



Criminal Law

Elixir Criminal Law 71 (2014) 24615-24619

Elixir
ISSN: 2229-712X

The Impact of Family Structure on Juvenile Delinquency: (A Case Study of Male Inmates at a Juvenile Detention Center and Male High School Students in Shiraz)

Abbas Mansourabadi^{1,*}, Sayyed Mahmoud Mirkhalili¹ and Karim Farokhiani²

¹Faculty of Law, Qom College, University of Tehran, Iran.

²Judge at Criminal Justice.

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: 27 January 2014;

Received in revised form:

20 May 2014;

Accepted: 31 May 2014;

Keywords

Offence,
Deviation,
Abnormality,
Monitoring,
Social control.

ABSTRACT

The effect of family and its structure on delinquency, in particular juvenile delinquency, has been the object of a wealth of notable research, all of which suggest that family is by far the most important factor in individuals' law abiding behavior and delinquency in a society. Surveying two samples i.e. juvenile delinquents and well-behaved minors in Shiraz, the present study examined this very issue and yielded results supporting, to a great extent, those obtained by previous research. In this study, 19 independent variables as the family structure variables influencing youth crime were tested using a questionnaire. The research hypothesis holds that these variables are significantly correlated to juvenile offending. The results indicated that, on the one hand, there is a significant relationship between delinquency among the samples and variables including place of birth, disability, adherence to religious values, parental monitoring, maternal employment, home ownership, family breakdown, and drug and alcohol abuse among family members, which supported the hypotheses. On the other hand, delinquency, the results suggested, is not significantly related to variables including household income, paternal employment, satisfying economic needs, parental education, family intimacy, stuttering, family dysfunction, and contact with friends, rejecting the corresponding hypotheses.

© 2014 Elixir All rights reserved

Introduction

Juveniles are considered as a determinant and a national capital in the growth and development strategy and in keeping the future perspective on any society so that necessary efforts should be taken to retain their health (Kamali, 2004; 332&Mohseni, 2004: 34). Therefore, childhood is a determining period for both juveniles and the society. On the other hand, individuals' vulnerability in this period is more than other periods of life. Delinquency in such ages may put juvenile in a road unintentionally which facilitates delinquency continuance and changing to social deviances (Ahmadi, 2005: 4 – 7).

In this vein, family plays a determinant role in children's fates. By correct education, family can show the proper way to children and/or paves the ground for their delinquency. Although in contemporary (super – industrial) age, family has lost a lot of its functions, family entity especially in the third world countries including Iran, plays an effective role in the evolution of social personality. Based on a field study, present paper attempts to study the impact of family structure in tendency to delinquency among male inmates at a Juvenile Detention Center and Male High School Students (aged 15 – 18 years) in Shiraz empirically.

To this end, it is necessary to expound theoretical approach on the studied subject initially and then use our field study. Hence, we divide our materials into two discourses: theoretical approach (discourse 1) and field study (discourse 2).

Discourse 1: Theoretical approach

Here, four items are provided under to articles: background and theoretical framework (article 1) and conceptual model and hypotheses (article 2).

Article 1: Research background and theoretical framework
Offence and delinquency are well – known concepts in social researches and there are paramount statements about them (Giddens, 2000: 130; Mohseni Tabrizi, 1993: 382; Ahmadi, 1998: 13; Sanders, 1970: 30; Najafi Abrandabadi and Hashembeigi, 1998: 199; Mansoor, 1971: 37; Kaynia, 2003: 89; Rajabipor, 2008: 51). Here, offence and delinquency are considered as anti-law behaviors committed by juveniles under 18 year-old.

Paramount studies are conducted the association between family and juvenile delinquency of which two researches in Shiraz are provide here.

In his study titled “examining the affecting factors on juvenile delinquency in Shiraz”, Jalili (1993) studied the impact by individual, familial and social variables on juvenile delinquency behaviors in Shiraz. His findings indicate that a set of individual, familial and social factors impact on juvenile delinquency.

In his research on “a comparative study of delinquency behaviors by new and old high school students in Shiraz”, Ahmadi et al., (2001) measured the impact of such factors as family, school and peer groups on students' delinquency behaviors. The findings indicate that delinquency rate among

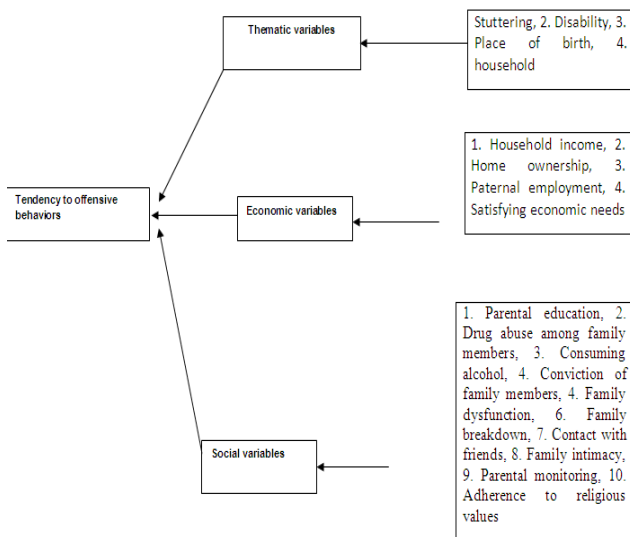
students in new system is higher than their counterparts in old system. Likewise, there is a significant association between place of birth, gender, education and leisure time and students' delinquency behaviors.

In such researches, sociological deviation theory is followed as the theoretical framework and legal aspects of offence and how to treat delinquents in terms of penal laws are less paid attention. Theoretically, present study can compensate some deficiencies of previous work.

Theoretical framework of present study is a combination of social control, social disorganization, subcultural, differential association and ecological theories. In terms of social control theory, strong correlation leads into better control and right supervision by parents over children that decrease the possibility of committing delinquencies. Social disorganization proponents believe that age, population intensity, religion, work, poverty, population growth and urbanism have significant association with deviant behavior. Subcultural theories have addressed to offensive behaviors among juveniles in lower classes and have concluded that subcultures and marginal cultures are the most important factors among juveniles. Differential association theoreticians believe that those processes that lead into delinquency are strongly acquirable rather than inherited and are committed through the relations between an individual and his/her friends who have frankly attachments to him/her. In elucidating social deviations, ecological theory emphasizes on such variables as language, kinship, migration, residential neighborhoods and, sometimes, population intensity.

Article 2: Conceptual model and hypotheses

Following graph shows research conceptual model.



According to above conceptual model and research theoretical framework, below hypotheses are devised:

1. There is a significant relationship between family income and tendency to offensive behaviors.
2. There is a significant relationship between home ownership and tendency to offensive behaviors.
3. There is a significant relationship between parental employment and tendency to offensive behaviors.
4. There is a significant relationship between satisfying economic needs and tendency to offensive behaviors.
5. There is a significant relationship between parental education and tendency to offensive behaviors.
6. There is a significant relationship between drug abuse among family members and tendency to offensive behaviors.

7. There is a significant relationship between alcohol abuse among family members and tendency to offensive behaviors.

8. There is a significant relationship between family dysfunction and tendency to offensive behaviors.

9. There is a significant relationship between family breakdown and tendency to offensive behaviors.

10. There is a significant relationship between contact with friends and tendency to offensive behaviors.

11. There is a significant relationship between family intimacy and tendency to offensive behaviors.

12. There is a significant relationship between parental monitoring and tendency to offensive behaviors.

13. There is a significant relationship between adherence to religious values in family and tendency to offensive behaviors.

14. There is a significant relationship between stuttering and tendency to offensive behaviors.

15. There is a significant relationship between disability and tendency to offensive behaviors.

16. There is a significant relationship between place of birth and tendency to offensive behaviors.

17. There is a significant relationship between parental accountability and tendency to offensive behaviors.

Discourse 2: Field study

Any field study is depended to determine statistical population and sample, data collection and identifying the variables. These parts are covered by research process (article 1) and then we represent research conclusions (article 2).

Article 1: research process

In present process, we point out below issues:

Population and sample size

In present study, the population consists of male high school students and Juvenile delinquents aged 15 – 18 years at Reformatory Institute in Shiraz, 50 students and 50 delinquents (totally 100) were randomly selected by simple sampling method so that all subjects enjoy equal opportunity.

Methodology and data collection method

Used methodology in present study is a survey method. A survey provides qualitative information on social world and describes the attributes of people and social world. Likewise, a survey is used to clarify and explore and asks many questions on people's beliefs, traits and past or present behaviors (Lawrence, 1997: 228).

Survey can be conducted by different tools such as questionnaire, interview and observance. In this study and concerning time limitation, questionnaire was used. Therefore, a questionnaire with closed and open-ended questions was devised and relevant information on juveniles in Shiraz high schools and Reformatory Institute was collected. After data collection, relevant data were analyzed by SPSS software in two descriptive and deductive parts. In descriptive part, relevant data and information were described by using frequency tables and indicators. In the second part, research hypotheses were tested by statistical techniques including Pearson's correlation coefficient, T-test, F and regression.

Variables

There are two types of dependent and independent variables explained separately:

Dependent variable

"Juvenile delinquency" is the dependent variable of present study. Delinquency is a wide concept. It does not only refer to individual behavior but also it involves collective and gang offences (Giddens, 1994: 134). By delinquency, we mean here deviant behaviors committed by -19 year – old juveniles.

Independent Variables

Independent variables are divided into three general groups and several subgroups as below:

- Place of birth (local or migrant): it expresses geographical location where someone is born. Here, local means someone who is born in Shiraz while migrant is someone who is born out of Shiraz (in suburbs or other cities).
- Family: the number of family members who live in one home.
- Stuttering: respondents' problems in speaking
- Disability: respondents' physical problems

Economic variables include:

- Household income: receivables by household head through official or unofficial jobs within one month
- Home ownership: it means that respondents are living with their family members in their owned or a rented home.
- Parental employment: official or unofficial jobs by respondents' parents
- Satisfying economic needs: to what extent family satisfies rational material needs of child(ren)

Social variables include:

- Parental education: the years when parents have learned official educations
- Family members' drug abuse: drug abuse among respondents' family members
- Alcohol abuse: who consumes alcoholic drinks among respondents' family member
- Prison Conviction: it means the existence of criminal(s) in respondents' home
- Family dysfunction: conflicts, disagreements, tensions and excessive disputes among respondents' family members
- Family breakdown: long absences by one or both parents due to such reasons as divorce, death or long terms travel.
- Family intimacy: feeling of belonging among family members
- Parental monitoring: the extent of controls posed by family on respondents' behavior and actions.
- Contact with friends: belonging and dependency to respondents' friends
- Respecting religious values: commitment to Islamic values such as praying, fasting, etc.

Article 4: evaluating research findings

Family is the first place which impacts on an individual's behavior. It is clear that since their birth, people are impacted by thoughts, believes and behaviors of their family. To the same reason, family plays a vital role in transferring usual values and norms in the society and is considered as the origin of all physical and mental damages or health. Findings of present paper indicate the rightness of above points clearly. These findings are explained below:

1. The association between household income and tendency to offensive behavior is in contrary to H_1 and this hypothesis is not supported. According to social control theory, such behavior is prevalent among all economic classes and social and cultural factors play a radical role in juveniles' tendency to offensive behavior.
2. There is a significant association between the averages of tendency to offensive behavior in terms of home ownership among both groups (high school and reformatory center) and total sample statistically.
3. There is no significant difference between the averages of tendency to offensive behaviors and father's employment in both groups and the possibility of relations between above two variables is less than 95%. Hence, H_3 is not supported and the

comparison of averages on tendency to such behavior in terms of mother's employment is supported.

4. The relationship between two variables namely tendency to offensive behavior and satisfying economic needs among two groups is in contrary to H_4 . Therefore, significance level is lesser than 95% and, to the same reason, H_4 is not supported.

5. There is a significant association between tendency to offensive behavior and parental education in high school group while this association is not significant in reformatory center. Therefore, H_5 is not supported on subject in the Center while it is supported for high school group.

6. Drug and alcohol abuse among family members has a significant association with tendency to offensive behavior in both groups. To this end, H_6 & H_7 are supported.

7. There is no significant association between tendency to offensive behavior and family dysfunction in both groups and H_8 is not supported.

8. There is a significant relationship between respondents' tendency to offensive behavior and family breakdown and H_9 is supported.

9. There is no significant association between contact with friends and tendency to offensive behavior. Contact to friends has no impact on tendency to offensive behavior so H_{10} is not supported.

10. There is seen no significant relationship between family intimacy and tendency to offensive behavior; so, H_{11} is not supported.

11. Significance level is 96% for total sample on tendency to offensive behavior and parental monitoring. So, H_{12} is supported.

12. The significance level is over 95% on respecting religious values and tendency to offensive behavior in both groups; thus, H_{13} is supported.

13. In both groups, there is no significant association between tendency to offensive behavior and stuttering and H_{14} is not supported.

14. There is a significant difference between respondents' tendency to offensive behavior and disability in both groups and the relationship between both variables is supported.

15. There is a significant association between place of birth and tendency to offensive behavior. So, H_{16} is supported. Non-locality of respondents fosters their tendency to offensive behavior in both groups.

16. There is an association between family size and tendency to offensive behavior. It means that more family members or broader familial structure would increase tendency to offensive behavior. So, H_{17} is supported in +99% level.

Recommendations

According to social knowledge findings, family is the most radical social unit. On this basis and also the results of present study, below recommendations are provided:

1. Preventing tendency to offensive behavior requires a comprehensive planning which emphasizes on economic, political and cultural difficulties of the society that impact on families directly. Without eliminating criminal components, penalties would have no tangible impact on decreasing tendency to offensive behavior and crime commission. To reduce crimes and offences, interactions, representing and executing plans by relevant organs are necessary.
2. The best action to discount and eliminate the process of committing offensive behaviors by juveniles is to determine the factors that lead them toward such behaviors. Likewise, it is necessary to determine proper reaction proportional to real

personality of the delinquent. Otherwise, it would not be sufficient to fight the effects through any kind of punishment.

3. Though cultural activities, we should aware parents how a calm and health family environment along with mutual respect can cause the security feeling of juveniles. Otherwise, innocent juveniles are the first guys who would be damaged followed by the family.

4. Studying, identifying and doing supportive initiatives for juveniles which may be under improper familial circumstances. These juveniles and their families need to be introduced to consultancy centers. Likewise, it is necessary to adopt regulations to protect juveniles influence by unhealthy familial circumstances from committing offences.

5. Additionally, undeniable necessities in preventing juvenile delinquency include reviving traditional religious and national values such respecting parents, organizing collective consultancy forums by parents and students, identifying those students who are in the risk of social damages.

References

1. Ahmadi, Habib (2005), deviations sociology, Tehran, SAMT Publications
2. ----- (1998), social deviation theories, Shiraz, Rose Publications
3. Behnam, Jamshid (1977), family structures in Iran, Tehran
4. Segalen, Martin (1998), family history sociology, translated by Elias, Hamid, Tehran, Markaz Publications
5. Sarukhani, Bagher (1996), an introduction on family sociology, Soroush Publications
6. Shambiani, Hushang (1992), juvenile delinquency, Tehran, Pazhang Publications
7. Rosenbauer, Harry (1988), family as a structure in the society, translated by Mohammad Sadiq Mahdavi, Tehran, University of Tehran Publications
8. Safi, Ahmed (2003), balance and imbalance family, Tehran, Parent and Coaches Association Publication
9. Giessen, Raymond (1991), an introduction on criminology, translated by Mahdi Kaynia, Tehran, Nashr Publications
10. Giddens, Anthony (1994), sociology, translated by Mahdi Saburi, Tehran, Nay Publications,
11. Momtaz, Farideh (2002), social deviations, Tehran, Enteshar Publications
12. Mazaheri, Ali Akbar (1993), Iranian family in pre-Islam period, translated by Abdullah Tavakol, Tehran, Ghatreh Publications
13. Najafi Tavana, Ali (2003), Juvenile delinquency in criminological terms, Tehran Rah Tarbiat Publications
14. Ahmadi, Habbi & Iman, Mohammad Taghi (2004), studying affecting factors on urban periphery residents toward offensive behaviors (case study: urban periphery residents in Shiraz), a research proposal for Fars governor General Office: Social Affairs Department
15. et al., (2001), a comparative study on old and new high school regime students in Shiraz, Social and Liberal Arts Journal, University of Shiraz, vol. 2
16. Bani Assadi, Ali Akbar, (2004), studying social deviations resulted from unemployment in Semnan, Semnan, Research Department, Academic Jihad
17. Pirasteh, Bahram (2003), juvenile delinquency, Ardabil, Research Council, Prison Organization
18. Jalaili, Mahnaz (1993), studying affecting factors on juvenile delinquency in Shiraz, M. A. thesis, University of Shiraz

19. Heydari, Behruz (2005), studying the situation of crime and its association with socio economic and demographic indicators within past ten years in Iran, Social Security Quarterly, vol. 1
20. Husseini, Hayede (1985), the impact by family on delinquency, M. A. thesis, Shiraz University
21. Rafeei, Abdulkarim (2000), studying affecting economic, social and cultural factors on high school students' offensive behavior in Kuar City, M. A. thesis, Shiraz University
22. Shiri, Ahmed Ali (1997), studying affecting factors on reintegration factors in Shiraz juvenile delinquency, M. A. thesis, Shiraz University
23. Shahri, Ali Reza (2002), risky class and criminal behavior, Morur Monthly Journal, vol. 1
24. Safavi, Amanollah (1991), deviation theories, Social Science Growth Journal, vol. 6 & 7
25. Sadigh, Rahmatollah (1997), theories on social deviation, Educational Science Journal, Univer4sity of Tehran, vol. 1 & 2
26. Farughian, Mahmoud (1974), an insight on juvenile delinquency, M. A. thesis, University of Tehran
27. Garusu, Mirtaghi (1998), studying the reasons of juvenile delinquency, East Azerbaijan Governor General Office, Social Affairs Department
28. Mafi, Ezatoolah (1999), emigration and relation to delinquency, Population Quarterly, vo. 27 & 28
29. Moghimi, Hussein (2006), studying the reasons and factors of delinquency among people aged 15 – 19 years in Tehran, M. A. thesis, University of Tehran
30. Khuzistan Criminology Research Centers (2000), studying affecting factors on juvenile delinquency, Education and Remedy Journal, vol. 63
31. Heravi, Mahdi (1996), an analytical study on juvenile delinquents in Tehran, M. A. thesis, Shahid Beheshti University
32. Ahmadi, H. (1995). Juvenile Delinquency in region, Australia: university of the Illawava Wollongong
33. Akinyemi, A. (2005) Migration Dynamics and Changing Rural-urban Linkages in Nigeria. "International Population Conference tours France.
34. Agnew, Robert (1991) the Interactive Effects of Peer Variables on Delinquency, American Journal of Criminology, Vol.29, No.1
35. Caldwell .R. M & L. E. Beutlerb & S .A. Possc, (2006) An Examination of the Relationships Between Parental Monitoring, Self-esteem and Delinquency among Mexican American Male adolescents, Journal of Adolescence, vol. 29, issue.3, pp. 45,-494
36. Campbell, Anne (1987),"Self-Reported Delinquency and Home life of youth and Adolescence", vol.16, No.2, pp.167-177
37. Goldstion, A. and Others (1994).Youth Violence, Aggression and Vandalism, London
38. Hagan. John and bill McCarthy (1994).Street Life and Delinquency, British
39. Hirschi, T. (1979),"Separate but Unequal is better". Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency.No.16, pp.34-38
40. Hagan, John and Bill McCarthy (1994),"Street life and Delinquency, "British Journal of Sociology, vol43, issue, No4, pp33-56
41. Leea. j. M, & N. J. Bell, & w. Watson (2006),"Situating Alcohol Use and Delinquency within Developmental and Societal Context: The Case of Korean youth." Journal of Adolescence, in press, corrected proof, Available
42. Miller, Walter (1980), Gang, Groups Tans Serious Youth Crime: Critical Issues in Juvenile Delinquency. Lexington, Mass: Lexington Books

43. Ryan .j. p. & m. f. Testa (2005), "Child Maltreatment and Juvenile Delinquency: Investigating the Role of Placement and Placement in Stability, "Children and Youth Services Review, vol.27, pp.227-249

44. Seigel, l. j. & Senna (1988), Juvenile Delinquency: Theory Practice and law.3d.ed. St. Paul. minn: west

45. Vold, G. B. (2001).Theoretical criminology, New York: oxford university press.