

A Study of Demographic Background of High and Low Delinquency Prone Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

Participation of children and youth in antisocial acts or violation of societal norms by youngsters is known as Juvenile delinquency. The present study titled as “Demographic Background of High and Low Delinquency Prone Adolescents” was designed to study and compare high and low delinquents on the basis of gender, parental occupation, parental education, type of their family, and monthly income. Identification of high and low delinquents was done by using Lidhoo’s delinquency proneness scale. The results of the study revealed that more number of boys comprised of high delinquents and girls were in less percentage. In case of low delinquents, girls outnumbered boys. Differences in percentages were found among high and low delinquents in terms of their parental occupation and education. It was found that most of the high delinquents belonged to nuclear families. In comparison to high delinquents, less number of low delinquents belonged to nuclear families. Differences were also found in terms of monthly income of both the groups.

Key Words : Demographic, Delinquency, Juvenile

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence often is defined as covering the period from about 11 years of age to 19, although some psychologists maintain that adolescence extends into the adult years (Sheehy, 1995). Distinguishing between early adolescence (ages 11 to 14 years) and late adolescence (ages 15 to 19 years) is important because they represent different transitional periods. During early adolescence, the individual is making the transition from a child to an adolescent. During late adolescence, the transition is from an adolescent to an adult (Sherrod *et al.*, 1993). Thus, younger and older adolescents must deal with different developmental tasks and problems. One of the problems that adolescents are confronted with is delinquency. Juvenile delinquency, also known as “Juvenile offending”, is participation in illegal behavior by minors (juveniles, *i.e.* individuals younger than the statutory age of majority) or the habitual committing of criminal acts or offences

by a young person, especially one below the age at which ordinary criminal prosecution is possible.

Delinquency is often attributed to the influence of the peer group; parents worry about a child’s “falling in with the wrong crowd”. Peers do exert a strong influence; young people who take drugs, drop out of school, and commit delinquent acts usually do all these in the company of friends. Some adolescents are guilty of isolated or occasional antisocial behavior. Then there is a small group of chronic (repeat) offenders, who habitually commit a variety of antisocial acts, such as stealing, setting fires, destroying property, physical cruelty, frequent fighting. Chronic offenders are responsible for most juvenile crime and are most likely to continue their criminal activity in adulthood (Yoshikawa, 1994). How do “problem behaviors” escalate into chronic delinquency? Research points to early patterns of parent- child interaction that leads to negative peer influence. Parents of chronic delinquents often failed to reinforce good behavior in

early childhood and were harsh or inconsistent, or both, in punishing misbehavior. Through the years these parents have not had any close, positive involvement in their children's lives (Patterson *et al.*, 1989). Antisocial behavior interferes with school work and with the ability to get along with well behaved classmates. Unpopular and low achieving children tend to seek out others like themselves, and the friends influence one another toward further misconduct (Patterson *et al.*, 1992). Antisocial behavior in adolescence is closely related to parent's inability to keep track of what their children do and with whom. Parents of delinquents tend to punish rule breaking with nothing severe than a lecture or a threat (Patterson and Stouthamer-Loeber, 1984).

Some studies suggest a genetic influence, but this is relatively small in comparison with parenting style, family atmosphere, and socioeconomic status. However, the risk is far greater when genetic and environmental influences combine (Yoshikawa, 1994). Children at genetic risk-whose biological parents are antisocial or alcoholic, or both- are more likely to become chronic delinquents if exposed to family conflict at an early age. Those who had complications at birth, such as prematurity, low birth weight, anoxia, or other trauma, are at greater risk if they grow up in poor, unstable families. Research suggests that low income group adolescents are at more risk for delinquency than middle and high income adolescents (Elliot, 1993).

Review of literature:

Wolff *et al.* (2015) identified various risk factors like divorce, parental separation, drug abuse, emotional neglect, poverty, busy parents, family history of imprisonment to be the predictors of delinquency. These risk factors can be mostly seen in urban areas.

Dajun *et al.* (2015) found that depression and anxiety can lead to problem behaviors in children and adolescents. There are various other factors that act as an indicators for the development of children and those factors are low socio-economic status, education of parents, occupation of parents, family income.

Steven *et al.* (2013) reported that urbanization and industrialization can pose a serious threat to delinquency among all countries. Since, family disintegration is on the rise due to the changing economic circumstances, antisocial behavior among youth have emerged.

Tomita (2013) found significant differences between delinquents and non-delinquents in terms of depression,

frustration, anxiety and aggression. Delinquents had more levels of frustration, anxiety, depression and aggression than non-delinquents.

Ojo (2012) reiterated that delinquency is associated with the low income, Low education and disintegrated families. Furthermore, most of the respondents to be studied belonged to dysfunctional families.

David *et al.* (2012) analysed that delinquency is caused by low socio-economic status that indirectly can cause hyperactivity and low achievement in children and adolescents. It was added that delinquency is caused by poverty.

Objectives of the study:

- To study and compare high and low delinquents on the basis of gender.
- To study and compare high and low delinquents on the basis of parental education, parental occupation of high and low delinquents.
- To study and compare type of family, monthly income of high and low delinquents.

METHODOLOGY

An initial sample of 600 adolescents (12-19 years) were selected randomly for data collection. Out of the total sample 20% potential high delinquents and 20% non-delinquents were identified.

Tool used:

Lidhoo's Delinquency Proneness scale developed by M.L. Lidhoo was used for the identification of high and low delinquents. The scale is based on social deviance parameter.

Classification of delinquents and non-delinquents:

Subjects with the mean score 64.5 and above require immediate attention as they are considered to be potential delinquents. While as, the subjects with mean score of 50 and below have been found to be law abiding and socially acceptable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Table 1 depicts the distribution of high and low delinquents on the basis of gender. The analysis reveals that among high delinquents 72.5% were boys and 27.5% high delinquents were girls. While as, in case of low delinquents, 38.3% were boys and 61.7% were girls.

Table 1 : Gender wise distribution of high and low delinquents.

Gender	High delinquents		Low delinquents	
	N	%age	N	%age
Boys	87	72.5%	46	38.3%
Girls	33	27.5%	74	61.7%
Total	120	100.0%	120	100.0%

The perusal of the Table 2 shows the level of parental education of high and low delinquents. The table reveals that 15% Fathers of high delinquents were illiterate and 5.8% fathers of low delinquents were illiterate, 16.7% fathers of high delinquents were under-matriculate whereas 15% fathers of low delinquents were under-matriculate. The above table further reveal that 25.8% fathers of high delinquents were matriculate and 19.1% fathers of low delinquents were matriculate, 15.8% fathers of high delinquents were 12th pass whereas 15.9% fathers of low delinquents were 12th pass, 11.7% Fathers of high delinquents were graduates and 25% fathers of low delinquents were graduates, 10% fathers of high delinquents were post graduates and 10.9% fathers of low delinquents were P.G's, 5% fathers of high delinquents had professional degree and 8.3% fathers of low delinquents had professional degree.

Table 2 : Comparison between high and low delinquents on the basis of Fathers Education

Level of education	High delinquents		Low delinquents	
	N	%age	N	%age
Illiterate	18	15.0%	7	5.8%
Under-matric	20	16.7%	18	15.0%
Matriculate	31	25.8%	23	19.1%
12 th pass	19	15.8%	19	15.9%
Graduate	14	11.7%	30	25.0%
Post Graduate	12	10.0%	13	10.9%
Professional	6	5.0%	10	8.3%
Total	120	100.0%	120	100.0%

The Table 3 reveals the level of Mothers of high and low delinquents. In case of high and low delinquents the level of education ranges from that of illiterates to professional degree holders. The table further shows that 34.1% mothers of high delinquents were illiterate and 15.8% mothers of low delinquents were illiterate, 28.3% parents (mothers) of high delinquents were under-matriculate and 17.5% mothers of low delinquents were under-matriculate. The above table further depicts that 13.3% mothers of high delinquents were matriculate whereas 20% mothers of low delinquents were

matriculate, 10.9% mothers of high delinquents were 12th pass whereas 22.5% mothers of low delinquents were 12th pass, 6.8% mothers of high delinquents were graduates and 12.5% mothers of low delinquents were graduates, 4.1% mothers of high delinquents were post graduates and 6.7% parents (mothers) of low delinquents were P.G's, 2.5% mothers of high delinquents had a professional degree and 5% mothers of low delinquents had a professional degree.

Table 3 : Comparison between High and Low delinquents on the basis of Mothers Education

Level of Education	High delinquents		Low delinquents	
	N	%age	N	%age
Illiterate	41	34.1%	19	15.8%
Under-Matric	34	28.3%	21	17.5%
Matriculate	16	13.3%	24	20.0%
12 th Pass	13	10.9%	27	22.5%
Graduate	8	6.8%	15	12.5%
Post Graduate	6	4.1%	8	6.7%
Professional	3	2.5%	6	5.0%
Total	120	100.0%	120	100.0%

Table 4 shows the level of fathers occupation in high and low delinquents. The table reveals that 29.1% fathers of high delinquents were Govt. employees and in case of low delinquents 45% were Govt.employees, 40.9% fathers of high delinquents had their own business whereas among fathers of low delinquents 24.1% had their own business. It was found that 5.9% fathers of high delinquents were professionals and in case of fathers of low delinquents 10% were professionals, 7.5% fathers of high delinquents were unskilled labour whereas 8.3% fathers of low delinquents were unskilled labour. The table also shows that 9.1% fathers of high delinquents were skilled labour and 7.5% fathers of low delinquents were unskilled labour, 5% fathers in high delinquents and 3.3% fathers of low delinquents were doing private job, 2.5% parents (fathers) of high delinquents were not doing any work and in case of low delinquents only 1.8% fathers were not doing any work.

Table 5 shows the level of mothers occupation of high and low delinquents. The table reveals that 13.3% mothers of high delinquents were Govt.employees whereas 21.7% mothers of low delinquents were Govt.employees, 85.9% mothers of high delinquents were housewives and in case of low delinquents 76.7% mothers were housewives. It was further found that 0.8% mothers of high delinquents ran their own business

and 1.6% mothers of low delinquents had their own business.

Table 6 Shows the comparison of high and low delinquents on the basis of their family type. The table reveals that 73.3% high delinquents were from nuclear families and 60.8% low delinquents were from nuclear families. It was further found that 26.7% high delinquents were from joint families whereas 39.1% low delinquents belonged to joint families.

The Table 7 shows the monthly income of high and low delinquents. The above table depicts that 17.5% high delinquents had monthly income upto 5000 whereas 5.9%

low delinquents also had upto 5000 as their monthly income, 18.3% high delinquents had their monthly income in between 5000- 10000 and in case of 15% low delinquents their monthly income was in between 5000-10000, 16.7% high delinquents belonged to the income group of 10000-15000 whereas 12.5% low delinquents belonged to the same monthly income group i.e 10000-15000. 20.9% high delinquents and 23.3% low delinquents had 15000-20000 as their monthly income. It was found that 26.6% high delinquents had above 20,000 monthly income and 43.3% low delinquents also had above 20,000 monthly income, respectively.

Table 4 : Comparison between High and Low delinquents on the basis of Fathers Occupation

Level of occupation	High delinquents		Low delinquents	
	N	%age	N	%age
Govt. Employee	35	29.1%	54	45.0%
Business	49	40.9%	29	24.1%
Professionals	7	5.9%	12	10.0%
Unskilled Labour	9	7.5%	10	8.3%
Skilled Labour	11	9.1%	9	7.5%
Other (Private Job)	6	5.0%	4	3.3%
Not doing any work	3	2.5%	2	1.8%
Total	120	100.0%	120	100.0%

Table 5 : Comparison between high and low delinquents on the basis of Mothers Occupation.

Level of occupation	High delinquents		Low delinquents	
	N	%age	N	%age
Govt. Employee	16	13.3%	26	21.7%
Housewife	103	85.9%	92	76.7%
Business	1	0.8%	2	1.6%
Total	120	100.0%	120	100.0%

Table 6 : Comparison between High and Low delinquents on the basis of type of Family.

Type of family	High delinquents		Low delinquents	
	N	%age	N	%age
Nuclear	88	73.3%	73	60.9%
Joint	32	26.7%	47	39.1%
Total	120	100.0%	120	100.0%

Table 7 : Comparison between high and low delinquents on the basis of Monthly Income

Monthly income	High delinquents		Low delinquents	
	N	%age	N	%age
Upto 5000	21	17.5%	7	5.9%
5000-10000	22	18.3%	18	15.0%
10000-15000	20	16.7%	15	12.5%
15000-20,000	25	20.9%	28	23.3%
Above 20,000	32	26.6%	52	43.3%
Total	120	100.0%	120	100.0%

Major findings:

- The results of the study revealed that majority *i.e.* 72.5% high delinquents were boys, only 27.5% high delinquents were girls. In case of low delinquents, majority *i.e.* 61.7% were girls and 38.3% were boys.
- It was found that among high delinquents 25.8% fathers were matriculate, and least percentage *i.e.* 5% were professionals.
- In case of low delinquents, 25% fathers were graduates and 8.3% were professionals.
- The results further revealed that 34.1% mothers of high delinquents were illiterate, followed by 28.3% under-matric, 13.3% and 10.9% were matriculate and 12th pass, least percentage *i.e.* 6.8% and 4.1% were graduate and postgraduate, only 2.5% were professionals.
- In case of low delinquents, only 15.8% were illiterate, 17.5% and 20% were under-matric and matriculate, 22.5% and 12.5% were 12th pass and graduate, only 6.7% and 5% were postgraduate and professionals.
- It was further found that majority *i.e.* 40.9% fathers of high delinquents had their business while as only 29.1% were Govt. employee, least percentage *i.e.* 5.9% were professionals, 7.5% and 9.1% were in unskilled and skilled labour, 5% were doing private jobs, 2.5% were not doing any kind of work.
- In case of low delinquents, majority *i.e.* 45% fathers were Govt. employee, followed by 24.1% who had ran their business, professionals were 10% , 8.3% and 7.5% were farmers and carpenters, masons etc. Only 3.3% were doing private job and 1.8% were not doing any work.
- In case of mothers of high delinquents, only 13.3% were Govt-Employee, maximum percentage *i.e.* 85.9% mothers were housewives, only 1 respondent had her own business.
- Majority *i.e.* 76.7% mothers of low delinquents were housewives, 21.7% were Govt-Employee and 1.6% ran their business.
- Maximum *i.e.* 73.3% high delinquents belonged to nuclear family, 26.7% were from joint family.
- More than half *i.e.* 60.9% low delinquents were from nuclear family and 39.1% belonged to joint family.
- Least number of high delinquents *i.e.* 17.5% had monthly income upto 5000, followed by 18.3% and 16.7% who had their monthly income upto 10000 and 15,000, 20.9% high delinquents had their monthly income upto 20,000, while as 26.6% respondents had above 20,000

as their monthly income.

- Meager percentage *i.e.* 5.9% low delinquents had their monthly income upto 5000, 15% and 12.5% had monthly income upto 10,000 and 15,000, 23.3% low delinquents had monthly income upto 20,000, maximum *i.e.* 43.3% low delinquents had above 20,000 as their monthly income.

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