

Quantitative Analysis of Causative Factors of Crime: A Case Study of District Sahiwal (Pakistan)

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Abstract

It is a postindustrial society in which the dynamics of social interaction and values have changed. Due to rapid technological changes, the social relations and bounding with social norms have been weakening. The impatience, delinquency, and criminal attitude of the people are increasing daily. The research objectives of this current study were to examine the causative factors of crime in district Sahiwal and to identify the elements that shape and influence criminal behavior in the region. The researcher used the quantitative method and exploited purposive sampling. The data was gathered from 120 criminals from Central Jail, Sahiwal, Pakistan. The analysis used Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to uncover significant patterns and relationships of variables. It was found that low socio-economic status and less academic qualification were the real causes of crime in the studied area. Based on the results, it is suggested that addressing the underlying issues of bad company, poverty, unemployment, and lack of education and strengthening legal and social frameworks can create a safer, more stable community in Sahiwal. The study's findings emphasize that only through targeted interventions that address both the symptoms and the root causes of crime can meaningful progress be made in reducing crime rates and improving the quality of life for the residents of district Sahiwal. The concerned institutions should collaborate with the concerned institutions to uplift the socio-economic status of the people, and strict law and order should be enforced to tackle deviance and crime in Sahiwal, Pakistan.

Keywords: Crime Control, Unemployment, Community, Deviance.

Introduction

Crime and criminal behavior are the leading causes of disorder in society. There are different schools of thought in criminology explaining those social phenomena. According to these perspectives, the biological series claims that the criminality of the individual depends on their biological characteristics; symbolic interaction is the perspective believed in the social construction of the crime; the psychological school of thought claims that the mental process of a person is the real cause of crime and the most crucial reason of the crime is that crime is not learned (structural functionalist Kama social strain topology conflict theory and labeling theory). Deviance

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and crime are the social phenomena of society. Every society faces this issue, but its tendency and rate are dynamic.

There are different factors of crime, such as socio-economic, psychological, biological, political, and legal factors and hitches (Asghar et al., 2016). These factors are often interrelated, creating complex environments that foster criminal activities. According to Aristotle, "man is a social animal." He learns different attributes from family, peer groups, education, religious institutions, and media. The peer group plays a vital role in defining right and wrong.

The studies showed that lousy company leads to deviance and crime. Sutherland et al. (1992), Orien (2002), Erikson (1962), and Glaser (1971) also endorsed above mentioned statements that deviance is the result of the association of the people with the wrong company. The people's low socio-economic status is another reason for deviance because they need better opportunities to get an education in well-equipped institutions, non-availability of entertainment facilities, and school climate. The subcultural theory of Cohen also identified that low socio-economic status is also a cause of social deviance because the complexity and inferiority may compel some people towards shortcuts and deviancy (Cohen, 1955, 2002; Barmaki, 2016). Therefore, deviance results from the antinomy between means and social aspirations, which is also a topic discussed by the anomie theory, with anomie being defined as the state of society characterized by a lack of norms and social values (Merton, 1938). Socio-constructivist theories that present deviance due to social judgment and labeling also have sociological orientations (Becker, 1995, 2008; Yoder, 2011).

The studies highlighted that family low demographic characteristics, victimization, harassment, domestic violence, low paid school/ free schooling, especially in developing countries, were the main reasons for crime (Dukes & Lorch, 1989; Haynie & Osgood, 2005; Chapple et al., 2014; Corkin et al., 2015; Buehler, 2020). Anderson (2010) found that lack of education, unemployment, and poor economic conditions significantly contribute to deviance and crime among adults. Furthermore, Anderson (2010) added that poor mental health and failures in life, along with negative social influences from parents, teachers, and peers, also led to the development of criminal tendencies. Social factors also play a crucial role in rising crime rates. Population growth and urbanization contribute to rising crime rates by increasing competition for limited resources and straining social services. Poor quality of life and high levels of corruption undermine social stability and trust in institutions, leading to higher crime rates (Qamar & Safdar, 2021; Shah et al., 2022).

Health is another critical factor in understanding crime, particularly among young people. The World Health Organization (2005) links poor health to increased violence, noting that living conditions and social, psychological, and biological disruptions are primary causes of criminal behavior. These findings underscore the importance of addressing health disparities as a broader crime prevention strategy. Additionally, Wayne (2010) examines the arrest of young people involved in criminal activities. He finds that family strife and religious differences are significant contributors to youth violence, while poverty has a less direct impact.

Economic de-stability, unemployment, inflation, and poverty are significant contributors to crime in Pakistan (Cheema et al., 2014; Saboor et al., 2017). Pakistan's criminal justice system, particularly within the prosecution process, leading to low conviction rates and ineffective deterrence, is one of the reasons for the increasing crime rate in Pakistan (Lal et al., 2023). The lack of collaboration between police and prosecution and insufficient legal guidance during investigations weakens the justice delivery system, allowing many offenders to evade punishment. Additionally, the rise of cybercrime introduces a new dimension to Pakistan's crime challenges, threatening national security and necessitating advanced I.T. infrastructure and cybersecurity

measures (Imran et al., 2022). However, challenges such as police corruption, lack of transparency, and public mistrust must be resolved for successful implementation (Wassan et al., 2023).

Sahiwal, a district in Punjab, Pakistan, presents a complex socio-economic and demographic landscape that influences crime patterns. The district is characterized by a predominantly rural population, with a significant portion of its residents living in rural areas, as evidenced by the high percentage of rural victims in firearm-related deaths and female homicides (Nadeem et al., 2021). This rural demographic is crucial in understanding the socio-economic context of Sahiwal, as rural areas often face unique challenges, such as limited access to education and employment opportunities, which can contribute to crime. The socio-economic factors influencing crime in Sahiwal are multifaceted.

The prevalence of firearms and the ease of access to weapons further complicate the crime scenario in Sahiwal, leading to a high incidence of firearm-related fatalities (Nadeem et al., 2021; Shah et al., 2022). Demographically, young males are predominantly involved in crime, particularly violent crime, which aligns with findings from other regions in Punjab where population growth and economic activity correlate with property crimes (Mahmood et al., 2019). The male-to-female ratio in firearm fatalities in Sahiwal is notably high, with males being more frequently involved in such incidents. Additionally, socio-cultural factors such as honor killings and property disputes significantly impact crime rates, particularly affecting women in rural areas (Nadeem et al., 2021). In summary, Sahiwal's crime landscape is shaped by its rural demographic, socio-economic challenges, and cultural dynamics. Addressing these issues requires comprehensive policy interventions focusing on improving education, economic opportunities, and law enforcement, alongside stricter firearm regulations to mitigate the high rates of violent crime (Mahmood et al., 2019; Nadeem et al., 2021; Sheikh et al., 2022).

The wrong use of technological advancements is a new challenge in the form of cybercrime. Anjum (2020) underscores the importance of integrating cybercrime education into high school and college curricula to raise awareness among young people. He also recommends the establishment of mandatory cybercrime units within police stations staffed with female officers to create a safe environment for reporting and addressing cybercrimes. Regular training for law enforcement officers and ongoing research is essential to keep pace with cybercrime's evolving nature and ensure that responses remain effective.

Youth crime remains a significant concern in Pakistan, where the population of young people is rapidly growing. The National Assembly of Pakistan (2006) highlights the urgent need for social, political, and economic development initiatives targeted at the country's youth. By guiding and empowering young people, the government can harness their potential to drive national prosperity while addressing the social factors contributing to youth crime involvement. This demographic's rapid growth necessitates urgent attention to their social, political, and economic development. The government has made strides in guiding the country's youth, recognizing their potential to drive national prosperity. However, challenges persist, particularly in addressing the social factors contributing to youth crime involvement.

Crime impacts every society, affecting social and moral values while undermining social and political order. Factors such as poverty, unemployment, and deviant peer influences significantly contribute to youth crime. Effective measures must prioritize education, population control, and societal behavior to address the root causes of crime among Pakistani youth (Auolokh, 1999).

Research Methodology

This study targeted respondents from central jail, Sahiwal, Pakistan. The researcher used purposive sampling and an interview schedule because most respondents were illiterate or less qualified. The researcher collected data from 120 criminals from central jail, Sahiwal, Pakistan. The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The researcher used descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and inferential statistics.

Results and Discussion

The outcomes and analysis of the data are crucial in scientific study. These procedures aid in the data's prediction and generalization. The following lines provide the research's findings and commentary.

Table 1: Characteristics of Demographics (n= 120)

Variables	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age of the respondents		
≤ 25 Years	50	41.7%
26-30 Years	42	35.0 %
31-35 Years	16	13.3%
36-40 Years	8	6.6%
> 40 Years	4	3.4 %
Marital Status of Respondents		
Married	45	37.5%
Single	75	62.5 %
Living Area of Respondents		
Urban	50	41.7%
Rural	70	58.3 %
Family System of Respondents		
Nuclear	86	71.3%
Joint	34	28.7 %
Master Status of the Respondents		
Student	08	6.7%
Employees	07	5.8 %
Laborers	78	65.0%
Businessman	19	15.8%
Farmer	08	6.7%

Table number 1 depicted that there were 50 (41.7%) respondents less than 25 years old, 42 (35.0%) of the respondents between the age of 26 to 30 years old, and there were 8 (6.6%) respondents between the 36- and 40 years. Previous studies also highlighted the strong relationship between age and crime and endorsed the result of this study that a child learns deviant behaviour at an early age (Blonigen, 2010). Another study highlighted that several co-occurring developmental changes account for most, but not all, of the association between age and Criminality in adolescence and early adulthood (Sweeten et al., 2013).

There were 50 (41.7%) of the responses to urban and 75 (8.3%) of the responded belongs to the rural areas. 86 (71.3%) respondents had a joint family system, and 34 (28.7%) had a nuclear family.

There is an association between residence and crime because the environment does matter in the individual's personality construction. Previous research also showed a clear relationship between residence and crime (Chat et al., 2022; Kepple & Freisthler, 2012).

Table 2: Chi-Square test for association between “did someone motivate/encourage you to do this crime?” and “given the most significant reason for committing this crime.”

		Given the most significant reason for committing this crime				Total
		Economic	Social	Psychological	Any other	
Did someone motivate/encourage you to do this crime?	Yes	62	18	9	5	94
	No	8	7	8	3	26
Total		70	25	17	8	120
Chi-Square Value= 12.554				p-Value= 0.006		

The above table 2 shows the chi-square test results for independency between “did someone motivate/encourage you to do this crime?” and “given the most significant reason for committing this crime”. From the results, we conclude that there is some association between " did someone motivate/encourage you to do this crime?" and “given the most significant reason for committing this crime”. Previous studies also endorsed that there is a relationship between a person's association and crime (Cressey, 2012).

Table 3: Chi-Square test for association between “did someone motivate/encourage you to do this crime?” and “qualification”.

		Qualification				Total
		Illiterate	Matric	Intermediate	Graduate	
Did someone motivate/encourage you to do this crime?	Yes	72	12	5	5	94
	No	9	8	6	3	26
Total		81	20	11	8	120
Chi-Square Value= 17.466				p-Value= 0.001		

From the results, we conclude that there is some association between "did someone motivate/encourage you to do this crime?" and “qualification”. The previous studies also verified that the association with deviant peers is one of the causes of deviance and crime. The studies also highlighted that educational exclusion, and religious discrimination also exclude people from the mainstream fabrics of society, and the probability of child deviance may increase (Zulfiqar et al., 2019; Shakir,2020; Zainab et al., 2021; Callenero., 2023).

Conclusion

The study conducted in district Sahiwal offers a profound insight into the multifaceted dynamics of crime, unveiling the critical socio-economic, demographic, and cultural factors that fuel criminal activities in the region. The findings paint a sobering picture of a community where economic hardship, lack of education, and insufficient social support systems intertwine to drive individuals, particularly young adults from labour backgrounds, toward criminal behaviour.

One of the most striking observations is the prevalence of crime among the labour class, with 62.5% of the criminals coming from this demographic and a significant portion being uneducated. This correlation between socioeconomic status and criminality underscores the urgent need for targeted interventions that address the root causes of crime—poverty and lack of educational opportunities. The study also highlights the vulnerability of young adults, primarily those aged 20-30, who are disproportionately represented in crime statistics. Often struggling with economic pressures and limited employment opportunities, this age group finds itself on the frontline of criminal activity. This trend reflects broader societal failings in providing adequate support and opportunities for youth.

The research further reveals a disturbing trend of violent crimes, with 44% of the reported incidents involving severe offences such as murder and dacoity. This surge in violence can be attributed to the easy availability of firearms and the socio-cultural environment that, in some cases, may implicitly condone such behaviour. Additionally, the significant involvement of individuals in gambling and drug addiction points to deeper social issues, such as unemployment and societal disintegration, which need to be addressed as part of any comprehensive crime prevention strategy. The findings' apparent lack of familial influence on criminal behavior is intriguing. Despite 96% of the criminals having no family history of crime, they were still drawn into illegal activities, suggesting that external socio-economic factors play a far more substantial role than familial predispositions. This highlights the potential for community and social interventions to play a more significant role in preventing crime, as individuals appear more influenced by their immediate social and economic environments than by family history. Moreover, the study's revelation that 75% of the criminals were first-time offenders points to significant gaps in the existing legal and social systems' ability to rehabilitate individuals after their first encounter with the criminal justice system. This finding is particularly critical for policymakers, as it underscores the need for more robust and effective rehabilitation programs aimed at preventing recidivism.

In conclusion, the crime dynamics in district Sahiwal, Pakistan, are complex and deeply rooted in socio-economic challenges. The high incidence of crime among the labour class, the prevalence of violent offences, and the significant proportion of first-time offenders all point to the necessity of a multifaceted approach to crime prevention. This approach must encompass long-term socio-economic development strategies beyond immediate law enforcement efforts. Addressing the underlying issues of poverty, unemployment, and lack of education, and strengthening both legal and social frameworks, creating a safer and more stable community in Sahiwal, Pakistan is possible. The study's findings emphasize that only through targeted interventions that address both the symptoms and the root causes of crime can meaningful progress be made in reducing crime rates and improving the quality of life for district Sahiwal, Pakistan residents.

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