Ahmed, & Murtaza, 2016).

## **Sample**

For this Study researcher conducted FGDs with 45 participants divided in six groups including juvenile delinquents ( $n=6$ ), law enforcement agencies ( $n=6$ ), teachers ( $n=5$ ), NGOs ( $n=6$ ), students (12 males & 10 females) of University of Balochistan, Quetta. Three FGDs were conducted with participants indulged or in a way related to delinquency. Juveniles were approached at the Central jail, Quetta through concerned authorities' for conduction of FGDs, while the FGDs with persons from law enforcement agencies and NGO's working on delinquency were conducted at University of Balochistan (UOB), Quetta. Teachers and students were inducted in the study to represent general population and information from them was collected through three FGDs conducted in University. Participants verbatim were recorded through careful note taking as tape recording was not preferred. Facilitator and co-facilitators focused the participants.

## **Instrument(s)**

A Focus Group Discussion guideline was prepared in this study. This guide was constructed through using the committee approach. The committee comprised of three experts from the field of psychological testing and qualitative research (with minimum qualification of Ph.D.).

## **Procedures**

First of all the prospective participants were identified and contacted for recruitment through personal associates. Then their consents were taken through sending informed consent form. The consented participants were then again contacted for scheduling the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).

Six FGDs were conducted on the schedule time. Each FGD lasted for about 40-50 minutes and same FGD guide was used in all FGDs. Researcher herself facilitated in each FGD, while co-facilitators having prior FGD conduction experience assisted for smooth conduction of FGD session and note taking (two co-facilitators with minimum qualification of M.A Psychology). Before start of proper FGD sessions facilitator explained the purpose and procedure of FGD to the participants and ensured about the confidentiality of their responses. Each FGD was concluded in a single session and was followed by a brief recap of the session proceedings in order to clarify and confirm the gathered information.

First FGD was conducted with juvenile delinquents. The age range of juvenile delinquents was 12-18 years and they were accessed from central jail, Quetta. After getting permission from jail superintendent facilitator conducted FGD. As tape recording was not allowed so information shared by the participants were recorded through careful note taking.

Second FGD was held with personnel from law enforcement agencies including Policemen, advocates, and persons from Army. Similarly, third FGD was conducted with employees from an NGO that was reported to be working for juvenile delinquents. Fourth FGD was conducted in the similar manner with teachers of the University of Balochistan, Quetta, while the last two FGDs were conducted with students of University of Balochistan, Quetta.

## **Results**

After the conduction of FGDs the collected information was compiled for further analysis. Thematic analysis of the gathered data was done in three steps. In the first step gathered information was coded through open coding technique. Open coding comprises concrete and in vivo coding. In this coding we identified important causal factors, tentatively labeled them in order to build the conceptual frame work of organized categories from the text. The

compiled text (participant's verbatim responses) was carefully examined for open coding through assigning appropriate numbers (for identified cause) and letters (for respective participant).

The next step was the axial coding of the data. This coding involved grouping of the previously coded causal factors on the bases of conceptual/ contextual relations. The axial coding resulted in emergence of sub-categories for the required conceptual frame work for explaining causes of juvenile delinquency. The sub-categories of causal factors of juvenile delinquency resulting from the axial coding are tabulated below along with their frequencies.

Table 1  
Sub-categories for Causes of Juveniles Delinquency along with their respective frequencies (N=45)

S. No.	Sub categories		Frequencies
1.	Parental and family influence		
	a.	Parental illiteracy	14
	b.	Joint Family	10
	c.	Father Ignorance	6
	d.	Separation of Parents	5
	e.	Less Monitoring	4
	f.	Conflicting Parents actions & saying	4
	g.	Paternal Harsh Behavior	3
	i.	Modeling effect	1
	j.	<i>Jirga</i> (traditional assembly of leaders that made decision by consensus)	1
2.	Peer and Community		
	a.	Peer influence	16
	b.	Community influence	7
	c.	Intergroup protection	6
3.	Economical / Financial Issues		
	a.	Poverty	14
	b.	low income	6
	c.	Child labor	3
	d.	Unemployment	3
	e.	Deprivation	2
	f.	Shortcuts of earning money	1
4.	School Related Issues		
	a.	Less monitoring in school	10
	b.	Punishment	7
	c.	Inattentive Teacher	6
	d.	Truancy	6
	e.	Private Schooling	5
	f.	Status quo in educational system	4
	g.	Less opportunities for feature	3
h.	Teachers' negative attitudes towards Students	1	

Personality Factors			
5.	a.	Risk taking behavior, adventurous & impulsive behavior	14
	b.	Depression	10
	c.	Drug usage	6
	d.	Pleasure seeking	5
	e.	Bullying	3
	f.	Less Tolerance	3
	g.	Aggression / Aggressive behavior	3
	h.	Oppositional behavior	1
	i.	Materialistic attitude	1
	j.	Destruction / Disruptive behavior	1
Mental / Cognitive Problems			
6.	a.	Immorality	7
	b.	Negative thinking	4
Media Related Issued			
7.	a.	Propagating violence through televised media	12
	b.	Print media	6
Religions and other Cultural Issues			
8.	a.	Political Pressure	4
	b.	Lack of facilities by State	4
	c.	Status Competition	3
	d.	<i>Madrisa</i> System	3

Table 1 shows the eight sub-categories along with the related minor categories. These minor categories were identified in the open coding. Tabulated information indicates that the sub-categories of parental and family influence were most frequently reported. The sub-categories of personality factors and school related issues followed then. Furthermore, the religious and cultural issues, and the media related issues are least frequently reported sub-categories.

Selective coding is the third and final step of the analysis. In this coding, we looked for the common themes among the sub-categories identified in previous step. Consequently, they were collapsed into four major categories. These are displayed in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
Major categories for Causes of Juveniles Delinquency along with their respective frequencies (N=45)

S.No.	Major Categories		Frequencies
1.	Financial factors		
	a.	Poverty	14
	b.	low income	6
	c.	Child labor	3
	d.	Unemployment	3
	e.	Deprivation	2
	f.	Shortcuts of earning money	1
2.	Social influence		
	a.	Parental influence	17
	b.	Peer influence	16
	c.	Joint family	10
	d.	Community influence	7
	e.	Less monitoring & attention	7
	f.	Intergroup protection	6
	g.	Modeling effect & conflicting parental action	5
	h.	Separation of parents	5
	i.	Criminal companionship	3
	Media		
	a.	Propagating violence through televised media	12
	b.	Print media	6
	Religious and other Cultural Issues		
	a.	Political Pressure	4
	b.	Lack of facilities by State	4
	c.	Status Competition	3
	d.	<i>Madrissa</i> System	3
	3.	School	
a.		Less monitoring in school	10
b.		Punishment	7
c.		Inattentive Teacher	6
d.		Truancy	6
e.		Private Schooling	5
f.		Status quo in educational system	4
g.		Less opportunities for future	3
h.	Teachers' negative attitudes towards Students	1	
4.	Personality		
	a.	Risk taking behavior, adventurous & impulsive behavior	14
	b.	Depression	10
	c.	Drug usage	6
	d.	Pleasure seeking	5
	e.	Bullying	3
f.	Less Tolerance	3	

	g.	Aggression / Aggressive behavior	3
	h.	Oppositional behavior	1
	i.	Materialistic attitude	1
	j.	Destruction / Disruptive behavior	1
	Mental / Cognitive Problems		
	a.	Immorality	7
	b.	Negative thinking	4

Table 2 shows four major categories along with their minor categories. The major categories were Financial factors, Social influence, School Related Issues, and Personality related Factors. The major categories have certain facets within themselves. For instance, social influence also comprises media and religious and cultural factors. Higher frequencies were for poverty, peer influence, parents influence, propagating violence through television media, less monitoring in school, risk-taking and impulsive behavior, depression, and low income.

### Discussion

The findings of this research lead to the identification of causal factors of juvenile delinquency in Balochistan as is the primary aim of the study. For this purposes FGDs were conducted with six groups of people from Balochistan or working in Balochistan. The resultant content was rigorously analyzed following thematic analysis. This resulted in emergence of four major categories. These major categories were financial factors, social influence, school related factors, and personality.

The most frequently reported cause of juvenile delinquency was social influence. Social influence includes factors like parental influence (parental illiteracy, separation of parents and less parental monitoring and attention), influence of family (joint family, familial modeling), peer influence (intergroup protection, criminal companionship), community influence (political pressure), religions and other cultural issues (influence of *madrissa*/religious educational institutes, *jirga*/traditional assembly of leaders that made discussion by consensus & according to the teaching of Islam), and influence of media (including both print & televised media). Social influence is reported as most important cause of delinquency in several other researches too. In one such research, the effect of family structure on juvenile delinquency play important role in delinquency (Parks, 2013). Additionally, parenting practices mediate between family structure and children's outcomes

(Dunifon, & Kowaleski as cited in Parks, 2013). Family structure, peers influence, and criminal companionship have been reported as important factors in the occurrence of juvenile delinquency (Alboukordi, Nazari, Nouri, & Sangdeh, 2012). Similarly, Talpur, Pathan, and Shah (2012) have also reported that family dysfunction, broken homes, and negative influence of peers can lead the young ones towards delinquency. Malik and Shirazi (2010) have discussed that media contributes in increase of juvenile delinquency by spoiling attitudes of juveniles.

The other frequently reported main cause of juvenile delinquency was personality. Personality factors include risk taking behavior & impulsive behavior, depression (negative thinking, extreme thinking), drug usage, oppositional behavior, disruptive behavior, bullying, and aggression. This is consistent with other findings where impulsive behavior was observed to be associated with delinquent juveniles. Studies further explain that associated behaviors act as catalyst for the persistence of conduct problem (e.g., Loeber, 1990). In another research Anderson, Cesur, and Tekin (2012) reported that depression among juvenile leads to property crime.

Similarly, Kausar et al. (2012) have indicated the relationship of depression and juvenile delinquency among Pakistani youth. Also, the high numbers of criminal offenders were seen frequently using multiple drugs (Powll as cited in Jalil, & Iqbal, 2014). Similarly, Nardi, Cunha, Bizarro, Dell, and Aglio (2012) reported that the juveniles frequently used the drugs (marijuana, cocaine, etc). Moreover, disruptive behaviors like attention deficit hyperactive disorder prevails among those young ones who show inclination towards delinquency (Hammod, 2007).

Another frequently reported factor of juvenile delinquency was school related factors. These include factors like less monitoring in school, punishment, inattentive teacher, truancy, private schooling, status quo in education system, less opportunities for future, and teachers' negative attitude towards students. Many Researches indicated that teachers are concern about the truancy in schools (Zahid, 2014). The criminal activities of the students are quite reduced when teachers engaged the students in classroom activities (Ahmed, et al. 2012). Chapman, Kapuscinski, and Roussel (2002) have suggested that carefully designed educational policies aid in

controlling the property crimes. The juveniles living in the rural areas are at higher risk to get involved in crimes (Shamim, Batool, Zafar, & Hashim, 2009).

Lastly, financial factors were found to be important predictor of juvenile's delinquent behavior. Financial factors include poverty, low income, child labor, and unemployment, etc. Malik, and Sharazi (2010) describe that the poverty is a main determinant of increasing juvenile offending. Unemployment increases the time span for which the juveniles have engaged in delinquency (Gronqvist, 2011). Another research reported that unemployment has adverse effect on the youth performance, which may culminate in criminal activities (Adebayo, 2013).

### **Conclusions, Implications, and Limitations**

Above findings lead to the conclusions that in Balochistan social environment, particularly the negative atmosphere closer to the youth (such as family and tribe) have played a critical role in the development of criminal behavior. Personal disposition is next important factor. Apparently, social influence and personal factors are contrasted. However, the present findings may suggest that the social milieu affects only those young individuals who are already predisposed to fall prey to it. The next significant factor, that is, the educational/school aspect of the teenagers again emphasizes the salience of the environment. Commonsense usually considers poor financial conditions as a major cause of the criminality. But, the present study seems to undermine its importance a little. It may be that financial difficulties only cause problems when the social environment and/or personality are already weakened.

The findings have implications for society and for public institutions and authorities in Balochistan as well as in other areas of Pakistan. The strongest of these is for parents/families. They need to be sensitive to the impact their relationships have on their offspring. Media and the political authorities should revisit their policies, as the existing violence in society or as shown on media is having poor influence on the juveniles. Besides, educational institutions especially schools are advised to examine their inherent issues. Public authorities need to improve the condition and policies of schools. To eradicate poverty and unemployment strict merit, justice, and timely recognition of human resource should be

ensured. Though it is difficult to change personality, they can be controlled somehow. Proper care, controlling drugs, and behavioral monitoring may be used to deal with disruptive personalities.

Certain limitations of the study can challenge the adequacy of conclusions and implications. The study was placed in only one city. Other areas were neglected. More importantly, only a few numbers of the delinquents themselves were inducted in the study. So, the rich experiential knowledge might not be available for this study. Steps were not taken to ensure reliability and validity of the findings. For example, independent coder should have been used to ensure inter-rater reliability.

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