

Analysis of Economic Factors in Juvenile Delinquency

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Abstract: Juvenile delinquency is a long-standing problem that exists globally. Juvenile delinquency usually refers to juvenile delinquency that includes various offenses such as theft, fighting, drug use, sexual assault, intentional injury, and more. Many factors are behind juvenile delinquency, including socioeconomic background, family environment, education, mental health, etc. The present research thesis aims to explore the current state of juvenile delinquency in various countries, the causes of juvenile delinquency, and recommendations for reducing juvenile delinquency from an economic perspective. According to research, childhood has a significant impact on adolescents; parents need to timely care about the psychological state of adolescents and give timely guidance; the government should allow poor adolescents the opportunity to educate, to reduce the rise of juvenile crime rate.

Keywords: juvenile delinquency, family, peer group, education, economic

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Juvenile delinquency has always been a global problem that cannot be ignored. Studying juvenile delinquency can help us gain insight into the root causes of juvenile delinquency and the social, psychological, and environmental factors behind it, and help develop more effective prevention and treatment strategies. Secondly, through research, we can discover the characteristics and patterns of juvenile delinquents of different types, ages and genders, which can help us better understand the nature of crime phenomena and provide a basis for formulating more targeted policies. In addition, research can also provide more effective methods for the prevention and treatment of juvenile delinquency, such as psychotherapy, community intervention, and vocational education, to help juvenile delinquents better integrate into society and rebuild their self-image and values. The study of juvenile delinquency can help us better understand and deal with this social problem to achieve social harmony and tranquility.

1.2. Related Research

Shaw and McKay review previous research and argue that crime rates are higher in urban areas due to factors such as poverty, lack of social support, and exposure to crime and violence, and discuss the role of community-based interventions in addressing juvenile delinquency in urban areas role.

According to the authors, such interventions should be comprehensive and address multiple risk factors, including family, school, and neighborhood factors. At the same time, family factors are an essential reason for juvenile delinquency[1]. Gove and Crutchfield studied various family factors, such as parenting practices, family structure, and communication patterns, and discussed their impact on adolescent behavior. important role in the risk of crime[2]. And Donovan et al. examined the role of parental support and control in predicting problem behaviors in adolescents, including alcohol use and delinquency. The study found that parental support and control were significant predictors of problem behavior in adolescents, with high levels of parental support and moderate levels of control associated with the lowest levels of problem behavior[3]. In addition, Nisar and Ali et al. used related research to study the role of family, peer, and economic factors in juvenile delinquency. The authors identified family dynamics, including parent-child relationships and parental supervision, as crucial factors leading to criminal behavior. It also discusses the effects of peer pressure and delinquent peer associations, as well as economic factors such as poverty, unemployment, and low socioeconomic status[4].

However, from a personal point of view, Cohen has studied the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency and its reasons and put forward a sociological explanation for it. Cohen believes delinquency stems from young people's rejection of middle-class values and their inability to achieve status and success through traditional means. These individuals adopt underground values or alternative cultural norms to build a sense of identity and social status[5]. Thornberry has studied the relationship between self-reported offenses and official crime measures and argues that apparent differences between the two measures are largely illusory. Thornberry found that the same factors that predicted official crime also predicted self-reported crime, suggesting that self-report measures are valid and valuable tools for understanding criminal behavior[6], while Merton had a similar view, examined Causes of juvenile delinquency, a sociological explanation based on strain theory is proposed. Merton argued that individuals might engage in illegal behavior when they cannot achieve culturally valuable goals through legal means[7]. While juvenile delinquency has many other causes, Dam and colleagues explored the developmental antecedents of sexual coercion in juvenile sex offenders. Studies have found that a history of physical abuse, sexual abuse, and exposure to pornography are important risk factors for sexual coercion[8].

The National Research Council examines the juvenile justice system in the United States and its effectiveness in preventing and rehabilitating juvenile delinquency. The report finds that the juvenile justice system needs major reform to address racial disparities, underfunding, and a lack of evidence-based interventions[9]. However, Howell and Lipsey proposed a comprehensive framework for preventing and reducing juvenile delinquency after drawing on insights from many studies and practices. The framework includes prevention strategies for at-risk youth, early intervention programs for youth already engaged in criminal behavior, and a range of interventions that address underlying risk factors for crime[10].

1.3. Objective

Chapter 2 focuses on the current state of juvenile delinquency in various countries in recent years and the juvenile justice systems in different countries, which show that juvenile delinquency rates have declined in recent years. Chapter 3 mainly studies the causes of juvenile delinquency from three aspects: family factors, peer influence, and lack of education. The family environment is a very important factor, and some children may grow up in unstable families and lack the support of security and love. Causes them to feel depressed and lonely; In group life, the influence between peers is also great, and some children will commit crimes in order to integrate into the group; In addition, some adolescents may not be well educated and lack knowledge and skills, making it difficult for them to find a stable job. These people may resort to illegal means to make a living be-

cause of their lack of financial resources. Chapter 4 makes recommendations on the reduction of juvenile delinquency from economic perspectives such as employment and economic costs.

2. Current Situations

In the United States, juvenile delinquency has been declining in recent years. According to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), the juvenile arrest rate for all crimes in 2019 was 2,005.4 per 100,000 juveniles, down 73% from the 1996 peak[11]. Juvenile justice outcomes vary by race and ethnicity, and black and Hispanic youth are overrepresented in the juvenile justice system. In Canada, the rate of juvenile accused crimes has been declining since 2006. (The overall juvenile crime rate in 2019 was 2,307 per 100,000 youth, down 45 percent from its 2006 peak)[12]. Declines in juvenile delinquency were observed in all crime categories. In Australia, juvenile delinquency has also been declining in recent years. The juvenile crime rate in 2019-2020 was 2,508 offenders per 100,000 10-17 years old, down 22% from the peak in 2009-2010[13]. Declines in juvenile crime rates have been observed in all Australian jurisdictions.

The situation of juvenile delinquency varies from country to country. In some countries, the juvenile justice system focuses on rehabilitation and education, while in others, it is more punitive in nature. In Norway, for example, the juvenile justice system focused on rehabilitation and education, with juvenile offenders serving a maximum sentence of 15 years and minors not being sentenced to life imprisonment. Instead, they are placed in juvenile detention centers, where they receive education, vocational training, and treatment. In contrast, in the United States, the juvenile justice system is more punitive. In some states, minors can be sentenced to life imprisonment without parole, and they are usually tried as adults for certain offenses. The number of minors arrested has also been decreasing in recent years. In 2019, U.S. law enforcement agencies arrested an estimated 696,620 people under the age of 18, down 69 percent from the peak of juvenile arrests in 1996[11]. In addition, the increase in juvenile crime has also shown a downward trend in recent years. Between 2015 and 2019, the number of minors arrested for all crimes decreased by 14%[11]. During the same period, the number of juveniles arrested for violent crimes (-16%), property crimes (-15%), substance abuse (-11%), and weapons violations (-26%) also decreased[11].

3. Causes of Juvenile Delinquency

3.1. Family Factors

Family factors play an important role in shaping the behavior of children and adolescents. Parental conflicts, including divorce, separation, or ongoing conflict between parents, can have a significant impact on a child's behavior. Children exposed to high levels of conflict between parents may experience stress, anxiety, and depression, which can lead to criminal behavior. Lack of parental supervision is another family factor that contributes to juvenile delinquency. Children who are left unsupervised for long periods of time or allowed to roam freely without parental supervision may be more likely to engage in delinquency. Inconsistent discipline or lack of consequences for negative behavior can also lead to juvenile delinquency. Children who have not experienced the consistent consequences of negative behavior may not understand the seriousness of their behavior, which is also a potential pitfall. In addition, a child's lack of positive reinforcement or praise for positive behavior can also lead to juvenile delinquency. Children who are not positively reinforced for good behavior may feel neglected or unimportant, which can lead to negative behavior as a way to seek attention or recognition, as shown in Table 1[14].

Table 1: The Relationship between family life and the type of delinquency.

Living with family Delinquency	They live with family		They do not live with family	
	Frequency	Percent- age	Frequency	Percentage
Theft	28	22.8	46	36.2
Drugs	17	13.8	24	18.9
Mischief and may- hem	29	23.6	12	9.4
Murder	9	7.3	5	3.9
Evil-doing	26	21.1	29	22.8
Two or more crimes	3	2.4	7	5.5
Other	11	8.9	4	3.1
Total	123	100	127	100

3.2. Peer Influence

Peer influence is another important factor in juvenile delinquency. Adolescents tend to imitate the behaviors and attitudes of their peers, which can lead them to engage in illegal activities. Peer pressure can lead children and adolescents to emulate their peers' behavior, even if it is against their own will. For example, if a child's peers have bad behavior, the child may feel pressured to do the same to make their group accept them. Peer rejection can also lead to bad behavior. Children who feel rejected or ostracized by their peers may gain acceptance or attention from their peers through bad behavior.

3.3. Lack of Education

Children who do not receive adequate education or have limited access to education are more likely to engage in delinquency. Children who have academic difficulties may feel frustrated, bored, and out of school. This can lead to truancy, truancy and dropout, increasing the risk of bad behavior. Education provides children with the knowledge, skills, and opportunities to help them make better decisions in life. Lack of education can also lead to low self-esteem and lack of opportunities, which can predispose children to bad behavior. They do not receive a quality education and may lack the skills and opportunities necessary to succeed in life. This can lead to feelings of frustration and hopelessness, which can lead to bad behavior. Children who do not attend a school or receive a quality education may be more vulnerable to negative effects, such as peers who engage in delinquency or adults who engage in criminal activity. In addition, children who do not receive a quality education may also lack the support they need to live successful life. This may include support from parents, teachers, and community members, which can lead to a sense of isolation and disconnection.

3.4. Poverty

Poverty is another factor that can contribute to juvenile delinquency. Children and adolescents who live in poverty are more likely to engage in delinquent behavior as they lack the resources necessary to lead a healthy life. Poverty can lead to a lack of education, poor nutrition, and lack of access to healthcare, which can all contribute to delinquent behavior.

4. Recommendations

Juvenile delinquency high economic costs, both in the short term and the long term. In the short term, the cost of juvenile delinquency includes the costs of policing, court proceedings, and incarceration. According to the National Institute of Justice, the average cost of incarcerating a juvenile is \$148,767 per year[15]. In addition to the immediate costs, juvenile delinquency also has long-term economic costs. For example, juvenile delinquency can lead to increased healthcare costs, reduced productivity, and decreased economic growth.

It is essential to understand the economic factors that contribute to develop effective strategies to reduce juvenile delinquency. Research has shown that economic factors such as poverty, unemployment, and income inequality are strongly associated with juvenile delinquency. Children and adolescents growing up in poverty are more likely to engage in delinquent behavior than those from more affluent backgrounds. Unemployment can lead to reduced economic opportunities, which can increase the likelihood of juvenile delinquency. Income inequality can also contribute to juvenile delinquency by creating feelings of injustice and hopelessness. Prevention strategies aim to reduce the risk factors associated with juvenile delinquency by addressing the underlying economic factors. For example, providing education and job training programs can increase economic opportunities for disadvantaged youth and reduce the likelihood of delinquent behavior. Additionally, providing access to affordable housing and healthcare can improve economic stability and reduce the likelihood of delinquent behavior. Intervention strategies aim to reduce delinquent behavior by providing targeted services to at-risk youth. For example, counseling and mental health services can help address underlying mental health issues that contribute to delinquent behavior. Additionally, diversion programs that provide alternatives to incarceration, such as community service or rehabilitation programs, can reduce recidivism rates and improve long-term outcomes for juvenile offenders.

5. Conclusion

The present research thesis examines several major factors in juvenile delinquency. For most adolescents, mental health is a very important factor; adolescents may have psychological problems for various reasons, such as depression, anxiety, etc., which may lead them to seek thrills and take risks, thus committing crimes. Socio-economically, some adolescents may live in low-income families and lack adequate financial support and social benefits, and they may commit crimes in pursuit of more material wealth. Juvenile delinquency is a very complex issue that needs to be addressed on multiple fronts. The government, families, and all sectors of society should work together to strengthen research and exploration on juvenile delinquency and formulate more targeted policies and measures to achieve the healthy growth and social harmony of adolescents.

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