

## THE ROLE OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AND INTELLIGENCE TO THE STABILITY OF SOCIAL SYSTEM WITH REFERENCE TO PAKHTOON CULTURE

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### ABSTRACT

The present research was to examine the level of intelligence among juvenile prisoners and non-delinquent boys of the same age group with rural and urban background respectively. The main purpose of the study was to look into the factors like family size and number of children does affect the socialization process with the same rate at both life patterns, mentioned above. A total sample of  $N=30$  subjects was randomly selected i.e., fifteen ( $n=15$ ) juvenile delinquents of Central Prison Haripur and fifteen ( $n=15$ ) non-delinquent boys from different schools of Peshawar. The subjects were contacted through proper channels for juvenile delinquents in jail. Permission was taken from the jail administration authority and non-delinquents were contacted through permission from the heads of their schools. Standard Progressive Matrices was applied on both groups and results were formulated according. It was hypothesized that the level of intelligence will be higher in non-delinquent boys as compared to convicted juvenile delinquents. It was further assumed that number of siblings more specifically male siblings will have a contributory role in developing delinquent behavior. Which were supported by the results i.e., significant difference was found in the intelligence level of delinquents and non-delinquent boys ( $p < .0001$ ) It was also found that greater the number of siblings greater will be the chances for delinquency ( $p < .01$ ). It was concluded that intelligence is one of the important factor of personality and healthy social life of an individual along with the family as the integral part of socialization providing stability and consistency to the social system. Thus emphasis is needed to look into functioning of the social system in terms of socialization and personality with reference to Pakhtoon society.

**Key Words:** Juvenile Delinquency, Social System and Pakhtoon Culture.

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### INTRODUCTION

Youth is the real asset of every society, the future of the societies, countries and the world at large depends on its youth. Youth indulging in crimes or deviating from the law have high return to themselves, their families, the societies and the world at large. Over the years efforts have been made to identify the causes of the juvenile delinquency. Researchers report core factors that predict juvenile delinquency among youth such as broken homes, absence of close relationships between children and their parents, number of people in the family (Demuth and Brown, 2004; Hoffman and Johnson, 1998; Derzon and Lipsey, 2000). Besides nurturance and family background, intelligence, learning disabilities, mental retardation have been of great concern to researchers during the early years of 19<sup>th</sup> century (Hollin, 1989) with little agreement regarding the role of these factors as a contributory factor to juvenile delinquency (Barnes *et al.* 1984; Craft, 1984; Hodgins, 1992; Moffit, *et al.* 1981; Offord, *et al.* 1978; Richman, *et al.* 1982; Rutter and Giller, 1983; West and Farrington, 1973).

During the last few decades the delinquency and crime rate is rising in both developed and developing countries (Rutter and Giller, 1983). The increase of crime rate in Pakistan has heightened the importance of investigating the explanation for the reasons (and whether these are changing) for delinquency and crimes in order to help the policy makers, law enforcing agencies and also the mental health practitioners.

Many factors contribute to the understanding of what leads someone to engage in delinquent behavior. While biological and psychological factors hold their own merit when explaining crime and delinquency, perhaps social factors can best explain juvenile delinquency. Juvenile delinquency is a massive and growing problem in Pakistan. The social causes of juvenile delinquency encompass a wide array of theories that have been set forth by

criminologists and sociologists. Some theorists view delinquency as a function of the individual while others view delinquency as a macro level function of society.

Just as the causal factors of delinquency are diverse and numerous, so are the definitions (Calhoun et al, 1989). Sociologists define deviance as any behavior violating norms of social group. This concept applies both to criminal acts of deviance and non-criminal acts that members of a group view as unethical, immoral, peculiar and sick of otherwise outside the bounds of respectability. Tommovic (1979) cites Breckenridge's definition of delinquency as "A condition arising in the matrix of socio personal disorganization and in the sequence of experience and influences that shape behavior problems. It is the product of dynamic social process, involving numerous variables and the failure of personal and social controls. It is a symptom of deep socioeconomic and social ailment". This definition of delinquency sees crime as a basic lack of positive social ties or bonds.

It is important to note the distinction between crime and delinquency, where as a crime is an acts that breaks criminal code which is created by society though written law, delinquency and deviance can be acts that merely break 'cultural law' or norms. Delinquency is usually specific and descriptive of age. Tomovic 1979 cites Redl and Winelian, "The legal concept of delinquency simply states which type of behavior is forbidden by law, in which state, for which age group of children and so forth".

Intelligence is the most a critical aspect of personality, and it also plays a significant role in behavior determination. Different researches concerning delinquency and intelligence show a higher frequency of people with disabilities or less intelligent delinquents, but by this it could not be said that the people of low intelligence are more likely to be delinquents because feeble-minded persons have less or no ability to hide their deviant behavior as compared to the normal persons so probably due to this reason they may come on record.

West and Farrington, (1973) conducted a longitudinal study on 411 English boys and concluded (using the Raven, 1960 approach) that those who later become criminals were characterized by lower I.Q. than those who did not. They concluded that intelligence is a meaningful predictive factor of future delinquency. Mednick and Christinensen (1977) also found that adolescents who committed criminal acts later had a lower tested intelligence score than their more law-abiding peers Ahmed (1966) administered a Weschsler intelligence scale for children with delinquents and compare these to non delinquent adolescents in Karachi and found that the group of delinquents had not only a lower I.Q. but that there was a higher proportion of adolescents with learning disabilities among the delinquent group.

There are controversial approaches of researchers about the role of intelligence in the emergence of delinquency but one thing can obviously be concluded by above discussion that though the statistics provides the clear evidence to believe that the intelligence is a major contributing factor among the causes of juvenile delinquency but the objections against this belief are also very strong. So it can be said that intelligence collaborates with other factors actively in the emergence of juvenile delinquency, but it is not the only cause.

Many factors are related to delinquent behavior such as poverty, low educational level, peer association and low intelligence level. In the current research, the main emphasis to analyze delinquent behavior was on intelligence as well as impact of family size: that is number of sibling of the delinquents and non-delinquents. It was assumed that parents in the large families may not be capable of giving quality time to all the children so there is a possibility of juvenile delinquency in the large families (Derzon and Lipsey; 2000 and various research highlights that the probability of delinquency increases with the number of siblings (Kalb and Williams, 2003; Grogger, 1998).

According to Geismar and Wood (1986), family variables are of two types, structural and functional. They further categorized the family variables into different sub-categories, with structural factors including the number of people in the family, family arrangements and the employment status of the mother. The functional variable included the nature of parental interaction, familial problems, parental disciplining of children and style of monitoring the children. It can be could be hypothesized that the larger the size of the family is the greater will be the chances of delinquency due to inability of the parents to pay equal attention to all the children in the family.

While a variety of factors are considered risk factors for causing delinquency in youth however, little attention is paid to the role of the siblings as a serious risk factor for delinquency. Some researchers argue that delinquency stems from the larger families the larger having a good number of siblings (Brownfield and Sorenson, 1994; Jones,

*et al.* 1980). In addition, Brownfield and Sorenson (1994) found that the number of siblings predicted delinquency for males, but not for females. Similarly, the number of male siblings has been associated with increased delinquency, while the number of female siblings has not been linked with increased delinquency (Jones *et al.* 1980; Farrington *et al.* 1996).

Therefore this study examines the comparison between the level of intelligence of delinquents and non-delinquents and also whether or not the number of siblings has an impact on delinquent behavior during early adolescence.

### **Hypotheses**

1. The level of intelligence will be higher in non-delinquents boys as compared to convicted juvenile delinquents;
2. The greater the number of siblings the greater will be the chance for delinquent behaviour;
3. The greater the number of male siblings, the greater will be the chance for delinquency in their male sibling.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### **Sample**

The sample consisted of two groups i.e. juvenile delinquents and non-delinquent boys. 15 subjects were included in each group thus there were 30 subjects in total with a mean age of 18.6 years. Juvenile delinquents were taken from Central Prison, Haripur which is the biggest prison complex in NWFP. Boys for the control group were taken from different schools of Peshawar. All the subjects were male and under 21 years of age. (In Prison System of Pakistan, juveniles are considered as less than 21 years of age). Both groups of juveniles were of similar ages ranging from 14 to 21 years old with the average age of 16.5 for the delinquents and 15.9 for the non-delinquents.

### **Instrument**

Standard Progressive matrices developed by Raven (1960) are widely used non-verbal intelligence tests, and these were applied to examine the level of general intelligence in both the two groups. This scale is applicable to people ages 5 years and over. The scale consists of 60 problems divided into 5 sets of 12 each. The split-half-reliabilities were  $r > .90$  in over 40 studies with people of differing age and from diverse cultural backgrounds. The test authors indicate test-retest-reliabilities varying between  $r = .83$  and  $r = .93$ . The concurrent validity ranged between .54 and .88, respectively.

### **Procedure**

The subjects were contacted at Central Prison Haripur. During the initial meeting the rapport was built up with respondents. After establishing the rapport and the consent obtained, a demographic questionnaire and SPM was administered. The subjects for the contrast group were taken from the different schools of Peshawar. After the questionnaires were completed, they were scored and similarities and differences between the two groups were examined.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Table I shows the mean difference between delinquents and non-delinquents on the scores of SPM. The table shows that non-delinquents scored higher than delinquents. This mean difference 25.13 is highly statistically significant at ( $p < .0001$ ).

**Table I** Mean, SD and t-value of percentile of delinquents and non delinquents on standard progressive matrices (SPM) (N=30)

Groups	N	Mean	SD	t	p
Non-Delinquents	15	82.13	11.637	3.945	.0001
Delinquents	15	57.00	21.762		

Df = 28,  $p < .0001$

Note: The higher the score on SPM the higher will be general intelligence

Table II shows cross tab between the number of total siblings of delinquents and non-delinquents. The result shows that higher number of delinquents reported 7 and above siblings while only 13.3% non-delinquents

reported greater than 7 siblings in the family. The frequency difference is highly statistically significant at ( $p < .02$ ) which indicates that children raised in large families are more prone to delinquency as compared to the children raised in small families.

**Table II** *Cross tab of delinquents and non-delinquent boys on the basis of number of total siblings in the family (N=30)*

Groups	1-6 siblings	> 7 siblings	total
Non-Delinquents	13 86.7%	2 13.3%	15 100.0%
Delinquents	6 40.0%	9 60.0%	15 100.0%
	19 63.3%	11 36.7%	30 100.0%

Chi-square= 7.033, df= 1,  $p < .02$

Table III shows cross tab between the number of total male siblings of delinquents and non-delinquents. The result shows that higher number of male delinquents reported 3 and above siblings (73.3%) while only 26.7 % non-delinquents reported 3 or greater than 3 siblings in the family. The frequency difference is highly statistically significant at ( $p < .01$ ) which indicates that children raised in large families with male siblings are more prone to delinquency as compared to the children raised in families with 2 male siblings.

**Table III** *Cross tab of delinquents and non-delinquent boys on the basis of number of male siblings in the family (N=30)*

Groups	0-2	3-5	< 6	1.00
Non-delinquents	10 66.7%	4 26.7%	1 6.7%	15 100.0%
Delinquents	2 13.3%	11 73.3%	2 13.3%	15 100.0%
Total	12 40.0%	15 50.0%	3 10.0%	30 100.0%

Chi-square value 8.933, df=2,  $p < .01$

Table IV shows cross tab between the number of total female siblings of delinquents and non-delinquents. The result shows almost similar number of female siblings of delinquents and non-delinquents. This means that female siblings do not have a significant impact on delinquency of the brother regardless how many female siblings are involved. The frequency difference is statistically not significant ( $p > .05$ ).

**Table IV** *Cross tab of delinquents and non-delinquent boys on the basis of number of female siblings in the family (N=30)*

Groups	0-2	3-5	Total
Non-delinquents	8 53.3%	7 46.7%	15 100.0%
Delinquents	7 46.7%	8 53.3%	15 100.0%
Total	15 50.0%	15 50.0%	30 100.0%

Chi-square value .133, df=1,  $p > .05$

Intelligence and logical reasoning have always been dominant forces for any type of behavior including deviant behavior. Some researchers consider delinquency as a global critical problem because youngsters are the future asset of every society and if ignore can gravitate to more extreme criminality (Tarolla, *et al.* 2002). The aim of the present research was to study the level of intelligence between delinquents and non-delinquents and the family size of the delinquents and non-delinquents. This study supported the hypothesis that greater the number of male siblings greater will be delinquency (Jones *et al.* 1980; Farrington *et al.* 1996; Boyle *et al.* 2001).

There can be many factors why these juvenile delinquents have a lower level of intelligence as compared to boys of the same age group. The most prominent factor is suggested to be the low literacy rate and socioeconomic problems in Pakistan. It is seen in general that most of the juvenile delinquents come from low socioeconomic backgrounds and from rural villages rather than from urban areas. The standard of education, received by these young men is quite different from the standard that is available in metropolitan environments.

Several steps can be adopted for the improvement of their intellectual capabilities. Because expressed intelligence must be drawn out from innate ability, through cultural experiences, it is natural to ask whether certain cultural experiences, including education, can improve intelligence. Some social programs have had this as an explicit goal. It is also natural to ask whether societies can improve intelligence by altering the physical environment for instance, through programs to improve nutrition or the family environment. The welfare of the society and the strength of the nation are therefore contingent on the family. The dynamics with a family may enable its members to become integrated into society and adopt societal norms or alternatively become a source of juvenile delinquents with resultant challenges for society.

Negligence and inappropriate parenting may be one cause of potential delinquency in children (Blackburn, 1993; Demuth and Brown, 2004). In the Pakistani context, this could include being ignorant of the religious teachings regarding the upbringing of children, doling out money and gifts as and when desired by children and/or fulfilling their demands without assessing its time and authenticity may spoil their children which ultimately lead to extravagance and delinquent behaviour. The parents should bring up the children in the context of societal norms. This includes being prepared before the child's birth and taking the utmost care once a child is born. This care should be sustained through the stages of infancy, adolescence and finally until adulthood. If this is not considered it becomes too late once delinquent patterns of behaviour have set in in this context, the roles of both parents are critical.

Islam shows the right way to bring up children and calls upon parents to teach their offsprings the Islamic morals, the noble virtues, the religious observance starting from the supremacy of Allah, belief in His book and His messengers. The life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is a model for presenting to the children and a shield of security from any external intellectual invasion and immune against any potential evil. It is crucial that parents should inculcate in children the fear of God and the instincts of obedience towards Him and all elders. It is essential that parents should develop a thoughtful plan and 'road map' for teaching their children and ensure its implementation jointly, that is father, mother and the child.

## CONCLUSION

It is concluded from the present brief study that capacity for delinquency is impacted on by family size and by number of male siblings. Juvenile delinquency needs to be addressed in terms of looking into the preview of existing social system operating under the umbrella of culture with reference to socialization and personality development process. If properly and accurately taken into consideration, this may yield some sound results towards minimizing the increase of delinquent behaviour among young male adolescents. The findings further suggest that larger family size, intelligence and gender of the siblings has an important role in determining delinquency. It is anticipated that this study may be of benefit the policy makers, educationists, researchers, and mental health practitioners in dealing effectively with delinquents.

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