

# ***The Influence of Child and Adolescent Education on Juvenile Delinquency***

**Shuwen Zhang<sup>1,a,\*</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Communication, Department of Education, Boston University, Boston, MA 02215*  
*a. corrinez@bu.edu*

*\*corresponding author*

**Abstract:** The educational process plays a vital role in human development, cultivating a better future from childhood. The topic of juvenile delinquency, which is on the rise, is one of the difficult issues attracting the attention of many psychologists and educators. Young criminals are not stereotyped to be bad members of society, and the impact of child and adolescent education may contribute to their misbehavior. Juvenile delinquents' education since childhood, such as family and school education, affects their behavioral changes and individual values as they mature. Varied social changes and surroundings impact the rate of juvenile delinquents. This study explores the influence of child and adolescent education on juvenile delinquency in three aspects: the effect of family education, school education, and social environment. A qualified family education, such as educational levels, familial environment, and neighborhood environment, shapes children's good values from a young age, preventing the occurrence of juvenile delinquency. School education equipped with moral education courses, positive teacher-student relationships in school, and a democratic learning environment creates a better curriculum to educate children and adolescents to step into society, lowering the risk of juvenile delinquency. Children's development and behaviors are also influenced by social surroundings, including social insecurity, historical and cultural context, and child socialization. In addition to corrective measures and evidence-based practices in juvenile detention facilities, additional steps, like mandating more effective transition planning, are necessary and urgent. These include aftercare to give them access to basic education or employment opportunities after release, assisting them in better reintegrating into society and making their contributions. A successful reentry into the community requires an effective transition procedure and high-quality support services.

**Keywords:** Juvenile delinquency, Childhood and adolescent education, Family education, School education, Social environment

## **1. Introduction**

In Walter Parker's "Teaching Against Idiocy," he illustrates that everyone is born with "idiocy," and an education process with a democratic and equal atmosphere could help develop "public-minded citizens" in society [1]. People in a community should take responsibility for what they have done illegally. According to the Federal Juvenile Delinquency Code, juvenile delinquency commits a "federal criminal violation" before their 18th birthday [2]. People committing crimes after the age of 18 are proceeded as "adults." However, juvenile crime rates are increasing worldwide, from suicide

to mass murder, especially in urban areas [3]. Different levels of criminal responsibility also vary in countries, meaning the minimum age to be considered a juvenile varies by country. For instance, countries such as Brazil, Costa Rica, and Jamaica have a minimum age of 12; countries such as Scotland, Antigua, and Barbuda are a minimum of 8 [4]. Aside from social condemnation of young criminals' acts of defiance, it is more meaningful to discover the reasons that caused them to commit a criminal violation in society. Child and adolescent development mainly depends on surroundings, including the external and internal environment. Internal environment mostly means the impact of the familial atmosphere, such as family cohesion, educational level, and economic status. The external environment often considers the outer atmosphere, like schools, curriculums, and neighborhoods. These environmental factors can cultivate children to become well-behaved from a young age, which is also an essential factor that could be applied to prevent juvenile delinquency. However, although some research since youth crime is a complicated issue to discover, a requirement of quantitative and longitudinal (at least one year) tracking of juveniles could help systematically collect data from concluding complete research on the relationship among juvenile delinquency and its causes. This study will focus on the root causes of juvenile delinquency and how child and adolescent education would influence better outcomes.

## **2. The Influence of Family Education on Juvenile Delinquency**

### **2.1. The Influence of Families' Educational Levels and Economic Conditions**

Families of different educational levels and economic conditions can influence children's development. Children often are influenced by what they hear and learn. Parents with relatively higher literacy rates could help children immerse themselves in an atmosphere filled with affluent knowledge and moral behaviors. According to the Central Jail Peshawar Applied Science Reports, 42.2% of juvenile delinquents were low-income, and 31.1% of their households were illiterate [5]. Therefore, a vital need for families with low education levels to achieve higher literacy is necessary. A cultured family with well-mannered, educated, and good values might also assist children and adolescents in growing up in a literate atmosphere, reducing the possibility of acts of rebellion.

Some parents with relatively low educational levels also often have lower expectations for their children. Some parents achieve lower school degrees or stop learning at young ages. They tend to have fewer academic expectations, and most do not realize the necessity of acquiring more knowledge in schools. Their attitudes to learning unconsciously affect children's and adolescents' thoughts; therefore, children in schools might not pay much attention to education. More seriously, they end up becoming "troublesome" girls and boys. "Youth Justice: Contemporary Policy and Practice" also mentions the significance of learning in schools for youth justice. Schools could equip students with a high range of knowledge and appropriate social behavior principles [6]. Without expectations and proper parental supervision, students and adolescents can become oblivious to schools' rules and gradually maladjusted to the learning atmosphere.

Even though single-income households frequently have better economic situations than dual-income households, dual-income family is considered a significant risk factor for juvenile misbehavior [7]. Compared to typical adolescents, young offenders exhibit higher levels of aggression, rebelliousness, and worse levels of self-regulation. Despite having a better financial situation, dual-income households encounter difficulties with child-rearing, causing children to have fewer abilities to learn self-control. Therefore, adolescents from dual-income homes outperformed single-income families on all measures, including smoking, drinking, and school absence [5]. The more time families spend with children can then help reduce juvenile delinquency.

## 2.2. The Impact of Familial Environment

Parents and families are children's first teachers. Without communicating and learning in schools with friends, the childhood familial environment dramatically affects children's behavior development. Positive family cohesion emphasizes the value of familial education and cares that boosts children's empathy growth and confidence in everyday situations [8]. The stability and cohesion of families cultivate a person with a stable mood and good behavior. A broken family, such as a divorce, tends to involve more children in delinquency [7]. This is because parents have less interest in children's learning experiences and daily life. Children tend to feel they lack their parents' attention and love, so they focus on other things or meet other people to fulfill this psychological deficit, which is not conducive to cultivating good behaviors [7]. Also, without much parental supervision and enlightenment, children contribute less trust to their parents. When doing something wrong and parents instruct them, they tend to avoid their instructions and then take the wrong turn. Parents' behaviors also affect children's development. Children could learn from their parents' habits and behaviors to understand the world from a young age. Juvenile delinquents who commit physical abuse sometimes find their parents' and siblings' criminality as significant risk factors [7]. Therefore, efficient familial educational methods to teach children are also essential. For example, Beker and Stumphauzer stated that "a treatment manual of social learning approaches" could help change juvenile delinquents, which are more efficiently acted in the family [8]. During this process, children could imitate correct and seemingly behaviors in a family by observing others, which also offers them much time to reflect on whether they did what was right or wrong. On the contrary, punishment and beating children to make them realize what they did wrong would provoke their resistant emotions.

## 2.3. The Role of the Neighborhood Environment

Children's motives are influenced by their surroundings and community, which are most examined as "causes of the causes" of criminal activities [9]. Adolescents may be confronted with violence and antisocial conduct in areas where there is a disturbance, such as drug abuse and poverty [6]. Since children frequently emulate what adults do in everyday life, families that live in a neighborhood with disorderly habits might mislead other families and their children. If done over a lengthy period, these irregularities might be challenging to eliminate [9]. At last, if more immoral practices are practiced in their local community, people may become immersed in an unfavorable local environment instead of learning from others to improve themselves. Children do not benefit because they may also mimic their family's behaviors.

Apart from the influence of their family members, children often spend more time with the external neighborhood environment. They can interact with others and learn behaviors and values from others. Thus, children's formation of individual values has close relations with the neighborhood environment. In "Dimensions of Human Behavior: Person and Environment," research illustrates the unity of environment and people, stressing that people's personal experiences and individual values connect with neighborhood environmental changes [11]. Without a positive impact on the external environment, children and adolescents' behaviors and thoughts could all be changed into misbehaving, making families' education of children less efficient. Also, an unsafe neighborhood environment would cause the occurrence of recidivism. According to the National Library of Medicine, recidivism among arrested youths is expected to reach at least 75% to 80% in the first three years after release. One of the main factors is the effect of unsafe and unsupervised environments [12].

### **3. The Influence of School Education on Juvenile Delinquency**

#### **3.1. The Influence of School Moral Education on Childhood**

"Moral poverty" describes an absence of morality among juvenile delinquents, meaning they cannot tell right from wrong [13]. Children go through four phases of development, according to Piaget's theory of cognitive development: the sensorimotor stage (years 0 to 2), the preoperational stage (ages 2 to 7), the concrete operational stage (ages 7 to 11), and the formal operational stage (ages 11 to adulthood) [14]. From the preoperational to the concrete operational stage, children have the most time to cultivate their moral development without much pressure from schoolwork. As a result, the moral education of children is crucial during these periods before they enter the fourth stage. Moral education included in curriculums, particularly in primary and secondary schools, is advantageous for students' moral growth.

The assimilation of education made it difficult for teachers to impart knowledge effectively, which resulted in students having a limited grasp of morality. During the early period of New China, students did not learn moral lessons effectively because educational systems did not prepare social courses to develop their morality [15]. In "Moral Education in Chinese Societies: Changes and Challenges," the authors point out that the lack of introductory moral courses set up in schools' curriculums is still an issue in China and other developing countries [16]. However, many juvenile delinquents have lacked morality education since childhood. The lack of moral courses in K–12 education curriculums may result in students losing the opportunity to develop their morality early, which is the ideal time for learning without interruption from external surroundings [13]. As a result, it is crucial to create a repertoire of moral education courses since childhood, which also improves the problem of juvenile delinquency. For instance, introductory behavioral and social courses should be included in the curriculum from kindergarten through primary school so that students can learn the appropriate and inappropriate behaviors to use when interacting with others. Social values seem to exert a more significant influence on them.

#### **3.2. The Impact of Teacher-student Relationships in School Education**

Teaching efficiency is critical in developing children's knowledge acquisition. In addition, the effectiveness of the teacher-student relationship has a significant impact on student's personal growth. A study was conducted utilizing propensity-score matching on the efficacy of the relationship between children and teachers at the age of ten to determine the rate of juvenile delinquency. The results indicated that higher teacher-student interactions could lead to lower teenage delinquency rates at ages 13, 15, and 17 [17]. For instance, some students develop antisocial habits during puberty when adolescents are on the edge of society and schools. At this age, kids spend most of their time in school, which means they interact more with teachers. Thus, teachers are more responsible for promoting better behavior among students and preventing some of them from engaging in antisocial behaviors. Teachers can create a unique setting in schools, impacting children's development. Negative treatment of students by teachers might lead to an inactive classroom learning environment, promoting more antisocial and aggressive feelings or behaviors in students. In the long term, they may feel more stress and develop self-destructive criminal habits. Pleasant interactions between students and teachers have been shown to influence students' behaviors, according to a sample of 1411 teenagers from 32 middle schools in Guangzhou, China [18]. Fewer negative attitudes and positive target teacher practices can ease personal tension, lowering students' negative moods. To decrease the prevalence of juvenile delinquency, teachers can help cultivate a positive learning attitude in students by creating a positive and communicative learning environment in classrooms.

### 3.3. A Culture of Equality and Democracy in Classrooms

Providing a democratic and equal learning environment in school curriculums is always essential in the development of children. Democracy and equality in a school environment can decrease juvenile delinquency rates. Sensoy and DiAngelo documented white supremacy and domination in various public schools in their book "Is Everyone Really Equal?" "Oppression" exists and may "extend well beyond people" [19]. White faculty members and students outnumber those of other races, resulting in a less varied learning environment. As a result, internalized oppression and domination might emerge, causing some students to feel unequal and excluded, leading them to act aggressively.

Children who have experienced prejudice and lack confidence early may grow up with greater societal misconceptions. As students enter secondary schools, they start to engage in a more sophisticated society and culture. Social issues such as sexuality and social justice grow essential during this time. In Helmer's work "Reading queer counter-narratives in the high-school literature classroom," he came out in front of his students to dispel their stereotypes of the homosexual group, demonstrating that "homosexual individuals are the same" and should not be considered "different" [20]. He stresses the significance of teaching diversity and inclusivity to students. Since middle school is an ideal time to teach students about the importance of gender, ethnicity, and other characteristics in society, courses on gender, sexuality, and social justice might be created for students in grades 5 through 12 [20]. Primary sex education and social behavior classes on the physical differences between males and girls may be available in the future for children in grades 5-8. This will help students understand sex and diverse cultures correctly, thus protecting them against harmful sexual assaults and prejudice. The fundamental knowledge they acquire at a young age can create a more inclusive atmosphere where all students can learn that different sexual orientations are normal and that there must be no discrimination.

## 4. The Influence of the Social Environment of Childhood on Juvenile Delinquency

### 4.1. The Impact of Social Insecurity

Social insecurity is defined as a lack of confidence in one's ability to perform successfully. Worry, mental illness, and the negative effect of an external environment may all contribute to the development of social insecurity [21]. The Shenyang University of Technology study on how personality traits may influence the rates of juvenile criminality cites a tight association between social insecurity and the emotional illnesses of juvenile delinquents [22]. In particular, at the ages when their cognitive abilities are unclear and easily led astray by external contexts, emotional instability may have its roots in social insecurity, including prior traumas, failures, and current events. Children who lack cognitive skills and self-confidence may opt to do other things to relieve their inner insecurities. In severe instances, they may behave immorally and violently. As a result, an adolescent or a child with a mental disease who does not get prompt and appropriate instruction may engage in impulsive behavior that leads to criminal activity.

A study of about 500 juvenile delinquents has a typical attitude: "I don't care what you want! [23]" They were socially insecure because they lacked cognitive empathy, which prevented them from understanding and responding to the attitudes and social issues of others. Children with cognitive empathy skills may react emotionally to others and societal issues because they feel empathy for them. However, most juvenile offenders typically lack empathy before misbehaving, eventually causing worse outcomes like crimes. Hence, it is essential to communicate and discuss social issues with children early on to develop their empathy. This will help them better comprehend the hardships and social concerns of others, giving them greater self-assurance when they face challenges in life. Also, if it is necessary to provide them with more help in improving social insecurity, families can play a



central role in alleviating social insecurity during children's growth, which is key to helping decrease the issue of insecurity [24]. Positive familial cohesion stresses the significance of familial care that increase children's empath development and confidence in real life.

#### **4.2. The Influence of Cultural and Historical Background**

People's attitudes and behaviors while making decisions are influenced by their cultural and historical environment starting at a young age. From the time they are born, children are impacted by the cultures in their environment. Therefore, each person's conduct tightly links to various cultures, which might affect their behavioral development. Across Asia and Indonesia, Chinese and syncretic Malayo-Islamic intellectual traditions have ingrained more "conservative notions" of what childhood should look like for youth in everyday life [25]. People prevented from freedom at an early age might struggle to overcome this restraint under such a conservative cultural setting. Although they desire a life of more freedom, entrenched societal norms hinder them from acting this way, which might eventually lead to crimes.

A strong cultural background promotes better social cohesion, which strengthens connections and a sense of unity among community members [22]. A study of the cultural and geographic contexts of the Basque Country in southern Europe shows that a favorable cultural backdrop, leisure activities, and suitable social cohesiveness might have a beneficial impact on adolescent delinquency [26]. As most people are content with the principles of rules and do not wish to break them, decent social cohesiveness indicates positive solidarity among individuals. This sense of serenity and security in cultural and geographical situations helps children and adolescents perceive individuals' harmony and cohesion. As a result, children are raised in a welcoming and pleasant environment, which inspires good behavior.

#### **4.3. The Impact of Child Socialization**

Socialization is an "interactive communication process" that incorporates people's individual and behavioral development and is a vital component in the development of children [27]. Children who acquire social skills develop into well-behaved people. As Walter Parker mentioned, "public-minded citizens" are people who can learn to feel and communicate with others [1]. Children with poor social or communication skills may find it difficult to interact with people, making it challenging to learn positive attitudes, values, and appropriate actions from their environment. The risk of engaging in harmful acts might arise from this condition.

Transition planning is an effective way to help juvenile offenders correct and reenter society after release. Transition planning includes entering the facility, regularly moving within and between facilities, and eventually returning to the community [28]. Aftercare included in effective transition planning is a service offered in the community to assist released juveniles in returning to their households [28]. An ineffective transition planning or insufficient transition services might cause recidivism. For example, in California, after juvenile delinquents' institutional release in one year, only 28% of the youth were enrolled in school, 27% had withdrawn, and 45% never reentered [29]. One of the main reasons that caused this result is a lack of transition services, so insufficient educational and emotional support or other employment opportunities caused 35% of the youth to continue committing a crime. Therefore, in a decent and inclusive community-based service such as a welcoming school and home environment and safe neighborhood environment, juvenile delinquents have more opportunities to communicate with others without negative influence from the external atmosphere, improving their socialization skills positively.

Online communication has also become increasingly popular as technology has advanced. A growing number of individuals, particularly children and adolescents, have become acclimated to

online conversations and eschew face-to-face interaction, even though online communication trends may provide people more convenience in their daily life. Many people choose to live in solitude and give up on offline interactions. Consequently, they may find maintaining relationships with their regular social circles challenging. This results in limited adaptability and improper behavior since they cannot communicate with others when quickly moved to offline conversation. Since 2020, an unprecedented circumstance, COVID-19, has occurred. COVID-19 mitigation measures such as social isolation, stay-at-home orders, and internet working have long been commonplace in everyday life for individuals. Long periods of isolation and loneliness increased juvenile delinquency because limiting people's freedom of mobility encourages their "potential involvement in delinquency [30]."

## 5. Conclusions

This study seeks to demonstrate the significance of childhood and adolescent education on juvenile delinquency. A sound economic foundation and literacy rate in the household help children develop morally and academically. However, if parents of dual-income households ignore the importance of parental interest in children, children can misbehave more than in single-income families. A positive neighborhood environment and community will interact with families well to shape children into good behaviors, maintaining a long-term positive family environment. Also, to improve children's behaviors, school moral education helps develop children's moral development at a young age. For instance, students learn moral and social behaviors through electives in primary schools or even kindergarten. With the help of positive teacher-student relationships, students tend to decrease their antisocial behaviors because of more active learning atmospheres with school teachers. More importantly, school curriculums with an equal and democratic learning atmosphere could provide students inclusive and diverse learning environment, preparing more moral students to better transition into society. Finally, childhood social environment, such as social insecurity, would influence children's mental development, leading to misbehavior. Children with low levels of child socialization may also fail to communicate with others efficiently, leading to destructive behaviors. With better social cohesion in a positive historical and cultural background in childhood, children have fewer cultural restrictions and fewer risks of misbehaving.

Transition planning is considered an essential step to help incarcerated youth reenter society. However, some transition services still require more effective processes to help them deal with issues like unsafe living environments and negative peer or family influence. Several services face a shortage of resources and a lack of consistent aftercare to assist juvenile delinquents in a better transition to a home environment, such as a lack of access to necessary behavioral and mental health services and an absence of assistance with disabilities. This demonstrates that only the correction practices in juvenile detention centers may not consistently help adolescents become better. Thus, transition services' educational support and effective transition planning can help them realize their value in society. However, this is a challenge that educators and policymakers face today. They need to find ways to improve the quantity and quality of transition programs and plans to reduce the incidence of juvenile delinquency. Also, more studies on juvenile delinquency, such as social and psychological issues, should be performed to develop better prevention approaches to minimize juvenile delinquency. For instance, it is vital to carry out a research protocol employing specific psychological techniques or interventions in the next stage to assess how to more effectively and quantitatively reduce juvenile delinquency.

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