

Gender Difference in Delinquent Tendency among Adolescents

Saba Kurd¹ & Dr. Saima Ambreen²

Abstract

Crime is a curse but it becomes a curse at that time when our children and adolescents are involved in bad activities, which exhibit delinquent behavior. Undoubtedly, it is a serious issue where our adolescents are involved in a high rate of crimes. Resultantly, the high ratio of crimes damages our society and creates an anarchic situation. In every society youth is considered the backbone of development and if the ratios of crime become high among youth so that particular advantage changes into a debt. Indeed child delinquency is a great threat to every society. In case of Pakistan it is increasing day by day. From suicide attacks to street crimes in every crime adolescents are involved. It is a burning issue for our society where the crimes are committed by children and adolescents.

Delinquency

Delinquency is an act where adolescents break or violate the norms and the rules of the society such as stealing at home and outside, truancy from school, fight and use of weapons (Spratt, Doob, & Jenkins, 2001). Delinquency itself is a socially insufficient adjustment at the part of the person to tough conditions (Bridges, 1927). Some adolescents are involved in minor delinquent behaviors such as stealing which is considered covert antisocial or non-aggressive behavior. On the other hand, some behaviors are violent and serious like fighting with someone, such behavior is called overt antisocial behavior or aggressive behavior (Eklund, Liljeberg, & Klinteberg, 2011). Some researches indicate high risk of injuries and deaths which are cause by delinquent behavior (Buckley, Chapman, & Sheehan, 2012).

Delinquency is not only a national problem but also a global issue, which varies country to country. Delinquency is increasing day by day in European and other countries such as United States, Finland etc. The

¹ M.Phil Scholar, Department of Psychology, University of Balochistan, Quetta.

² Department of Psychology, University of Balochistan, Quetta.

most common juvenile crimes in America and Finland are curfew violations, drug abuse and theft (Chowdnury, Khan & Uddin, 2012).

Additionally, delinquency is a burning issue in developed countries as well developing countries likewise, sexual crimes, purse- snatching etc. Every country has made her own laws and regulations according to her own cultural, social and political experiences similarly, in Scotland the age of delinquency is 8, England 8, Canada and Turkey is 14. The criminal ratio is quite high in the developing countries owing to terror events, lack of education, Poverty, internal migrations and unemployment (Ozen, et, al. 2005). Pakistan is also considered a developing country where the adolescents exhibit illegal behavior which is against of norms. The ratio of crime in Pakistan culminating day by day due to undecided goals of life and unsupported state of involvement (Niazi, Haider & Sadruddin, 2016).

Factors Effecting Delinquency

There are several risk factors which are linked with delinquency. However, it is not determined which factor strongly links with delinquent behavior (Spratt, Doob, & Jenkins, 2001).

Social and other external factors. In the social factors family structure link with delinquency where the family conflicts, separation and divorce influence on the behavior of adolescents. Not only poor parental supervision but also family interactions cause anti-social behavior. On the other hand in the period of adolescence the involvement of peers in the delinquency directly effect on the child behavior. Peers influence becomes strong among those adolescents who are ignored by their parents and having a poor interaction with their parents. As a result, a child adopts similar attitudes and behaviors to conform with his/her peers. Moreover, school is associated with delinquency such as rigid and inelastic school system, early school dropout, teacher's behavior, dividing classroom into upper class and lower class, bad school companions, undesirable attitudes of students towards teachers, wrong dragging, poor attendance and high level of bullying at school develop delinquent behavior (McCord, Widom, & Nancy, 2001).

Personality related factors. There are some individual factors which are caused by delinquent behavior. Following are the risk factors which are caused by delinquent behavior such as complications during pregnancy, parents involvement in drugs, age, gender, individual social behavior characteristics impulsivity and hyperactivity that predict the delinquent behavior. Moreover, individual's cognitive deficits like poor language performance and low IQ associate with delinquency. On the other hand, some childhood disorders such as Conduct disorder and Attention Deficit

Hyperactivity disorder link with aggressive behavior or delinquency (McCord, Widom, & Nancy, 2001).

Gender and Delinquency. Gender is also correlates with delinquency and criminal acts. Boys are involved in delinquent and drug related behaviors. The reason behind the involvement of the boys in the delinquency are failure at school, deviant friends, impulsivity which strongly related to conduct problems in boys. As compare to boys girls exhibit less criminal acts (Gulledge, Jones, & Cochran, 2011). Moreover, another research explained that girls are less delinquent than males because the high level of risk factors are more prominent in boys than girls such as hyperactivity, conduct disorder are the predictors of anti-social behavior which are more common in boys than girls (Tas, Ribeaud & Curyff, 2004).

Delinquency is a huge problem now a day not only in Pakistan but also all over the world. Where a large number of youth involve in delinquent acts. It is a serious issue for our society where our children and adolescents commit a crime. It is essential to control the delinquency. Furthermore, there are many risk factors which contribute to increase the level of delinquency. Gender is also one of the factor which increases the level of delinquency. Moreover, it is important to identify gender differences in the delinquency among adolescent whether girls exhibit delinquent acts or boys.

So, this study is conducted to explore gender differences in delinquent behavior in Quetta.

Method

The research is primarily aimed at identifying gender difference in delinquent behavior among adolescents.

Sample

In this study the 80 adolescents were selected through convenient sampling. The data was collected from two different Government High schools of Quetta, Balochistan. The sample was divided in to two groups boys ($N=40$) and girls ($N=40$).The age range of the participants was 11-19 years.

Instruments

Self-Reported Delinquency Scale and Informant Reported Delinquency Scale (SRDS & IRDS). To assess the delinquent behavior tendency Self-Reported Delinquency Scale and Informed-Reported Delinquency (SRDS & IRDS; Ishfaq, 2014) were used in the present study. Both forms consist of 27 items and these items were scored on 5 point of Likert type scale ranging from Never=0, Once time=1, Two to three times=2, Five to ten times=3, Ten to many times=4.

Informed Consent Form and Demographic Sheet were administered along with SRDS and IRDS.

Procedure

For collecting the data permission was taken from the administrators of the boys and girls schools. Initially, informed consent was taken from every participant. After that questioners were administered in their classes. Afterwards, the collected data was analyzed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 23) software and results were drawn.

Results

The result explored gender differences in delinquent tendencies among adolescents. First of all Reliability coefficient of the instruments were assessed. The reliability Coefficient of Self-Reported Delinquency Scale (SRDS) and Informant Reported Delinquency Scale (IRDS) were found to be 0.84 and 0.70 respectively.

Gender differences were explored through t- test analysis on the scores of boys and girls on both SRDS and IRDS.

Insert Table 1

The table 1 shows mean and Standard Deviation differences of the two gender groups SRDS and IRDS. The mean and standard deviation values of SRDS girl's group are less than the group of SRDS boys (M= 8.23, SD= 7.850). Table showed that boys are more delinquent than girls. Results indicated significant ($p < .001$) mean differences on both SRDS and IRDS. This shows that boys may display significantly higher delinquent tendencies than girls. This trend was similar on both scales i.e. both research participated and their informants reported that boys have higher delinquent tendencies

These gender differences were further explored keeping in consideration their age through t- test. The two age groups were formulated including having age from 11 to 14 and the second age group having age from 15 to 19.

Insert Table 2

Results indicated significant ($p < .001$) mean differences on both SRDS and IRDS for age group of 11- 14 years. This shows that boys may display significantly higher delinquent tendencies than girls in age 11- 14 years. Moreover, the results indicated that in the older adolescent do not display significantly different delinquent tendencies for boys and girls.

Discussion

The research was conducted on the topic of “Gender differences in Delinquent Tendency among adolescents”. Delinquency is becoming a global problem. Many factors effect delinquency such as individual level factors, Gender, committee factors and social factors. The research sample was comprised of 80 adolescents.

Firstly Alpha reliability Coefficient was computed for scales which were utilized in this research Self-Reported Delinquency Scale (SRDS), Informant Reported Delinquency Scale (IRDS) which was found to be quite good. The finding of this research states that boys exhibit more delinquent behavioral tendencies than girls and this was reported both by the participants and their informants. This finding is consistent with many other study findings report that the rates of crime is very low among females as compare to males owing to general differences in culture demands and biological factors. Another fact is that girls are kept away from social life. Girls are under strict observation by their parents (Ozen, et.al. 2005). Some other researchers also described that females are less delinquent than males because of conventional social roles assigned to the gender by our culture where the females are more restricted in the society and males are allowed to involve in various activities (Kalb & williams, 2014 : Rebellon, Gundy, Manasse & Cohn, 2016). Another evidence supported the findings of this research that males are more often involved in criminal behavior than females because boys show delinquent behavior when their fathers adopt neglectful approach during the stage of their growing. Furthermore, parents have direct control over their daughters as compare to their sons (Steketee, Junger & Tas, 2013). On the other hand, girls mostly show less delinquency, less violent behavior and less drug use than boys the roots of this gender gap are family climate, peer influence and parental style towards male and female children (Hadjar, Boehnke, Baier & Hagen, 2007).

Another finding of this research indicates that the differences in display of delinquent behavior among boys and girls is more apparent in younger adolescents than older adolescents. This finding may divert attention towards the issue of reporting the display of delinquent behavior than actual display.

Before generalizing the findings of this research, Limitation of this study should be kept in mind especially the small sample size may limit generalization of the findings. Secondly, utilization of the self-report method for gaining information could have affected the amount and quality of research data due to social desirability issues. So, in future this study may

be replicated with a large and diverse sample with utilization of other method of data collection may yield more valid results.

Table 1

Mean differences of the two gender groups on their scores of SRDS- Self Reported Delinquency Scale and IRDS- Informant Reported Delinquency Scale (N=80)

Variable Scales	Boys	Girls	<i>t</i> (78)	<i>P</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	<i>M</i> <i>SD</i>	<i>M</i> <i>SD</i>			
SRDS	8.23 7.850	2.08 3.025	50.33	.000	1.033
IRDS	7.88 4.724	2.85 2.992	65.950	.000	1.272

Note. SRDS= Self-Reported Delinquency Scale; IRDS= Informant Delinquency Scale; M= Mean; SD= Standard Division.

Table 2

The mean differences of the Two Gender Groups on the scores of SRDS- Self Reported Delinquency Scale and IRDS- Informant Reported Delinquency Scale for Adolescents in the Age Group of 11- 14 and 15 -19 years old (N= 80)

Age Groups	Variable Scales	Boys	Girls	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
		<i>M</i> <i>SD</i>	<i>M</i> <i>SD</i>			
11-14	SRDS	6.83 6.36	1.25 2.00	4.16	.000	1.183
	IRDS	7.50 5.32	2.50 3.02	3.26	.002	1.155
15-19	SRDS	8.47 8.14	5.38 4.20	1.03	.306	0.477
	IRDS	7.94 4.69	4.25 2.55	2.13	0.39	0.977

References

- Bridges, K.M.B. (1927). Factors contributing to juvenile delinquency. *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, 17. Reterived from <https://scholarlycommons.law.northwestern.edu>
- Buckley, L., Chapman, R., & Sheenhan, M. (2012). Adolescent involvement in antisocial and delinquent behavior: predicting future injury risk. *Accident Analysis and Prevention*, 48,581-522. doi : 10.1016/J.app.2012.02.010
- Chowdhury , A, I., Khan, M, M., & Uddin, I.(2012). Causes and consequences of juvenile delinquency in Bangladesh: A sociological analysis. *International Journal of Social Science Tomorrow*, 1(4). Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/267860650>
- Eklund, J.M., Lileberg, J.F., & Klinteberg, B.A. (2010). Delinquent behavior patterns in adolescence: development and associated personality traits. *Personality and Mental Health*, 5,169-185. doi:10.102/pmh.137
- Gulledge, L., Jones, S., & Cochran, J. (2011). Gender differences in age consequences. *Journal of Crime and Justice*, 33 (2), 95-126. dio: 10.1080/0735648x.2010.9721289
- Hadjar, A., Boehnke, K., Baier, D.,& Hagan, J. (2007). Juvenile delinquency and gender revisited: the family and power control theory reconceived. *European Journal of Criminology*. 4 (1), 35-58. doi: 10.1177/1477370807071729
- Kalb, G., & Wiliams, J. (2014). Delinquency and gender. *Applied Economics Letters*, 10 (7), 425- 429. doi: 10.1080/0003684032000066822
- McCord, J., Widom, C.S., & Nancy .(2001). *Juvenile crime,juvenile justice*. Washington,D.C: National academy press
- Niazi, S., Haider, K., & Sadruddin, M, M. (2016). Intellectual grooming and responsiveness a remedial measures towards curbing juvenile delinquency among children in pakistan. *Ma'arif Research Journal*, 57- 66. Retrieved from <http://www.researchgate.net>
- Ozen, S., Ece, A., Oto, R., Tirasci, Y., & Goren, S. (2005). Juvenile delinquency in developing county: A province example in Turkey. *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry* 28, 430-441. doi: 1016/j.jlp.2004.05.001
- Rebllon, C., Gundy, V, T, K., Manasse, E, M., & Cohn, S, E. (2016). The relationship between gender and delinquency: assessing the mediating

role of anticipated guilt. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 40, 230- 237.
doi: 10.1016/j.j crimjus.2015.11.006

Steketee, M., Junger, M., & Tas, J, J. (2013). Sex differences in the predictors of juvenile delinquency:females are more susceptible to poor environments; males are influenced more by low self control. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice* 1-18,
doi:10.1177/1043986212470888

Tas, J, J., Ribeaud, D., & Cruyff, M, J, L, F. (2004). Junvenile delinquency and gender. *European Journal of Criminology*, 1 (3). doi:
101177/14773708040440077