

# Personality Traits and Juvenile Delinquency in Punjab, Pakistan

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**Abstract**— Juvenile delinquency is, now a day, becoming a global problem in developing countries which slows down economic growth of any country. Criminal's behavior is influenced by various personal traits. The current research focused to investigate the relationship between personality traits and juvenile delinquency among delinquents and non-delinquent juveniles, taking Pakistan as a model country. Our study was descriptive in nature. The sample comprised of 240 participants (among them half were delinquents) and the purposive sampling technique was applied. Four subscales of Minnesota Multiphase Personality Inventory were used for measuring the personality traits. Demographic variables of the present study were age, gender, education, family size, and family setup. The data was quantitatively analyzed statistically on SPSS by using t-test. Our results interestingly indicated that overall delinquents scored high on Psychopathic Deviant Scale, Depression, Hypocardiasis, and Schizophrenia as compared to non-delinquents. These results could be applied not only in Pakistani society, but overall internationally to develop or improve the personality traits of young generation.

**Keywords**—Economic growth, Juvenile Delinquency, Pakistan, Personality

## I. INTRODUCTION

JUVENILE delinquency is becoming a global problem [1] [2] in this new era. In developed society, the criminal justice system has the highest and strongest values in providing rule of law and fair play to citizens. In fact economic growth can never be possible in a country, where citizens are in trouble or the feel fear for their life and property [3].

Juvenile is the term used for children under the age of 18 and Delinquency is a term that is defined by the law for criminal behavior which is often the result of extreme problematic behavior. According to Schwartz and Johnson [4] the term delinquency is used for the juvenile (usually under the age of 18) who has committed an act that would be considered illegal for an adult. When an individual commit an illegal act below the age of seven, they are called problem child not the delinquent. Because it is felt that they are not mature enough to differentiate between the legal and illegal and right and wrong [5]

Delinquency is an environmental and social illness. Deviant behaviors are skilled and gained. Child is not born as a delinquent nor are its genes responsible for delinquent behaviors. In this way, delinquents are not a single type of

human beings that are born with any such innate, physical, mental or emotional characteristics. These individuals are normal with normal needs and desires. Like other normal children, they also want love, security and to be recognized as normal children. The refusal of these basic needs leads to adjustment problem and as a result, these children become enmity and protest against the society. Consequently, delinquent behavior is produced that is indignant against social and environmental conditions [5].

The condition of juvenile delinquency in Pakistan has become serious problem for the psychological and moral development of these children and society. Criminal's behavior is influenced by various personal traits. Over the last three decades personality traits are major determinants of criminal and delinquent's behavior in children. A juvenile delinquent is the individual who sustains a pattern of delinquency over a long period of time, and whose life and identity are organized around a pattern of deviant behavior. Criminal behavior is influenced by single personality traits or particular group of personality traits. There is a relationship between personality and delinquency and perpetration of crime [6].

Juvenile deviation related studies generally presented two theoretical perspectives- sociological and psychological. Without being affected by psychology and sociology focus on different aspects of crime (sociology stresses the system, psychology- the person). Both disciplines focus their attention on the theme of "control". Psychology forces the personal and inner control that is made up by super ego or skilled by behavior patterns. Sociology gives attention on society or community institutions that have a direct effect on the processes of external social control. According to Reiss, deviations rely both on the personal and social control [7]. The lack of personal and social control may result in crime involvement.

According to Siegel [8] traits theories emphasizes on the psychological side of crime, including the relationship among personality, intelligence, learning and criminal behavior. Psycho- dynamic perspective focuses on early childhood experience and its effects on personality [8]. Williams [9] argued that psychoanalytical theorists claim, that criminal behavior is the result of mental conflicts and these conflicts may arise in the subconscious or unconscious mind.

According to social learning theorists, crime is the result of learning the values, norms and behavior attached with criminal activity [8]. Differential association is a process of learning, in which law-abiding people and criminals learn their behavior from association with other. Delinquency is skilled behavior that is gained by the interaction of these people in engaged in criminal lifestyle. So offenders are differentiated from non-offenders on the basis of individual's choices [10].

Sutherland [11] theorized that those who are strongly attached with delinquents have more chances to become a delinquent and delinquency and crime are produced when the people are bringing up in criminal environment with deviant values.

A personality trait is an interrelated cluster of mental and/or behavioral characteristics [12]. According to Allport [13] the coherent core of personality is attributable to traits which underlie personality. Trait enable individuals to respond to heterogeneous stimuli in a typical manner, and traits influences their thoughts and actions in diverse but chrematistics ways. Thus for Allport, traits accounts for both the stable enduring features of personality as well as it may fluctuate and grow. Juvenile delinquents showed more depression [14] cognitive distortions and problem behavior than non- delinquents [15]. Key characteristics of depression include difficulty concentrating, loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities, hopelessness, feelings of worthlessness, and, at its extreme, suicidal thoughts and tendencies.

Hunt [16] theorized that Depressive symptoms are closely related to juvenile delinquents. Adolescents in the correction centers are more depressed than those from the community based samples. In particular, they considered how depression may predict antisocial behavior among girls. During childhood, males' and females' rates of depression are similar and relatively low. Early adolescence marks a time when the rates clearly diverge, with a sharp rise in the onset of depression in girls [17].

In relation to depression, self esteem has been conceptualized as both causes [18] and effect [19] of depression. One recent British study suggests that 23% of patients with major mental illness in High Security have comorbid psychopathic [20]. Others e.g. [21] [22] report psychopathic comorbidity rates of 29% and 33% respectively in samples of violent patients with schizophrenia. Considering the type of person that emerges when these attributes work in together concert, it is no wonder that psychopathy has held a long-standing place in descriptions of criminality and personality disorders and is one the most researched conditions in psychopathology [23].

In general, Meloy [24] have demonstrated that males and females with psychopathy display similar behaviors but they have contended that the personality or character structure that motivates these behaviors is not equivalent across genders. Cunliffe and Gacono [25] hypothesized that the histrionic/hysterical character of psychopathic females would serve as an ineffective structure in fending off depression and dysphoria. On the other hand, they noted that the psychopathic

male narcissistic character structure is more successful in preventing a depressive breakdown [24] [26]

Meier, Slutske, Arndt, & Cadoret [27] concluded that there is a relationship between personality specifications and agitation, emotional senselessness, and the delinquent behaviors of male and female juveniles who are in contact with each other.

The study was aimed to find out the relationship between personality traits and juvenile delinquency. Main focus of the inventory was to find out the relationship between personality traits and juvenile delinquency, after that compare the personality traits of delinquents and non-delinquents juveniles.

## II. METHODS

### A. Sample

Participants of this study consisted of 240 juveniles (120 delinquent and 120 non-delinquents) with age range from 16 to 18 years. Data have been collected from Borstal jail Bahawalpur, Borstal jail Faisalabad, Women jail Multan, Central jail Bahawalpur, and high schools of Punjab, Pakistan. The purposive sampling method was used. Only those delinquents were selected who were educated at six grades.

### B. Procedure

One of the most important steps of research was to collect data from delinquents. We personally visited the jail for the administration of inventory. Inform consent of the participants was also obtained. They were briefed about the purpose of the study in detail. They were assured that all information would be kept confidential. The delinquents and non-delinquents approached after formal permission from Deputy Inspector General of the prisons of Punjab region and principles of high schools respectively. Necessary explanation has provided to the responds to make the questionnaire easier and understand. Time limit was given one hour to complete the questionnaire. Other relevant demographic data was also collected.

### C. Measure

After going through the related previous literature, the following subscales of Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory[28] were used in the present study to compare the personality traits of delinquents and non- delinquents. The MMPI is also the most widely used personality inventory in Pakistan, at present it is only test has been translated, adapted standardized and published in Pakistan with the permission and close supervision of the authors. To collect the quantitative data four subscale of MMPI were used Hypochondriasis, Depression, Psychopathic deviate, and Schizophrenia. A brief description of the instrument used in the study for the measurement of variables is as follows.

**Hypochondriasis:** The Hs scale is a measure of amount of abnormal concern about bodily functions. Persons with high Hs scores are preoccupied with fears of having serious disease which persist despite medical reassurance to the contrary. Macleod, Haynes, and Sensky [29] have found that high scores on a measure of Hypochondriasis were more likely than others to attribute the feeling to an illness.

**Depression:** The 60 items of scale depression measure symptomatic depression, which is a general attitude, characterized by poor morale, lack of hope in the future and general dissatisfaction with one's status. When scale D is the only clinical elevated above a T- Score of 70, a suicide risk is indicated, particularly if there are no overt behavioral signs of depression. Suicide risk in such clients is demonstrable clinically. The major content areas deal with a lack of interest in activities expressed as general apathy, physical symptoms including complaints and excessive sensitivity and lack of sociability. A high score further suggests a characteristic person linty background in that person who reacts to stress with depression is characterized by lack of self confidence, tendency to worry, narrowness of interests, and introversion.

**Psychopathic deviate:** The 50 items of Pd scale measure the similarity of the subject to a group of persons whose main difficulty lies in their absence of deep emotional response, their inability to profit from experience, and their disregard of social mores. Although sometimes dangerous to themselves or others, these persons are commonly likeable and intelligent. They may often go on behaving like perfectly normal people for several years between one outbreak and another. Their most frequent digression from the social mores is lying, stealing, alcohol; or drug addiction, and sexual immorality. They may have short periods of true psychopathic excitement or depression following the discovery types of a serious of their social or antisocial deeds. They differ from some criminal types in their inability to commit social acts with little thought of possible gain to themselves or of avoid-ing discovery.

**Schizophrenia:** In Sc scale there are 78 items, which measur- es the similarity of subject's responses to those patients who are characterized by bizarre and usual thoughts or behavior. There is a splitting of the subjective life of the schizophrenic person from reality so that the observer cannot follow rationally the shifts in mood or behavior.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1 shows bivariate correlation among various personality traits on the subscales of MMPI.

TABLE 1  
BIVARIATE CORRELATION AMONG VARIOUS PERSONALITY TRAITS ON THE SUBSCALES OF MMPI

	Hs	D	Pd	Sc
Hs		.289**	.127*	.258**
D			.599**	.525**
Pd				.555
Sc				

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Hypochondriasis (Hs) with Depression (D), Psychopathic Deviate (Pd), and Schizophrenia (Sc), shows correlation values 0.289\*\*, .127\*and, 0.258\*\* and respectively which are significant at α=1 percent. Depression (D) with Pd, and Sc, shows correlation values .599\*\*, and .525\*\* respectively which are significant at α=1 percent. Psychopathic Deviate (Pd) with Sc .555 which is significant.

The comparison between Hs personality traits of delinquents and non-delinquents was found out. The result (Table 2) shows that the mean value of Hs delinquents was 1.43 and the mean value of Hs for non-delinquents was 1.05. Therefore, the hypothesis that Hs personality trait is high in delinquents as compared to non-delinquents is accepted. This finding is contrary to the result conducted by Decuyper, Bolle, and Fruyt [30] regarding perspective on that anger levels can be successfully predicted by general and maladaptive personality dimensions.

TABLE 2  
COMPARISON OF HYPOCHONDRIASIS PERSONALITY TRAIT BETWEEN DELINQUENTS AND NON-DELINQUENTS

Juveniles	n	M	SD	t	p	df
Juvenile delinquents	120	1.43	.498			
Non juvenile delinquents	120	1.05	.386	6.670	.000***	238

\*correlation is significant at 0.05

The result shows in Table given t-value=6.690 with p=0.000< 0.05 which means that there is significant difference in the score of delinquents and non-delinquent juveniles on Hypochondriasis subscale of MMPI. The comparison between Depression personality traits of delinquents and non-delinquents was calculated. The result (Table 3) shows that the mean value of D delinquents was 1.67 and the mean value of D for non-delinquents was 1.10. Therefore, the hypothesis that D personality trait is high in delinquents as compared to non- delinquents ,was accepted. This result is in line with the results of recent research conducted by Nasir, Zainah, Shahrazad, and Latipun [31] regarding perspective on psychosocial factor of juvenile delinquents. This study has suggested that Malay juvenile delinquents were significantly more depressed than the Indonesian juvenile delinquents. These results were also contrary with the findings of Ajiboye, Yussuf, Issa, Adegunloye and Buhari [32] that Depression was the most common current psychiatric diagnosis occurring in 17% of the subjects and was closely followed by hypomania which occurring in 11.3% of the subjects.

TABLE 3  
THE SCORE OF DELINQUENTS AND NON-DELINQUENTS JUVENILES ON DEPRESSION SUBSCALE OF MMPI.

Juveniles	n	M	SD	t	p	df
Juvenile delinquents	120	1.54	.500	6.970	.000*	238
Non juvenile delinquents	120	1.15	.359			

\*correlation is significant at 0.05

The result shows in table given t-value 11.063 with p-value 0.000 < 0.05 which means that there is a significant difference in the score of delinquents and non-delinquents on juvenile Depression subscale of MMPI.

Further the comparison between Psychopathic Deviate personality traits of delinquents and non-delinquents was calculated. The result (Table 4) shows that the mean value of Pd delinquents was 1.87 and the mean value of Pd for non-delinquents was 1.05. The inferences can be drawn that the hypothesis Pd personality trait is high in delinquents as compared to non-delinquents were accepted. These finding is contrary to the result conducted by Fullam and Dolan [33] that patients with high psychopathic scores had a more aggressive, deviant and impulsive personality style and less self-control.

TABLE 4  
TABLE FOR THE SCORE OF JUVENILE DELINQUENTS AND NON JUVENILE DELINQUENTS PSYCHOPATHIC DEVIATE SUBSCALE OF MMPI.

Juveniles	n	M	SD	t	p	df
Juvenile delinquents	120	1.67	.473	11.063	.000***	238
Non juvenile delinquents	120	1.10	.301			

\*correlation is significant at 0.05

The result shows in table given t-value= 19.30 with p=0.000<0.005 which means there is a significant difference in the score of juvenile delinquents and non-juvenile delinquents on Psychopathic Deviate subscale of MMPI.

The comparison between schizophrenia personality traits of delinquents and non-delinquents was also calculated. The result (Table 5) shows that the mean value of Sc delinquents was 1.54 and the mean value of Sc for non-delinquents was 1.15. Hence, the hypothesis that Sc personality trait is high in delinquents as compared to non-delinquents were accepted. This finding is contrary to the results conducted by Vinkers and Duits [34] that mental disorders were more often attributed to crimes committed by native Dutch than are crimes by ethnic minority juvenile defendant.

TABLE 5  
T-TEST FOR THE SCORE OF DELINQUENTS AND NON-DELINQUENTS JUVENILES ON SCHIZOPHRENIA SUBSCALE OF MMPI

Juveniles	n	M	SD	t	p
Juvenile delinquents	120	1.82	.382	19.300	.000***
Non juvenile delinquents	120	1.05	.219		

\*correlation is significant at 0.05

The result shows in table given t-value 6.970 with p-value 0.000 < 0.05 which means that there is a significant difference in the score of delinquents and non-delinquents on juvenile schizophrenia subscale of MMPI.

This shows that Pakistani juvenile delinquents have specific personality's traits. It may be due to their environment, lack of education and socioeconomic status.

#### IV. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

It was difficult to deal with delinquents. Some of them were unable to understand the statements of inventory and gave response very late, so it was time consuming process. Sample size was relatively small. Some delinquent's attitude was causal and they did not understand the aim of the research. We personally approached to jails but some staff of the jail was non-cooperative.

#### V. IMPLICATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The policy implication derived from these results is that increases the education and controls the personality traits of delinquents. Environment has been in a good condition so that the personality be grown up in a positive way. Overall, socio-cultural artifacts and socializing agents of the society should promote healthy personality traits.

#### VI. CONCLUSION

It is conclude that there exist a relationship between personality traits and juvenile delinquency. The personality traits concerned with Hypochondriasis, Depression, schizophrenia, and Psychopathic Deviate, that causes delinquency in juveniles of Pakistan.

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