

Research Article

Role of Peer Group on Juvenile Delinquency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa-Pakistan

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Abstract

Juvenile is the term used for children under the age of 18 years and delinquency is a term that is defined by the law for criminal behavior which is often the result of extreme problematic behavior. Generally better the peer group better would be the children environment. Similarly, peer groups have a positive and negative role in children's socialization. The present study was conducted to find out the impact of peer groups on juvenile delinquency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Data were collected from 222 law-breaking youths who were imprisoned in three jails in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In the context of Peer groups, the result showed a significant association of juvenile delinquency with the company of peer groups have negatively affected the juvenile, the association between peer groups fulfils the need of the family, and involvement in deviant peer groups leads to delinquencies.

Key words: *Juvenile, Juvenile Delinquency, Family, Deviation, Socialization*

Introduction

The term juvenile delinquency refers to the criminal acts performed by juveniles or the youths, thus calling them juvenile delinquents. It is also the legal term for criminal behavior carried out by minors recognized for having problematic behavior. Juvenile Delinquency can actually be traced in the early times, where governments all over the world have these poor laws that gave the youth much freedom, while some began as a form of youth rebellion (Nas *et al.*,2005).

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Steinberg (1996) stated that delinquency a legal term for criminal behavior carried out by a juvenile is often the result of Escalating problematic behavior. Definitions of delinquency vary among different groups. To alleviate confusion we describe four perspectives on delinquency. According to first perspective that is a parental view about juvenile delinquency Parents may define disruptive and delinquent behavior as disobedience fighting with siblings destroying or damaging property stealing money from family members or threatening parents with violence. Second perspective is educational view about juvenile delinquency School staff members often regard delinquent behavior as that which interrupts or disturbs classroom learning violates the school code of conduct and threatens the safety of faculty and students. Third perspective is mental health view about juvenile delinquency.

Juvenile delinquency is anti-social personality disorder which is really harmful for the society. It is deviant behavior that emerges, usually, by the age of 15 and goes along through adolescence and adulthood. This deviation from a generalized standard social behavior is a constant source of worry for social psychologist, educationists, social workers and activists. Each society is weary of this issue and has been taken many initiatives to curb the problem. A number of researches have been conducted to understand the reasons of this delinquent behavior. Psychologists have conducted many longitudinal and cross-sequential researches to investigate the causes of delinquency. Unfortunately, no systematic study to understand the delinquent behavior among youth has been rehearsed in Pakistan. (Muhammad, 2012)

Juvenile delinquency include not only those minor who actually broken the law but also those who are likely to do so. It include whose attitude to other individuals, to the community to law full authority is such that it may lead him/her to breaking the law, if he/she has not done so persistent truants or children beyond the control of parents whether or not it is the parent fault would came within this definition. Therefore, in juvenile delinquency breaches of law represents only one aspect of the problem. the police statistics are useful indicating broadly the rates of crime and to a very limited extent, that of juvenile delinquency rather the attention of the police were emphasized only in ordinary crime became of this the problem has never been given full attention. Imprisonment was the major type of punishment made by juvenile because of the non-existence of special courts dealing with juvenile delinquency and the lack of juvenile institutions to which juvenile delinquency can be committed and also there is no rehabilitation or treatment centre in the case of juvenile delinquency. Adolescents form remarkable portion of society, it demands to pay much attention to the adolescents (Changizi, 2007).

The most important factor of influence is considers as peer group influence. Some scholars are of opinion that the most important social institution where children spent most of their time is family but other view that it is peer group. Peer group is grouping having similar age and similar interest where children feel him empower and free. In their study they found that close friends have tremendous influence on younger behavior and younger are more likely to be involve in delinquency if his or her close friends doing the same job Regoli, *et., al* (2006).

Ingram *et al.*, (2007) explained that bad family environment, peer groups and media is an important agent of socialization and have tremendous contribution in juvenile delinquency. Some scholars argued that lack of family and parents monitoring over children may lead child to develop contacts with deviant peers.

Regoli et al (2006) stated that family is an important agency of socialization where child spend most of his or her time further he explained that studies have been discovered that closest friends also have greater influence on young people behavior and there is more probability of juvenile delinquency if his or her close friends is involve in such activities.

Piquero *et al.* (2005) argued that a theory known as Differential Association Theory, developed by Edwin Sutherland in 1947, is a prominent interaction theory of delinquency and deviancy. Other social learning theories, based on his theory broaden the framework of classical symbolic interactions paradigm, and presume the criminal behavior is learnt within the interaction process with peer groups.

Research Methodology

The present study was conducted on 2015 from three Prisons of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa namely Central Prison Peshawar, Central Prison Haripur and District Prison Mansehra based on primary data. The reason for the selection of the aforementioned prisons is due to the availability of the juveniles imprisoned in the three Prisons. According to the official record there were 222 Prisoners at the time pf survey in the selected Prisons. All the Prisoners up to 18 years were the respondents of the study in the three selected Prisons. For detail see table 1.

Table1. Distribution of the respondents

S.No	Name of prisons	No of prisons
1	Central jail Peshawar	102
2	Central jail Haripur	40
3	Central jail mansehra	80
4	Total	222

Source: Survey-2015

Conceptual Framework

The following was the dependent and independent variable of the study.

Table 2: Conceptual Framework

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
Peer group	Juvenile delinquency

Methods of Data Analysis

After the collecting of data it was coded and entered into computer by using SPSS20 versions. The results were interpreted into frequency and percentage. Moreover, Bivariate analysis was carried out to measure the association between dependent variable juvenile delinquency and independents variable peer group. Chi-square and Fisher Exact tests were used to measure the association. The Chi-squared test statistics for the test of independence summarizes how close the expected frequencies fall to the observed frequencies. It is represented by the symbol χ^2 .

Karl Pearson introduced the statistics in 1900 and used in sociological studies to test the degree of independence (Tai, 1978). The formula used to compute Chi-square is given in the following:

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^r \sum_{j=1}^c \frac{(O_{ij} - E_{ij})^2}{E_{ij}}$$

Where χ^2 is chi-square, o_{ij} is observed frequencies in i^{th} row and j^{th} column. E_{ij} is expected frequencies in i^{th} row and j^{th} column whereas r is number of rows and n is number of column. The large summation sign, Σ (capital sigma), tells us to compute the fractions for each cell and then sum over all cells to get χ^2 .

Fisher exact test was used when the frequencies in the table was less than 5. Following was the formula of the test.

$$\text{Fisher Exact Test} = \frac{(a+b)!(c+d)!(a+c)!(b+d)!}{N!a!b!c!d!}$$

Where a , b , c and d were the observed numbers in contingency table while “ n ” were the total number of observations.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

This portion of the study describes the univariate analysis and bi varite results of the independent variable i.e Peer group.

Uni-Variate Analysis

Peer Group and Juvenile Delinquency

Table 3 while describing the various tendency leading to juvenile delinquency among the sampled respondents reports that 49.5 percent of the sample respondents reported yes to statements that the Company of peer group have negatively affected the juvenile, while 31.5 percent stated no to the statement. A 47.3 percent replied yes to the statement that ill social conditions are nurseries to rear delinquents while 34.7 percent replied no to the statement. Regarding violence is learned from peer group, 59.9 percent stated yes to the statement whereas 28.8 percent stated no to the statement. A 58.8 percent replied no to the statement that peer group fulfills the need of family while 30.6 percent stated no to the statement. Majority of the respondents 54.5 percent were again agreed to the statement that involvement in deviant peer group leads to delinquencies whereas 28.5 percent replied no to the statement. A 50.5 percent replied yes to the statement that peer group motivates one for violent acts while 26.1 percent no to the statement. A 51.4 percent reported yes to the statement that peer group directs the mind of juvenile towards delinquencies while 34.2 percent replied no to the statement. Regarding the statement that you are satisfied of your peer group, 41 percent respondents yes to the statement where at the same time 39.2 percent replied no to the statement. A 45.5 percent replied no to the statement that your peer group advices you for goods whereas 35.1 percent

reported yes to the statement. Regarding your friends are responsible for negative actions, 51.4 percent found yes to the statement while 34.7 percent replied no to the statement.

The table as a whole reveals that violence is learned from peer group, where involvement in deviant peer group leads to delinquencies, peer group directs the mind of juvenile towards delinquencies and the company of peer group.

Similar findings are reported by Regoli .,et al (2006) who stated that the peer group is the group of youth of similar age empower them in their sense of feeling and significantly influence their behavior.

Table 3:- Role of Peer Group and Juvenile Delinquency

S.NO	Statement	Yes	No	Don't Know
1	The company of peer group have negatively affected the juvenile	110(49.5)	70(31.5)	42(48.90)
2	Ill social conditions are nurseries to rear delinquents	105(47.3)	77(34.7)	40(18.0)
3	Violence is learned from peer group	133(59.9)	64(28.8)	25(11.3)
4	Peer group fulfills the need of family	68(30.6)	115(58.8)	39(17.6)
5	Involvement in deviant peer group leads to delinquencies	121(54.5)	63(28.4)	38(17.1)
6	Peer group motivates one for violent acts	112(50.5)	58(26.1)	52(23.4)
7	Peer group directs the mind of juvenile towards delinquencies	114(51.4)	76 (34.2)	32(14.4)
8	You are satisfied of your peer group	91(41.0)	87(39.2)	44(19.8)
9	Your peer group advices you for goods	78(35.1)	101(45.5)	43(19.4)
10	Your friends are responsible for negative actions	114(51.4)	77(34.7)	31(14.0)

Source: Survey 2015

Bi-Variate Analysis

Association between Peer Group and Juvenile Delinquency

Table 4 presents the association between peer group and juvenile delinquency. The results show a highly significance association between the company of peer group have negatively affected the juvenile and dependent variable (juvenile delinquency) ($p= .000$). Similarly, the association between peer groups fulfils the need of family ($p= .001$), involvement in deviant peer group leads to delinquencies $p= (.000)$ and dependent variable (juvenile delinquency) was also found significant. On the other hand non-significant association was found between juvenile delinquency and ill social conditions are nurseries to rear delinquents ($p= .477$), violence is learned from peer group ($p= .127$), peer group motivates one for violent acts ($p= .859$), peer group directs the mind of juvenile towards delinquencies ($p= .170$), you are satisfied of your peer group ($p= .082$), your peer group advices you for goods ($p= .648$), your friends are responsible for negative actions ($p=.074$).

From the above table it was concluded that the company of peer group had negatively affected the juvenile whose peer groups fulfils the need of family and involvement in deviant peer group leads to delinquencies their friends are responsible for negative actions and violence is learned from peer group.

The result are supported by the finding of Regoli, *et., al* (2006) who stated that close or best friends have significantly influence on teen behaviour and that a youth is about twice as likely to engage in delinquency if his or her close friends engaged in it, similarly Ingram *et al.,* (2007) who found involvement in deviant peer groups leads to delinquency.

Table 4 :- Association between Peer Group and Juvenile Delinquency

S.No	Statement	JUVENILE DELINQUENCY			Chi squire P=vale
		Yes	No	Don't know	
1.	The company of peer group have negatively affected the juvenile				$X^2=33.236^a$ ($p=0.000$)
	Yes	73(23.9%)	61(9.5%)	16(7.2%)	
	No	22(9.9%)	30(13.5%)	18(8.1%)	
	Don't know	17(7.7%)	23(10.4%)	2(0.9%)	
2.	Ill social conditions are nurseries to rear delinquents				$X^2=3.504^a$ ($p=.477$)
	Yes	53(23.9%)	33(14.9%)	19(8.6%)	
	No	41(18.5%)	28(12.6%)	8(3.6%)	
	Don't know	18(8.1%)	13(5.9%)	9(4.1%)	
3.	Violence is learned from peer group				$X^2=7.171^a$ ($p=.127$)
	Yes	75(33.8%)	37(16.7%)	21(9.5%)	
	No	29(13.1%)	26(11.7%)	9(4.1%)	
	Don't know	8(3.6%)	11(5.2%)	6(7.0%)	
4.	Peer group fulfills the need of family				$X^2=19.728^a$ ($p=.001$)
	Yes	22(9.9%)	28(12.6%)	18(8.1%)	
	No	71(32.0%)	35(15.8%)	9(4.1%)	
	Don't know	19(8.6%)	11(5.0%)	9(4.1%)	
5.	Involvement in deviant peer group leads to delinquencies				
	Yes	72(32.4%)	36(16.2%)	13(5.9%)	

	No	24(10.8%)	19(8.6%)	20(9.0%)	$X^2=21.446^a$ (p=0.000)
	Don't know	16(7.2%)	19(8.6%)	3(1.4%)	
6.	Peer group motivates one for violent acts				
	Yes	59(26.6%)	37(16.7%)	16(7.2%)	$X^2=1.317^a$ (p=.859)
	No	27(12.2%)	19(8.6%)	12(5.4%)	
	Don't know	26(11.7%)	18(8.1%)	8(3.6%)	
7.	Peer group directs the mind of juvenile towards delinquencies				
	Yes	51(23.0%)	41(18.5%)	22(9.9%)	$X^2=6.419^a$ (p=.170)
	No	47(21.2%)	20(9.0%)	9(4.1%)	
	Don't know	14(6.3%)	13(5.9%)	5(2.3%)	
8.	You are satisfied of your peer group				
	Yes	55(24.8%)	23(10.4%)	13(5.9%)	$X^2=8.287^a$ (p=.082)
	No	36(16.2%)	33(14.9%)	18(8.1%)	
	Don't know	21(9.5%)	18(8.1%)	5(2.3%)	
9.	Your peer group advices you for goods				
	Yes	36(16.2%)	31(14.0%)	11(5.0%)	$X^2=2.480^a$ (p=.648)
	No	52(23.4%)	31(14.0%)	18(8.1%)	
	Don't know	24(10.8%)	12(5.4%)	7(3.2%)	
10.	Your friends are responsible for negative actions				
	Yes	54(24.3%)	39(17.6%)	21(9.5%)	$X^2=8.544^a$ (p=.074)
	No	44(19.8%)	27(12.2%)	6(2.7%)	
	Don't know	14(6.3%)	8(3.6%)	9(4.1%)	

Source: Survey 2015

CONCLUSIONS

The Peer group factor was found as a major indicator for juvenile delinquents in all three prisons in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The finding reports that the company of peer group have negatively affected the juvenile. Similarly, involvement in deviant peer group leads to delinquencies, Peer group fulfills the need of family, Peer group motivates one for violent acts and Peer group directs the mind of juvenile towards delinquencies. A wise proverb a man is known by the company he keeps. Peer group is important agent of socialization which a child observe and practice what they see among their friends. Therefore it is required for parents to monitor their children and prevent them from joining bad companies.

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