

Exploring Psychosocial Factors of Delinquency in Juveniles: A Survey Investigation

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ABSTRACT

Owing to its peculiar indigenous socio-cultural, economic and legal conditions, juvenile delinquency in Pakistan is bound to have a unique complex facet. Our study aimed to explore the psychosocial factors that contributed to the development of delinquency in juveniles. Through the non-probability purposive sampling technique, a sample of ($N=40$) late adolescent juvenile boys with an age range of (16-18) years, ($M=17$, $SD=.78$) were recruited from the District Camp Jail of Lahore city. By applying a Sociodemographic Information Sheet, a Self-constructed Survey Questionnaire on Psychosocial Causes of Delinquency, the Parenting Authority Questionnaire (Buri, 1991), and Urdu translated Psychopathic Deviation Scale (Mirza, 1977), the data were collected and further analyzed through SPSS. Results showed the significance of sociodemographic characteristics including education, family dynamics, peer relations, substance abuse, parental education and family income. Moreover, the majority of the participants reported the authoritarian parenting style for both parents while their psychopathic deviation scores were also found to be above the cutoff score. These findings have eclectic and interdisciplinary implications that are not limited to intra-psychology fields of forensic, clinical and counselling settings, with a focus on adolescent development and behaviour, but can add value addition to the research scholarship to quite a few fields of social sciences, primarily sociology, social work and development studies. Moreover, these findings will further provide awareness and insight to law enforcement agencies, legislatures and public or private sector-based policymakers regarding the issues of delinquency.

Keywords: Parenting styles, psychopathic deviation, psychosocial causes, delinquency, juveniles.

Introduction

One of the major subspecialties within the field of forensic psychology is the psychology of crime and delinquency, which indicates the significance of research scholarship around the issues of actual or potential disruptive and violent behavioural patterns liable to legal ramifications among children and adolescents (Bartol & Bartol, 2018). Although the dynamics underlying delinquency may diverge from culture to culture, their early identification, assessment and rehabilitation are what need to be taken up

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seriously. As part of its efforts to fulfil obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the government of Pakistan promulgated Juvenile Justice System Ordinance (JJSO) to protect the rights of juveniles who come into conflict with the law back in 2000, but it's slow and delayed implementation caused unrecoverable losses to the young delinquents (Ali, 2020). It was repealed with the Juvenile Justice System Act (JJSA), introduced in 2018, urging courts to undertake the best interest of the child while making decisions in their cases. Other than defining a juvenile offender as someone under the age of 18 years involved in actions cognizable as criminal offences under the law, this act elaborated on the process of the establishment of separate courts, free legal assistance, the arrest and release on bail, disclosure of the juvenile's identity and determination of the age by the competent authority. But the critics have pointed out glaring lapses and recommended a multi-stakeholder-based coordinated approach to the uplift juvenile justice system in Pakistan (Ali, 2020; Tahir, 2021).

But limiting the issue of juvenile delinquency only to a legal context is myopic as it is rather a complex social phenomenon that involves psychological, social, moral and cultural implications. On one hand, it impacts the social functioning of the society while on the other; it gets affected by the prevalent social structures and dynamics. Within psychology, the interest in the construct of delinquency, especially in its classification and types emerged as a major scientific force back in the 1960s (Smiley, 1977) and mainly focused on the developmental and clinical disorders-based typologies like reactive depressive, repeatedly rejected, schizoid and latent psychotics, with organic disorder and family-centred delinquents (Downe, 1968 as cited in Smiley, 1977). Similarly, Hewitt and Jenkins (1946, as cited in Jenkins & Boyer, 1968) divided delinquents into two different behavioural categories namely un-socialized aggressive delinquents and socialised delinquents, where the former were distinguished to be involved in behaviours like assaults, malicious mischief, cruelty, defiance to authority and starting fights while the latter was characterised by gang activities, co-operative stealing, truancy and running away from homes.

It is important to note that apart from defining and classifying delinquents, the researcher also focused on the development of theoretical perspectives for better understanding and rehabilitation of criminal and delinquent behaviour (Shoemaker, 2018).

Theories of Criminality and Delinquency

Just like any other psychological construct, criminal behaviour and delinquency also have a diverse range of theoretical perspectives that not only enables one to better understand the underpinnings of this phenomenon but also add different dimensions and expand its scope and application. One of the foremost and initial theoretical perspectives on criminality and delinquency talked about biological predispositions, involving the twins' and family studies-based etiologies (increased probability of criminal offending in identical twins in contrast to fraternal twins), as well as chromosomal (the XYY chromosome argument), neuro-chemical imbalances (vitamin B3 deficiency) and structural brain abnormalities (frontal lobe dysfunction); some of whom are still found to be consistent and relevant (Rowe & Osgood, 1984).

Through a variety of theories, the sociological perspective took into account the contributing environmental factors for delinquent behaviour. While focusing only on the economically challenged delinquents, the strain theory argued that due to limited opportunities, these offenders experience a strain between their aspirations and expectations, and try to resolve it either by using deviant means or adapting to substance abuse or suicide; the proponents of social control theory believed that delinquency is the result of the breakdown of one's bonding and social ties with the existing social institutions that control one's potentiality of legal violations (Hoffman, 2003). Similarly, the theory of differential association argued that criminal behaviour is learned through contact with other people who hold favourable definitions of criminal behaviours and attitudes (Hoffman, 2003). Also, while theorising on the social and semantic basis, the labelling theory of deviance believed that powerful people stigmatise someone as a criminal, who then develops a negative self-concept and starts behaving as per society's expectations and beliefs (Petrunik, 1980). Lastly, ushering in the feminist perspective on delinquency, Daly and Chesney-Lind (1988) reasoned that delinquency and crime are a result of the women's oppressed position in

society, which entices them to indulge in violent activities.

The psychological perspective of delinquency and crime provides a unique combination of both internal (biological) and external (sociological) factors, while especially focusing on the developmental phases of childhood and adolescence. Starting with the psychoanalytical approach that viewed human innate aggression, destructive drives, weak ego and superego as primary reasons for delinquency, Skinner argued for the plausibility of certain reinforcements that shape one's behaviour a deviant one (Moore, 2011). The social learning theory focused on the aggressive role models and observations causing delinquent behaviour while Gibbs (2003 as cited in Davies & Beech, 2018) highlighted both the immature and mature aspects of moral reasoning responsible for deviant behaviour. Also, focusing on developmental patterns, Moffitt (1993) proposed two qualitatively different categories of antisocial individuals namely life-course-persistent offenders, the ones who would continue to commit a crime and adolescence-limited offenders, whose offending is just limited to adolescence.

The attachment theory by Bowlby (1969 as cited in Davies & Beech, 2018)) argued that in the absence of prolonged maternal deprivation and comfort, one can develop a delinquent personality. Similarly, Eysenck (1996) focused on the development of conscience, which can be learned to override one's innate tendency to seek hedonistic pleasures by committing criminal offences. Likewise, the proponents of rational choice theory believed that deviance is a result of the highly rational calculation of risks and awards (Gül, 2009). And last but not the least, at times; a variety of situational and circumstantial factors become a causal factor for a crime. These factors include but are not limited to conducive situations, provocative situations and accidental situations (Trinidad, 2019).

In the end, it can be concluded from this overview of theories of crime and delinquency that it is a multi-faceted phenomenon that does not involve a single cause or factor but rather a result of a combination of different factors and causes.

Literature Review

Before divulging the research scholarship on the psychosocial causes of juvenile delinquency, it must be significant to point out that most of the studies focused on adult criminals and that too in a western context. So, indigenous research literature exploring the psychosocial developmental factors and causes of deviance among juveniles is rather rare.

Talking about the nature of juvenile delinquency, Heghe and Chiopu (2020) argued that it is delinquency is a multidisciplinary, complex phenomenon with disproportional relation between the biological elements, external stimuli, and internal emotional and psychological management of these elements. Moreover, Basto-Pereira et al. (2016) concluded that early adversity is significantly related to juvenile justice involvement, criminal persistence and psychosocial problems. Also, another study reported that exposure to stress during childhood and adolescence negatively affects development and results in diverse behavioural outcomes including substance abuse, self-inflicted harm and delinquency (Sigfusdottir et al., 2017).

While exploring the socio-demographic profile of both juvenile and adult detainees at police stations, Bazai et al. (2021) reported that most were illiterate, married, between the ages of 20-29 years, living in nuclear families and had a fair economic status. Further findings suggested that a majority of them were arrested for the first time for mainly drug use and petty theft. On inquiring about their self-reported reasons for offending, they informed their criminal emotions, peer influence, lack of parental attention and living in crime-dominated areas as justifications. Similarly, a study on juveniles cited poor economic conditions, unemployment, and greed for higher economic status for delinquency (Islam et al., 2016). Moreover, Djidonou et al. (2016) concluded that the average age for juveniles to commit a crime is 16.1 ± 1.1 years. Most of the delinquents were school dropouts, and orphans belonged to broken families and were charged with theft. Just like Bazai et al. (2021), most of them did not have any previous criminal record and used psychoactive substances and drugs.

Investigating the role of the school environment in the development of deviant adolescent behaviour, Aldridge et al. (2018) reported that school connectedness and rule clarity are negatively correlated with delinquency while bully victimization mediates school climate on delinquent behaviour.

Studies have also explored the construct of criminal social identity (CSI) and found that it was only associated with a lack of parental supervision when the individual had friends involved in crime (Spink & Woodfield, 2019). Moreover, they found that offenders having positive feelings towards other offenders are likely to have criminal attitudes if they score low on extroversion. Similarly, Boduszek et al. (2016) argued that CSI is developed because of the interplay of an identity crisis due to familial and peer rejection, exposure to the antisocial environment, and a need for identification with criminal groups to enhance self-esteem and certain personality attribute. Moreover, a study found that peer risk-taking behaviour and impulsivity predict delinquency (Curcio et al., 2017) while Abd-Rahman and Abdullah (2020) reported friends as the major source of delinquency as well as TV crime shows appeared to be another source. In a relatively contrasting light to this finding regarding TV crime shows, another study reported that media has a direct effect on both deviation and rehabilitation (Islam et al., 2016).

Family dynamics, especially the nature of relationships with parents, appeared to be a recurring theme across the literature on delinquents and offenders. In a qualitative phenomenological study, Sumari et al. (2021) investigated family experiences of delinquents and found the emergence of five themes namely life without guidance, alienation and isolation, conflict on how the family is managed, 'I am still a little child' and prisoners at home. Similarly, Hayat et al. (2020) found that most of the deviants belonged to rural areas, were unemployed, economically disadvantaged and had disruptive paternal relations. Moreover, Rezaei et al. (2019) argued that the authoritative parenting style positively predicted while the authoritarian parenting style negatively predicted self-control capacity in delinquents. Also, a study of adult criminals reported a prior history of parental drug use and imprisonment with familial involvement in criminal activities (Alam et al. 2018). Findings further suggested that most of them belonged to broken families with large family sizes, and had low social status and moral values.

Vashisht et al. (2018) reported family environment has an impact on life satisfaction and resilience in delinquents while another study found a significant positive relationship between the father's hostility or aggression and the mother's indifference or rejection of delinquent behaviour in juveniles who lacked self-control (Shafiq & Asad, 2020). Similarly, an investigation revealed that secure parental attachment and intrinsic religious orientation are significantly related to an increase in moral character and a decrease in delinquency (Munir & Malik, 2020). Likewise, another study deduced a significant positive relationship between criminal thinking styles, criminal social identity, the authoritarian and permissive parenting styles (Sana et al., 2021).

Moreover, Kauser (2017) found authoritative parenting style was positively associated with a decline in delinquent behaviour while the neglectful parenting style had a positive relationship. Also, the association was stronger for mothers' parenting styles than fathers, while another study concluded family harsh practices and low family support responsible for youth participation in street crimes (Amanullah et al., 2021).

Through a longitudinal study, Farrington et al. (2016) concluded that high troublesomeness, parental conviction and high daring are risk factors while having few friends and fewer scores on neuroticism emerged as promotive factors for delinquency. Moreover, Taşkıran et al. (2017) did not find any gender, age or history of crime and substance abuse predicting delinquency. However, family crime history was significantly higher in the high-severity crime group, which was associated with having one or more comorbid psychiatric disorders, the most common of whom were attention-deficit hyperactive disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, conduct disorder and anxiety disorder.

By focusing on immigrant and intergenerational aspects of delinquency and crime, Ellis et al. (2016) argued that it is a result of distinctive social-contextual and individual factors. Similarly, Sabia (2016) discovered a lack of self-control for first-generation immigrants, self-control and environmental factors

for second-generation immigrants, and a combination of psychosocial, individual, and environmental factors for native-born youth may serve as critical risk factors of delinquency. Another study found parental convictions were directly related to the conviction of sons and mediated via the father's drug use (Auty et al., 2017). Further, in the case of daughters, parental convictions were indirectly related to harsh parental discipline.

While investigating recidivism in juveniles, Basto-Pereira and Maia (2018) argued that adult criminal behaviour is a result of drug consumption and mental health issues. Similarly, another study concluded that conduct disorders and recidivism predict delinquency (Olashore et al., 2017). While discussing the rehabilitation of delinquents, Chughtai et al. (2021) argued that though juvenile justice is a contemporary issue, Islam had deliberated on it since its advent and has always focused on the reformation, rehabilitation and social reintegration of children into society.

The Rationale of the Study

Before divulging the research scholarship on the psychosocial causes of juvenile delinquency, it must be considered that while there is extensive literature on adult criminals and deviants, there is relatively a dearth of empirical studies on juveniles. Moreover, while the dynamics of deviance, its assessment and rehabilitation strategies have been thoroughly investigated in the western context, indigenous context-based literature is quite scant. By taking into account the empirical research evidence, the present study would focus on bringing in a new, dynamic and comprehensive indigenous investigation on the psychosocial contributing factors of delinquency among juveniles in Pakistan. Based on this rationale, this study aimed to investigate the following objectives; (a) to understand the significant sociodemographic characteristics of juveniles, (b) to comprehend the psychosocial causes of delinquency in juveniles, (c) to highlight the parenting styles that the juveniles reported, and, (d) to find out the psychopathic deviation level among juveniles.

Hypotheses of the Study

In the light of literature review and keeping in mind the survey-based approach of the current investigation, the following hypotheses:

- There would be significant chi-square differences in sociodemographic characteristics.
- There would be significant chi-square differences on the survey questionnaire investigating psychosocial causes of delinquency among juveniles.
- There would be significant chi-square differences on the parenting styles scale.
- The delinquents would score above the cutoff score for the psychopathic deviation scale.

METHOD

Research Design of the Study and Sample Details

This quantitative exploratory survey research recruited a sample of ($N=40$) late adolescent juveniles, with an age range of (16-18) years, ($M = 17$, $SD = .78$) through a non-probability purposive sampling technique from District Camp Jail of Lahore city. All the participants were boys and no one reported any formal diagnosis of a physical or mental health-related issue.

Assessment Measures

Self-reported Sociodemographic Information Sheet

A detailed self-reported sociodemographic information sheet inquiring about their age, education level, birth order, occupation, family system, personal monthly income, number of siblings, nature of the crime, education level and occupation of parents, parental monthly income, the living status of parents, and ages at the time of father's death.

Self-constructed Survey Questionnaire on Psychosocial Causes of Delinquency

Employing a deductive approach, a survey questionnaire was constructed about the research scholarship involving juvenile delinquents. It included questions about their quality of relationship with parents and siblings, quality of childhood experiences, experiences of parental physical abuse, parental imprisonment and substance abuse, personal satisfaction with family income and parental satisfaction with family income, peer group cohesiveness, peer group imprisonment, feelings of remorse after committing a crime, interest towards religion, reasons for committing a crime, best and worst life event, reasons for receiving appreciation, reasons for receiving punishment, best and worst personal quality and favourite inspirational character. The inter-rater reliability of the self-constructed survey questionnaire was .73.

Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ)

The Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) (Buri, 1991) was used to assess parenting styles. It is a 30-item questionnaire that investigates the authoritarian, authoritative and permissive parenting styles. Scored on a Likert 5-point scale (where 1 refers to 'strongly disagree' and 5 refers to 'strongly agree'), its alpha reliability ranges between .72- .92 (Buri, 1991). Following the guidelines mandated by Mapi Research Trust, it was translated into Urdu for a better understanding of the participants.

Psychopathic Deviation Scale (PD)

The level of psychopathic deviation (PD) tendencies was measured by the application of the Psychopathic Deviation subscale of MMPI (Hathaway & McKinley, 1943), though in the present study, its Urdu-translated version (Mirza, 1977) was administered for convenience and a better understanding of the participants. It is a 50-item subscale with 'True' and 'False' options. The score range for this subscale is between 0-50; where the higher scores indicate a higher level of psychopathic deviation and lower scores indicate lower levels of psychopathic deviation. The mean cutoff score is 25. The test-retest reliability of this scale was estimated to be .71 (Hathaway & McKinley, 1943).

Procedure and Ethical Considerations

After the conceptualization of this research project, a synopsis was developed for seeking formal approval from the Departmental Board of Studies (BOS). Meanwhile, permission for the usage of assessment measures was taken from the respective authors. After the BOS approval, official permission was also taken from jail authorities to conduct this study. For better comprehension and understanding of research participants, a sociodemographic information sheet and survey questionnaire on psychosocial causes of delinquency were developed in the Urdu language. While the Urdu version of the PD scale (Mirza, 1977) was also available for usage, it's the PAQ (Buri, 1991) that needed Urdu translation.

Following the guidelines developed by the Mapi research institute, the first two authors (both native Urdu speakers) initially did a forward translation that was reconciled. This was followed by a backward translation of this reconciled language version into English by two independent speakers (two M.Phil students, one from the English and Psychology department each). Lastly, the backward translation and the original measure were compared and discrepancies were corrected to finalize the Urdu version of PAQ (Acquadro et al. 2012).

Even though formal permission was taken, the participation of juveniles was completely voluntary. Only those delinquents were recruited who consented to participate after getting a briefing about the nature and purpose of the study. Owing to the security protocols of jail authorities, the data was collected over multiple meetings, which involved the first author reading out the survey items and noting down their responses, in the presence of the authorities. All the data was collected anonymously and kept confidential in line with the guidelines provided by American Psychological Association (APA) and Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). Through SPSS, the data were analyzed to generate results and the findings were discussed in the light of research evidence.

Results

Results were generated through SPSS by running descriptive analysis and chi-square goodness of fit test, which is also referred to as Pearson chi-square. Table 1 revealed sociodemographic characteristics of the study reported that most of the delinquents were of 17 years of age (40.5%), middle born (50%), without any formal education (45%), unemployed (42.5%), with most of them having at least six siblings (25%), belonged to the joint family system (72.5%) and committed dacoity (55%). Further, the findings reported that the fathers and mothers of most of the juveniles did not have any formal education reporting (52.5%) and (70%) ratios respectively. Also, while most of the fathers of delinquents were not working (50%), only (12.5%) of their mothers were homemakers.

Moreover, the results of Pearson's chi-square goodness of fit showed significant differences for almost all of the analyzed sociodemographic characteristics, with the education of juvenile $\chi^2 (3, N = 40) = 10.4$, their fathers $\chi^2 (3, N = 40) = 21$, and the birth order of juveniles $\chi^2 (2, N = 40) = 8.75$, with a $p < .01$. On the other hand, the $p < .001$, in the case of employment status of juveniles $\chi^2 (5, N = 40) = 24.2$, number of siblings $\chi^2 (5, N = 40) = 22.65$, family system $\chi^2 (3, N = 40) = 50$, father's employment $\chi^2 (6, N = 40) = 38.75$, education of mother $\chi^2 (4, N = 40) = 64.25$ and employment status of the mother $\chi^2 (1, N = 40) = 22.5$ respectively.

Table 1: *Descriptive Statistics and Pearson's Chi-square Goodness of Fit Test Results for Sociodemographic Characteristics of Delinquents (N = 40)*

Variables	<i>n</i>	%	χ^2	<i>df</i>
Age (in years)				
16	11	27.5		
17	16	40.5		
18	13	32.5		
Education level			10.40**	3
No formal education	18	45		
Grades 1-5	4	10		
Grades 6-8	10	25		
Grades 9-10	8	20		
Nature of employment			24.20***	5
Unemployed	17	42.5		
Laborer	9	22.5		
Mason	5	12.5		
Farmer	4	10		
Driver	4	10		
Student	1	2.5		
No. of siblings			22.65***	6
2	1	2.5		
4	8	20		
5	1	2.5		
6	14	25		
7	8	20		
8	4	10		
9	4	10		
Father's education			21**	3
No formal education	21	52.5		
Grades 1-5	3	7.5		
Grades 6-8	12	30		
Grades 9-10	4	10		
*Father's nature of employment			38.75***	6

Unemployed	18	50		
Mason	8	22.22		
Labourer	7	19.44		
Driver	2	5.55		
Farmer	1	2.77		
Birth order			8.75**	2
First born	15	37.5		
Middle born	20	50		
Last born	5	12.5		
Family System			50***	3
Joint family	29	72.5		
Nuclear family	7	17.5		
Single-parent family due to father's death	3	7.5		
<i>Table Continued</i>				
Variables	<i>n</i>	%	χ^2	<i>df</i>
Single-parent family due to separation	1	2.5		
Monthly family income (in PKR)				
None	19	47.5		
7,000	7	17.5		
10,000	10	25		
12,000	1	2.5		
12,500	1	2.5		
13,000	1	2.5		
15,000	1	2.5		
Types of crime				
Dacoity	22	55		
Theft	13	32.5		
Attempted murder	3	7.5		
Murder	2	5		
Mother's education			64.25***	4
No formal education	28	70		
Grades 1-5	2	5		
Grades 6-8	6	15		
Grades 9-10	3	7.5		
Graduation	1	2.5		
Mother's work status			22.50***	1
Home-maker	5	12.5		
Working	35	87.5		
Mothers are alive	40	100		
Fathers are alive				
Yes	36	90		
No	4	10		

Note. The participants were on average 17 years with $SD = .78$, while their monthly family income was ($M = 5037.5$, $SD = 5119.58$). *As ($n = 4$) participants reported that their fathers were not alive, therefore the frequencies and percentages here are according to ($n = 36$).

** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

While highlighting the findings of the self-constructed survey questionnaire of psychosocial causes of delinquency in juveniles, Table 2 reported that most of the participants had a pleasant childhood (60%), with positive relationships with fathers (80%), mothers (90%) and siblings (72.5%), had experienced parental physical abuse (92.5%), with parents abusing substances (65%) and revealed peer cohesiveness (80%). Also, most of the parents (92.5%) and peers (70%) of the delinquents were not imprisoned at any point in time. Similarly, a majority of delinquents revealed their satisfaction with family income (72.5%) as well as claimed that most of their parents also felt the same (57.5%).

Further, most of the delinquents felt remorse after committing the crime (72.5%) with an increased interest in religion after being imprisoned (70%). Similarly, most of them did not have any role model (70%), gave poverty (50%) as their primary reason for committing a crime, declared not a single life incident as the best (57.5%), while regarded imprisonment (87.5%) as the worst incident of life. A majority of juveniles considered offering prayers (20%) as their best behavioural characteristic while regarded aggression (22.5%) as their worst personal attribute. Likewise, most of the delinquents reported that they were punished for roaming around with friends (22.5%) and appreciated for taking interest in their studies (22.5%).

The results of Pearson's chi-square goodness of fit in Table 2 showed significant differences for most of the survey questions with the exception of nature of childhood experiences $\chi^2 (1, N = 40) = 1.6$ and juvenile's perceived parental satisfaction with family income $\chi^2 (1, N = 40) = .90$ with $p > .01$. While, parental substance abuse $\chi^2 (1, N = 40) = 3.60$ and imprisonment of peers $\chi^2 (1, N = 40) = 6.40$ showed significant differences at $p < .01$, all the other survey questions showed significant differences at $p < .001$ with quality or relationship with fathers $\chi^2 (1, N = 40) = 16.40$, mothers $\chi^2 (1, N = 40) = 29.45$, and siblings $\chi^2 (1, N = 40) = 13.85$, respectively.

Moreover, experiences of parental physical abuse $\chi^2 (1, N = 40) = 28.90$, imprisonment of parent(s) $\chi^2 (1, N = 40) = 28.50$, juvenile's satisfaction with family income $\chi^2 (1, N = 40) = 8.10$, peer cohesiveness $\chi^2 (1, N = 40) = 14.40$, feelings of remorse after committing crime $\chi^2 (1, N = 40) = 8.10$ and increased interest in religion after been imprisoned $\chi^2 (1, N = 40) = 10$, also showed significant differences at $p < .001$.

Table 2: *Descriptive Statistics and Pearson's Chi-square Goodness of Fit Test Results for Self-constructed Survey Questionnaire of Psychosocial Causes of Delinquency (N=40)*

Variables	<i>n</i>	%	χ^2	<i>df</i>
Nature of childhood experiences			1.6	1
Pleasant	24	60		
Unpleasant	16	40		
Quality of relationship with father			16.40**	1
Positive	32	80		
Negative	8	20		
Quality of relationship with mother			29.45**	1
Positive	36	90		
Negative	4	10		
Quality of relationship with siblings			13.85**	1
Positive	29	72.5		
Negative	11	27.5		
Experienced parental physical abuse			28.90**	1
Yes	37	92.5		
No	3	7.5		
Parents have been imprisoned at any point in time			28.50**	1
Yes	3	7.5		
No	37	92.5		

Parents with substance abuse issues			3.60*	1
Yes	26	65		
No	14	35		
Perceived parental satisfaction over family income			.90	1
Yes	23	57.5		
No	17	42.5		
Participant's satisfaction with family income			8.10**	1
Yes	29	72.5		
No	11	27.5		
Peer group cohesiveness			14.40**	1
Yes	32	80		
No	8	20		
Friends have been imprisoned			6.40*	1
<i>Table Continued</i>				
Variables	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	χ^2	<i>df</i>
Yes	12	30		
No	28	70		
Experienced remorse after committing the crime			8.10**	1
Yes	29	72.5		
No	11	27.5		
Increased interest in religion after being jailed			10**	1
Yes	30	70		
No	10	30		
Nature of role models				
No one	28	70		
Fictional action movie hero	11	27.5		
Real-life warrior hero	1	2.5		
Reasons for committing a crime				
Poverty	20	50		
False accusation	10	25		
Impulsive/situational	5	12.5		
For honour	2	5		
Revenge	3	7.5		
Best event/incident of life				
None	23	57.5		
Living together with parents	10	25		
Whenever received parental affection	7	17.5		
Worst event/incident of life				
Stay in jail	35	87.5		
Murder of the father	2	5		
Death of the father	2	5		
Murder of a relative	1	2.5		
Reasons for receiving punishments				

Roaming around with friends	9	22.5		
Disobeying elders	8	20		
Quarrelling with siblings	4	10		
Naughtiness	3	7.5		
Quarrelling with friends	3	7.5		
Lack of interest in education	2	5		
Smoking	2	5		
Lying	2	5		
Name-calling	2	5		
Watching films	2	5		
Never been punished	2	5		
Petty thefts	1	2.5		
<i>Table Continued</i>				
Variables	<i>n</i>	%	χ^2	<i>df</i>
Reasons for receiving appreciation				
Taking interest in education	9	22.5		
Obedying parents	7	17.5		
Not quarrelling with friends	6	15		
For working	4	10		
Reaching home at the time	3	7.5		
Not wasting time with friends	3	7.5		
By avoiding smoking	3	7.5		
Offering prayers regularly	2	5		
Speaking truth	1	2.5		
Respecting elders	1	2.5		
None	1	2.5		
Best personal attributes				
Honesty	4	10		
Intelligence	2	5		
Politeness	3	7.5		
Caring for others	1	2.5		
Helping others	3	7.5		
Friendliness	2	5		
Analytical thinking	1	2.5		
Bravery	3	7.5		
Ability to earn	3	7.5		
Ability to do everything	2	5		
Self-reliant	1	2.5		
Offering prayers regularly	8	20		
None	3	7.5		
Obedying parents	4	10		
Worst personal attributes				
Aggressive behaviour	9	22.5		
Lack of interest in studies	3	7.5		

Roaming around with friends	6	15
Smoking	4	10
Being outspoken	1	2.5
Having fights with siblings	4	10
Having fights with friends	2	5
Disobeying parents	2	5
Waking up late	1	2.5
Not earning	2	5
Watching films	1	2.5
None	5	12.5

Note. * $p < .01$, ** $p < .001$

The results of perceived parenting styles (in Table 3) indicated that most of the juvenile delinquents reported experiencing authoritarian parenting styles from both fathers (82.5%) and mothers (85%). The findings of Pearson's chi-square goodness of fit test also revealed significant differences in parenting styles, across parents, with $\chi^2 (2, N = 40) = 43.55$ and $\chi^2 (2, N = 40) = 48.20$ for fathers and mothers respectively, with $p < .001$.

Table 3: *Descriptive Statistics and Pearson's Chi-square Results for Parenting Styles of Both Parents (N = 40)*

Parenting styles	Fathers				Mothers			
	<i>n</i>	%	χ^2	<i>df</i>	<i>n</i>	%	χ^2	<i>df</i>
			43.55*	2			48.20*	2
Authoritarian	33	82.5			32	85		
Authoritative	3	10			2	5		
Permissive	4	7.5			4	10		

Note. * $p < .001$

Lastly, Table 4 revealed that the majority of the participants (57.5%) scored above the cutoff of 25, while (42.5%) had a score of 25 or below on the PD scale.

Table 4: *Descriptive Statistics for the Scores of Psychopathic Deviation Scale (N = 40)*

Scores	<i>n</i>	%
18	1	2.5
19	4	10
20	2	5
24	8	20
25	2	5
26	5	12.5
27	4	10
28	7	17.5
29	6	15
34	1	2.5

Discussion

The present study purported to investigate the psychosocial causes of delinquency among juveniles and while most of the findings are following previous research literature, a few others appeared to be significant additions to the existing research scholarship. The results of sociodemographic characteristics

of the delinquents showed that a majority were unemployed, without any formal education, with large family size, and belonged to a joint family system, which was also suggested by previous studies (Bazai et al., 2021; Islam et al., 2016). Moreover, our findings also reported that most of them were middle-aged, charged for dacoit with both parents without any formal education while fathers were mainly unemployed. Although a majority reported they did not have any regular family income, still those who did, the average monthly income was a little over 5000 PKR per month, which highlight their poor financial conditions. But interestingly, when asked about their satisfaction with family income during the survey, a vast majority of them reported personal and perceived parental satisfaction. Moreover, most of them further argued that poverty was the primary reason to commit crimes. These contradictory findings did not appear in previous literature and may be regarded as a unique characteristic of our sample, or a result of underlying mental health-related conflicts. However, the findings in general regarding poor economic conditions are congruent with previous findings (Djidonou et al., 2016; Hayat et al., 2020). Significant differences across these sociodemographic characteristics were also reported by running chi-square goodness of fit test that further established the accuracy of results.

The findings of the survey on psychosocial causes of delinquency as well as the results of parenting styles both indicate the significance of family and peer group relations in the context of deviance among juveniles. Their reporting of unpleasant childhood, experiences of physical abuse, parental drug abuse, as well as the emergence of authoritarian parenting styles from both fathers and mothers, all seemed to be in line with the literature (Amanullah et al., 2021; Rezaei et al., 2019, Sana et al., 2021). But our findings did not support previous literature when it comes to the parental or familial history of imprisonment and antisocial peer group, as most of the participants reported the opposite. Another contradiction that emerged is regarding the nature of the relationship between parents and siblings which most of them reported are positive but when tested through the PAQ item, the authoritarian parenting style emerged as the most common parenting style for both fathers and mothers. Once again, this can either be interpreted as a participant's bias to give socially desirable responses or maybe a result of dissonance. Similarly, they reported peer-group cohesiveness, which if we combine with their response of being punished for roaming around with friends and perceived worst personal attribute of aggression, we did get an idea about the influence of peer group and an aspect of CSI. These deliberations are following studies by Spink and Woodfield (2019) and Abd-Rehman and Abdullah (2020), both of which highlighted the role of the peer group in the development of delinquent behaviour.

While most of the participants regarded imprisonment as the worst experience of their lives as well as felt remorse after committing the crime and increased interest in religion after being imprisoned, indicate their interest in reformation but it's a little tricky due to the prevalent juvenile justice system in Pakistan as Khan et al. (2017) reported a strong association between juvenile and adult inmates as adult criminals to support them financially, supply drugs and persuade them to join their networks. This is further strengthened by the additional current findings regarding PD level, where although no one reached extreme psychopathy, a majority of the participants did score above the cutoff point, which indicates psychopathic tendencies among most of the sample participants. And as Basto-Pereira and Maia (2018) and Olashore et al., (2017) argued that recidivism results from mental health-related issues developed in childhood and adolescence, therefore, early and effective rehabilitation programs are highly needed to bring to alleviate crime and delinquency in society.

Limitations and Suggestions

While the current study is one of the foremost surveys investigating psychosocial causes of delinquency among a purposive sample of indigenous delinquents, certain limitations cannot be overlooked and must be kept in mind before interpreting its findings. First of all, due to the survey methodology of our study, all the responses were self-reported with potentially higher chances of social desirability bias from the participants' end. This may influence the authenticity and generalizability of the study findings. Then, due to logistic limitations that include a lack of rapport building, limited time duration, and security issues at the prison, the authors were not able to collect a large sample of juveniles. Therefore, for future studies, it

is highly recommended to use another methodological approach, with a large sample size to increase generalizability. Moreover, in future, a diverse sample of juvenile delinquents, especially across the gender must be studied as it will not only enhance the external validity of the research findings but will also provide an opportunity for comparative analysis.

Conclusions and Implications

The present study successfully managed to bring in a dynamic and indigenous understanding of the psychosocial causes of delinquency and by discussing the findings in the context of socio-cultural deliberations, highlighted the background issues and basis to alleviate the problems faced by juveniles. The current findings had not only added substantial empirical evidence to the indigenous research scholarship but also provided information regarding the delinquents from which benefits could be availed in clinical, counselling and forensic settings, especially when the clients would be young children and adolescents. These findings also provided understanding to law enforcement agencies and legislatures who can deliberate on policies and laws regarding juvenile delinquents. This study would also benefit public sector social welfare departments as well as the civil society and non-governmental organizations that are involved with the rehabilitation and mainstreaming of delinquents back into society.

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Conflict of Interest

Authors have no conflict of interest.

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