

# ***The Correlation Between China's Juvenile Crime Rates and Wealth Inequality***

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**Abstract:** In recent years, with the continuous improvement of people's living standard and the development of economy, the gap between the rich and the poor index shows an increasing trend. This essay examines how the wealth gap and China's crime rate are related, focuses on finding solutions, and uses teens as its research subject. Consider all the elements that affect adolescent delinquency when analysing them, and then develop tactics that fit. Create a safer society where everyone is subject to the rule of law by reducing the rate of youth crime.

**Keywords:** economic inequality, crime, education, leftover children, crime prevention

## **1. Introduction**

As economies and societies continue to develop, governments, people and economists around the world have focused their attention on the growth of crime rates. Reducing crime rates has become a key issue for governments to discuss and address. In terms of human social development, the gap between the rich and the poor and crime occur at the same time. From the perspective of juvenile delinquency itself, most scholars agree that their family economic status and their own situation are important triggers for juvenile criminality [1]. From 1998 to 2000, the growth rate of crime in China had risen to about three times the original rate [2].

According to the Supreme People's Court of China (SPC), criminal acts committed at the age of 25 and below are called juvenile delinquency. Based on statistics from China's Ministry of Public Security, the number of criminals being tried by the People's Courts in criminal cases was 526,312 in 1997 and rapidly increased to 15,268,811 by the year 2020. Over this whole period, the number of criminals put on trial by the people's courts has almost tripled. Meanwhile within 23 years, the youth convict population has grown from 199,212 to 245,074. By counting the proportion of juvenile delinquents to criminal offenders fell from 37.9% to 16.1% [3]. Is there a connection between the causes of this phenomenon and China's rapid economic development? This paper focuses on how the gap between rich and poor in China, a developing country, affects the crime rate of young people up to and including the age of 25. To support the healthy development of society overall economic, it is crucial to accurately analyse the causes of juvenile delinquency, provide preventive methods to deal with juvenile delinquency effectively, and establish a supportive social environment for the healthy growth of juveniles.

## 2. Literature Review

The inventory of resources is the accumulation of wealth over the course of human life. However, in addition to the impact of income, many different individuals, institutions, and households can also be factors influencing his accumulation [4]. Generally speaking, higher levels of economic resources may promote higher levels of security of living standards, which in turn may stimulate more diverse consumption and generate additional benefit chains [5]. Since the introduction of China's reform and opening-up policy, the central government has encouraged people to become affluent through entrepreneurship and other means. However, as China's economy has grown, a small group of people who got rich first have taken control of a large part of China's economy, which has led to a growing gap between those who got wealthy first and those who got wealthy later the gap between the rich and the poor has become more and more pronounced [6]. Since economic theory suggests that there is a negative correlation between educational attainment and the occurrence of most types of crime. In turn, increased educational attainment usually leads to a substantial reduction in subsequent violent and property crime, resulting in considerable social benefits. And a handful of studies have found important effects in reducing crime. According to Lochner and Moretti's study, education considerably lowers participation in criminal behaviour [7]. This is since education gives people the chance to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to function in modern society. As they lack the knowledge and skills required to function in contemporary society, individuals who fail to attend school are more likely to engage in criminal behaviour. As shown by Lochner and Moretti's research, there is a direct correlation between education and criminal behaviour. Based on this article, expanding educational opportunities may aid in lowering crime rates. School attendance reduces the potential for contemporaneous property crime, but in some cases, violent crime increases among adolescents [8]. It is recommended that young people born to adolescent mothers are significantly more at risk of having low school attainment and may have constraints on their disposable income, leading to an increase in juvenile delinquency [9]. It is also the family that is probably single-parented, and young people growing up in an unbroken family are more susceptible to psychological and behavioural rebellion. Using a sequential school choice model and a logistic arrest model, Ausejo and James draw attention to the importance of family background, initial ability, and behavior in explaining gender inequalities in educational success [10].

Juvenile delinquency has increased over the past few years in China, where the crime rate among youngsters who are left behind is also rising. Children who have been left behind include those whose parents have been away for business for more than three months in a row and who have had their household registration turned over to relatives or friends, according to the Chinese Ministry of Education [11]. As rural communities see economic growth, a growing number of residents opt to relocate to urban areas to work to enhance their quality of life, leaving behind children who must live with their grandparents. However, there is a problem with the generation gap that cannot be disregarded. As an illustration, communication within the family structure can be negatively impacted by disparities in speaking styles, poor information reception, and conventional thought habits. Young individuals who lack parental supervision and receive poor family education are more likely to be misled by the outside world and commit crimes [12]. When children are left behind unsupervised by parents and classmates are compared, it is simple to feel psychologically different. The number of children left behind in rural areas is still increasing, and in some rural areas many legal literacy efforts are not put into reality and children left behind seldom ever learn about the law because of how backward the countryside is. The degree of education in rural areas varies to some extent from that in metropolitan areas, and many left-behind youngsters in some places do not acquire a basic education and are unable to discriminate between right and wrong, making them susceptible to being provoked and encouraged to commit crimes [13].

### 3. Method

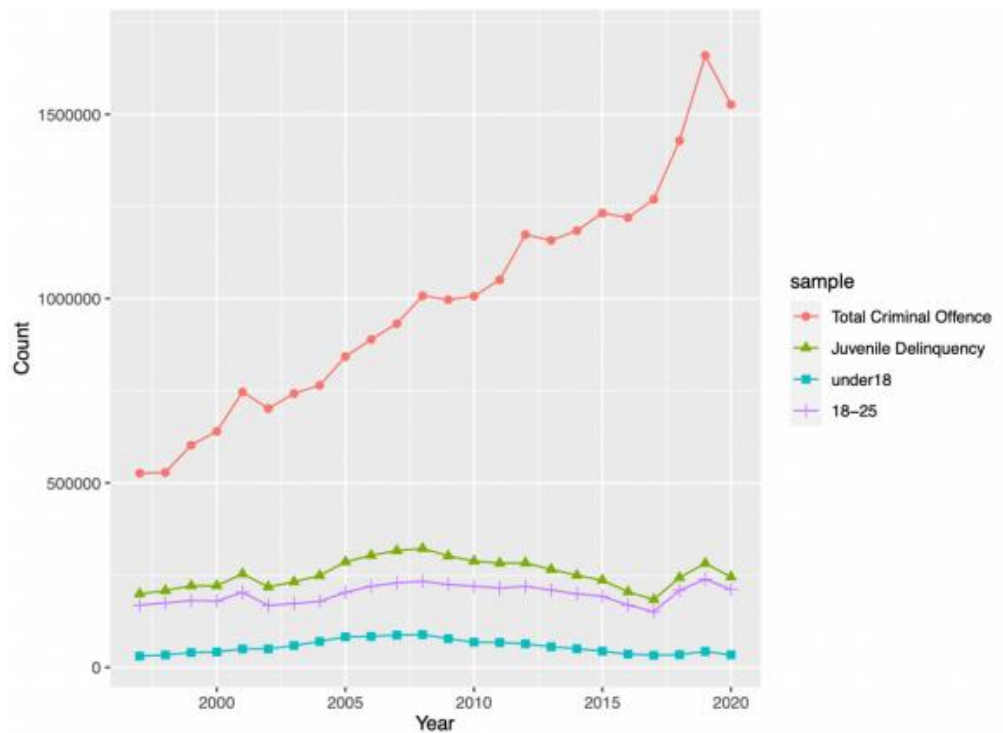


Figure 1: Juvenile and overall crime trends.

Table 1: Economic growth and juvenile crime rate.

Date	Unemploy ment Rate (%)	Gini Coeff icient	Growth Rate Of GDP (%)	Number Of Juvenile Sentences	Number Of People Under Criminal Punishment Nationwide	Populati on (million)	Urbaniza tion rate (%)
2002	4.00	-	9.10	50030	690506	1284.53	39.09
2003	4.30	0.479	10.00	58870	730355	1292.27	40.53
2004	4.20	0.473	10.10	70144	752241	1299.88	41.76
2005	4.20	0.485	11.40	82721	829238	1307.56	42.99
2006	4.10	0.487	12.70	83697	873846	1314.48	43.90
2007	4.00	0.484	14.20	87525	916610	1321.29	44.94
2008	4.20	0.491	9.60	88891	989992	1328.02	45.68
2009	4.30	0.490	9.20	77604	979443	1334.50	46.59
2010	4.10	0.481	10.60	68193	988463	1340.91	47.50
2011	4.10	0.477	9.50	67280	1032466	1347.35	51.27
2012	4.10	0.474	7.70	63782	1154432	1354.04	52.57
2013	4.10	0.473	7.70	55817	1138553	1360.72	53.70
2014	4.09	0.469	7.30	50415	1164531	1367.82	54.77
2015	4.05	0.462	6.90	43839	1213636	1374.62	56.10

Primarily, crime is measured differently by various statistical sources. Second, while some crime micro-data reveal information about the traits of offenders, they aim to stay away from specific

defining behaviours. Police recorded crime information is probably the source of crime data sets that is used the most in quantitative research. The characteristics of the reported criminals will not be included in sort of data given that not all crimes are solved or resolved [14]. In these situations, the data sources are publicly accessible data that the CBS has published. The research topics that are the focus of this work might be consistently identified by this aggregation, which would be the reality.

From Figure 1, the data is sourced from the China Statistical Yearbook, which separated out the number of minors, 18–25-year-olds and criminal offences nationwide based on the cases received by the Supreme People's Court of China each year, to derive their trends and compare them between 1996 and 2020. This reveals that the number of criminal offences in China has grown in tandem with the development of the Chinese economy. In 2019, both the number of 18–25-year-olds and minors and even the number of criminal offences nationwide rose to a peak and began to decline. At the same time the difference between the number of crimes nationwide and the number of juvenile crimes was as much as three times greater in 1996 and 2020, meaning that during the 24 years when crime surged, the number of juvenile crimes levelled off relatively, while adult crime rose rapidly. According to recent statistics, young offenders are becoming a smaller proportion of the nation's criminal offenders. This means that the juvenile crime rate is decreasing. However, this does not mean that juvenile crime is no longer a problem. There are still many young offenders who need help and rehabilitation. We must continue to work towards reducing juvenile crime and making our communities safer.

In Table 1 of the Statistical Yearbook, statistics on the unemployment rate, Gini coefficient, GDP growth rate, and economic growth rate were chosen for the period of 2002 to 2015. In accordance with the data, the unemployment rate reached its highest point in 2003 and has since started gradually declining. The Gini coefficient has been largely consistent throughout time, falling yearly after reaching a peak in 2009. The cliff significantly slowed down when the GDP growth rate reached in 2007, and then continued to drop in tiny fluctuations. Since 2002, the rate of urbanisation has been steadily increasing. Changes in the unemployment rate reflect the deterrent effect of China's labour market and economic expansion on juvenile delinquency. The impact of wealth distribution on juvenile delinquency rates is represented by the Gini coefficient, which provides a quantifiable threshold for the extent of income distribution imbalance. Using the GDP growth rate, it is possible to determine whether China's economy is in a boom, recession, or plateau by looking at the rate of economic growth. To quantify changes in juvenile crime rates, population size is used as a measure of juvenile crime rates. As cities have a greater impact on population aggregation, the urbanisation rate can be used to describe the extent of urbanisation in society. As the rate of juvenile crime increases, so does the rate of urbanisation, which can be seen as an indicator of economic development. There are several reasons for this, including the increased opportunities for offenders in urban areas and the increased social and economic opportunities for young people. The urbanisation rate as an indicator of economic development may therefore also be related to the extent of juvenile delinquency.

#### 4. Discussion

Community-based priority principles are frequently used in several nations when allocating students to public schools [15]. As a result, kids in underprivileged areas have very little access to top-notch public schools. However, premier schools are interested in their pupils' general growth as well as their academic performance. For instance, to care for the growth of young people, they pay greater attention to the legal education of pupils and can care for their health and connect with their parents in a timely manner. The data in Table 1 indicate that there is a trend toward a decline in teenage crime rates over the long term, however this trend is not a guarantee that crime rates will fall because of increased urbanisation. The worth of a high school diploma in terms of college-going alternatives may not be as high for young people from low-income families as it is for those whose parents have higher salaries if the latter cannot afford to go to college. This is where the issue of unequal access to

education is a problem. The reason that parents of left-behind children would decide to leave their children to work in the face of the current economic situation is the very essence of their existence. Children who are left behind because of this lack of family education are more susceptible to social stigmas. In addition, young people have the easiest access to the internet in a developing economic environment [6]. Accordingly, pornographic, and violent content abound on the internet. Young people's inability to distinguish right from wrong and lack of self-control, along with the harmful effects of the internet, make delinquency a serious problem. At the same time, China, a developing nation, faces similar difficulties with this issue. However, the disparity between the rich and the poor only leads to this relatively simple problem. When discussing crime, a psychological perspective on young people is crucial. The widening achievement gap between young people and their classmates has the potential to increase crime, particularly violent and property crime. This is because young people may feel the need to prove something to their friends and turn to criminal behaviour to achieve this. In addition, a person's inability to interact and communicate effectively with their peers may make them feel isolated and depressed, which may also be a component of economically induced criminal behaviour. Economic inequality and violent crime and economic crime are directly correlated. Given that they are more likely to be underprivileged and have limited access to opportunities and resources, disadvantaged groups are more likely to face greater rates of crime. This is in part because poverty, illiteracy, and social marginalisation are frequently linked to crime [16].

## 5. Conclusion

Since there is a large disparity between the rich and the poor in society, the fact that the impoverished are frequently treated differently from the wealthy might exacerbate feelings of injustice. Because of their irritation or rage, some people may be pushed to commit crimes. Even if this is not a justification for criminal activity, it's necessary to recognise the difficulties that many people in our society confront. The likelihood of young people committing crimes on the spur of the moment significantly increases when they are exposed to this harmful impact. China has been making efforts to reduce the wealth gap as a developing country. Poverty can be decreased in remote and underdeveloped locations in a few different ways. These areas can develop by restoring these communities, enhancing social programmes, and increasing educational possibilities so that everyone can learn a trade. This would benefit the local population as well as generate new jobs and contribute to the global reduction of poverty. This study examines the relationship between economic development and juvenile crime using juvenile case data from the Supreme People's Court and statistical data from the China Statistical Yearbook. It also finds that the impact of economic growth on juvenile delinquency needs to be examined at different levels of social development and examines some of the results that are currently available. A spiral relationship between economic growth and juvenile crime is found, which explains why juvenile delinquency rates remain constant in the long run but fluctuate considerably in the short run.

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