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Khan M.J. (2018). *Role of Peer Pressure towards Tendency of Juvenile Delinquency among Male and Female Adolescents*. “Pakistan Journal of Criminology”, 10(4): 1–14

## **Intellectual plot line**

The purpose of the research conducted by Dr. Mussarat Jabeen Khan in 2018 was to analyse the impact on peer pressure in the development of adolescents' delinquency. In this way, they created the “Peer Pressure and Tendency of Juvenile Delinquency Scale”, which consists of two factors or variables: peer pressure in academic settings and in social settings. This 15-element self-report questionnaire was administered to a 400 teenager sample from Islamabad and Rawalpindi schools (Pakistan); taking into account gender, age, and demographic variables of education among others. After reviewing the existing literature on the role of peer pressure, psychometric properties were applied to the scale: factor analysis, correlation, Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient, Mean, standard deviation, and t-value. The results indicated a significant correlation between peer pressure in the social and academic areas. Furthermore, males were more likely to engage in delinquency than females; and when it comes to age, early adolescents were more prone than those in the later phase to engage in misconduct and delinquency.

## **Critical reflection**

The main purpose of this research article seems to be to create an appropriate scale to measure the tendency of Pakistani adolescents to indulge in criminal acts. Taking into account the power and impact of peer pressure on this developmental stage. Thus, the introduction adequately establishes the topic. The reader understands why teenagers could be involved in negative situations with different theoretical explanations. In particular, the article discusses the emotional and behavioral lack of self-control through the Theory of Crime. Specifically, adolescents tend to have low self-control, so if their parents (the main social network at that time) do not pay enough attention to them,

later on, if they interact with peers with a tendency to delinquent acts, they may be more likely to be involved, too.

Although the writer highlights the increasing tendency of adolescents engaging in criminal acts, the reasons why it is necessary to address the issue are insufficient. Although Khan (2018) emphasises that the main objective of the study is to approach the subject from various factors “The main objectives of this study are to examine the impact of demographic variables such as age, gender, and education on the tendency to juvenile delinquency due to peer pressure”; the groundwork leaves aside an introduction on why these demographic variables are crucial in the investigation. However, regarding the procedure, the study takes into account what was mentioned above. To be concrete, the sample was made up of an equal number of men and women of different ages and educational levels. In addition, I consider it is not important to mention the different definitions of delinquency in order to introduce us to the article. Regarding the writing style, this conceptual jargon does not add or clarify why they have chosen this subject of research.

In terms of methods and procedure, the study follows a coherent order to create the scale “Peer pressure and the tendency to juvenile delinquency”. It is built with all the requirements, for instance, it bears in mind previous literature with a constructed based approach, and a committee. Additionally, the author points out the importance of creating a different scale due to cultural divergences “the values of Pakistani people are distinct from the values of westerners” (p. 9). I believe that the cultural construct is crucial to avoid cultural biases. However, the study overlooks the possible deliberate attempt by adolescents to deceive and appear socially favorable on the scale. Therefore, as a possible improvement, the scale could take this bias into account.

Along with the procedure, the study includes 6 tables; each one with a different statistical method. For example, by means of the analysis factor, both the 15 items that make up the scale and the two measured variables (peer pressure in academic and social settings) are correlated with each other, indicating a high construct validity of the scale.

In addition, statistically significant results were found for the three main variables: age, educational level, and gender. In this way, the results answer the research question or the main objective of the study. Specifically, as the results and the existing literature indicate, the gender difference is noteworthy; boys are more likely to be involved in vandalism. Khan (2018) based the results on the previous literature on the study by Lotar and Lebedina Manzoni (2011), which explained the following: “Boys are more vulnerable to peer pressure for the behaviors like misconduct; there is also a possibility that in some societies like Pakistan, boys’ misconduct behavior is socially accepted than girls” (p. 10). Furthermore, research confirms that teenagers from the early adolescence phase (which at the same time are at a lower academic level) are more prone to be involved in vandalism than late adolescents. In conclusion, the hypothesis of the study coincides with the results and the previous literature.

One of the most interesting and I believe innovative issues compared to other studies is taking into account cultural differences when creating the scale. As the article states

“The values of Pakistani people are distinct from the values of westerners, so the peer pressure measures have been developed and standardised on samples carrying different cultural setup” (p. 9). As there are cultural differences between western and eastern societies regarding prosocial behavior for instance, they also exist in the field of peer pressure. The peer interactions of children and adolescents’ are shaped by their cultural settings. As a result, I believe it would be interesting to guide the investigation of peer pressure and juvenile delinquency in the direction of cultural differences and diversity (Chen, French, Schneider 2006).

Similarly, aside from the discussion, the research also includes suggestions for improvement and limitations. I believe it is a favorable point since it not only concludes with the results, but also offers a critical reflection on their own work. Specifically, they highlight the need to have a larger sample and more various educational institutions from different cities. Also, consider that the small sample size was somewhat aggravated by the fact that many students were in the examination stage.

In addition to their suggestions, I also feel that it would be helpful to add in the annexes the 15 items of which the scale “Peer Pressure and Tendency of Juvenile Delinquency Scale” is composed for better comprehension.

## Conclusions

In conclusion, both the scale created and the research can be useful in understanding the behavior and reasons that lead young people to engage in delinquent acts. In addition to being able to avoid, prevent, or deal with delinquent acts, as Khan (2018) stated: “These identified problems should be treated to prevent delinquency. The earlier they are identified and treated the better it is.”

In an analysis of the paper, it is not clear that anything new has been discovered that previous studies had not already proven. Although the data have been collected in a proper way and the format, procedure, and results are correct, as the research shows, the issues about peer pressure in adolescents (regarding variables like age, gender, and educational level) have already been addressed in precedent studies. That is the reason why I would not publish this article. However, it is a good start to investigate peer pressure and a promising start to advance knowledge in this field.

## References

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