

Juvenile Crimes, Education, And The Future

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A systematic approach has been adopted in this literature review to study the relationship between juvenile crime and education. In order to conduct the online research, various groups of words were used in combinations such as (a) juvenile, young people, youth, adolescence, children, (b) activities, engagement, involvement, behaviour, substance abuse, violence, risk-taking, antisocial, incarcerations, arrests, offending, delinquency, crime, (c) attainment, attendance, performance, IQ, non-(cognitive) abilities, truancy, early-school leaving, dropout, academic, school(ing), education(al), and (d) program, experiment, intervention, stimulation, out-of-school time, after school, adolescence, early childhood. Different search engines and electronic databases, including Taylor & Francis, Springer, Wiley, Economic Papers, Social Science Research Network, JSTOR, SAGE's, Science Direct, PsychLit, EconLit, ERIC, Google Search, Google Scholar, and Elsevier, were used for empirical research.

Literature Review

A systematic literature review on the topic has been carried out using the Technology of Skill Formation as the theoretical framework (Cunha & Heckman, 2007). The existing literature on juvenile crimes indicates that the relationship between education and crime is independent of the differences between age groups. However, youth crime can be differentiated from adult crime in various ways. On the grounds of these differences, the relationship of education can be studied as it will be different with both types of crime. In order to study and carry out further research on this topic, the following literature survey has been carried out:

According to Loeber et al. (2013), adolescence is the peak age of criminal behaviour in human beings, i.e., between fifteen and nineteen years of age. Young people involved in crimes have to deal with the juvenile justice system. Junger-Tas et al. (2009) and Puzzanchera et al. (2010) both indicated that although young people tend to indulge in a variety of crimes, they do not commit serious and sophisticated crimes in comparison to adult criminals. For instance, the most common crimes juveniles are involved in the United States consist of crimes related to obstruction of justice, disorderly conduct, drug dealing, vandalism, and property (Puzzanchera et al., 2010), whereas computer hacking, vandalism, shoplifting, drugs dealing, carrying a weapon, and group fighting predominate among youngsters in the European countries (Junger-Tas et al., 2009).

Moreover, young people have different motivations to engage in criminal activities in comparison to adults. For instance, Lochner (2011) showed that adults have an economic interest in committing a crime, whereas adolescents commonly lack such motivation. According to Farrington (2001), such motivations include pleasure, entertainment, excitement, and enjoyment. Such criminal activities are

often seen as a risk-taking adventure by juveniles (Cohen, 1995). Boredom, instead of a calculated criminal thought, has also been found to be a cause behind such juvenile crimes (Luallen, 2006). Similarly, Scitovsky (1999) has also confirmed boredom as one of the primary reasons behind violence exhibited by students in school. Likewise, McCord et al. (2001) explained that lack of reflection on emotional situations, mood swings, and peer group pressures also contribute towards offending behaviours in youngsters.

The third distinction between juvenile crimes and adult crimes is the emotion of association. Research has found that adolescents are more likely to work in groups while committing criminal activities in comparison to adults who prefer working alone (Greenwood, 1995). Adults make criminal associations as well. However, according to Reiss (1988), they are not formed on the ground of territorial affiliation as the groups of youngsters are typically formed. Thus, social interaction at school and on the street plays a critical role in the juvenile crime rate of an area because they have a great impact on the personalities of young people. He further elaborated that young people, as opposed to adults, are more likely to co-offend with individuals of the same gender (Reiss, 1988). It has also been found that young males have more tendency to get involved in criminal activities in comparison to young females (Levitt & Lochner, 2001).

Lastly, the timing plays a critical role in differentiating the criminal activities of the young people from that of the adults. According to the past literature in the field, after-school hours are the most common time of police-reported juvenile crimes (Snyder & Sickmund, 1999). A more recent study has specified that the time should be between three and six p.m. (Taylor-Butts, 2010). However, it has also been argued by Gottfredson and Soule (2005) that violent crimes by juveniles are more likely to occur during school timings. This finding is contrasted by Taylor-Butts (2010), who did not only report the expected timing to be after-school hours but also between midnight and three o'clock in the morning when the youngsters can sneak out of their homes. Another research study found that the rates of occurrence of juvenile crimes are likely to decrease on the weekends because they do not get much chance to sneak out (Jacob & Lefgren, 2003). On the other hand, the ratio of violent adult crimes on the weekends increases on the weekends (Briscoe & Donnell, 2003).

From the above literature, the differences between adult crimes and juvenile crimes have been cleared. Now, the relationship between juvenile crimes and education will be studied under several socioeconomic theories. The past literature has distinguished between economic (Freeman, 1999), sociological, psychological, and biological mechanisms (Reid, 2011) as underlying mechanisms of criminal behaviours; these mechanisms have been captured by the Technology of Skill Formation (Cunha & Heckman, 2007) theoretical framework. It connects the personality traits, information processing, and intellectual and emotional development of individuals to criminal conduct using psychoanalytical and psychological theories. The childhood experiences are especially studied in this regard (Bartol, 2002). The role of parents, schools, peers, and even the government is to invest in the development of a child. The significant role of the sociological background cannot be ignored, and this is underlined by sociological theories because criminal behaviour is identified from the social process and social organisation perspectives, such as school climate and school social bonds (Reid, 2011). On

the other hand, according to economic theories, any criminal activity is the outcome of a careful weighing of costs and benefits that results in a rational decision for the person committing the crime (Freeman, 1999). The amount of investment in this regard is connected with the amount of effort made.

In conclusion, the Technology of Skill Formation (Cunha & Heckman, 2007) allows researchers and practitioners to study the relationship between education and juvenile crimes in a dynamic manner. Their relationship can be pinpointed at a single point in time, the development of which is strongly intertwined with the passage of time. It suggests that early-school interventions are successful in reducing juvenile crime rates. For instance, the Chicago Child-Parent Centers program, the Syracuse Family Development program, and the High/Scope Perry Preschool program for disadvantaged minority children lead to a considerable reduction in the rates of juvenile crimes (Belfield and Levin, 2009; Lally et al., 1988; Schweinhart et al., 2005). Rigorous, small intervention programs aimed at groups with a propensity for crime have also been proven to be effective in reducing crime rates among juveniles (Lochner, 2007). Becoming a Man is another intervention program. It improves the social-cognitive skills of grade seventh to tenth-disadvantaged male youths from high-crime Chicago neighbourhoods (Heller et al., 2013).

Importance Of This Work

This work has made two major contributions towards the criminal justice system and the citizens of the United States. Firstly, it documented and analyzed the existing literature on the relationship between education and juvenile crimes in the country. Most of the past literature has been focused on criminal behaviour and the causes behind it while discussing the role of education among adults. However, this paper has focused on the idea that there are major differences between adult crimes and juvenile crimes with respect to the type of crime, motivation, emotion of association, and timing of criminal activities. From studying the differences, it has been concluded that intervening at the age of adolescence and correcting criminal behaviours can have a positive impact that would last throughout adulthood; it would also produce educational and behavioural outcomes.

From the policy perspective, studying the causal relationship between the level of education and the intensity of criminal behaviour is critically important. Relying on causal evidence is crucial while developing effective policies aimed at reducing youth crime and school dropout rates. Therefore, as a second contribution, this research paper has distinguished between correlational and causal studies while analyzing the relationship between education and juvenile crimes. It first discussed the studies that evaluated the interventions at the stages of childhood and adolescence on education and criminal behaviour outcomes. It has been found that educational outcome is improved and criminal behaviour is reduced in young people coming from disadvantaged families due to early-childhood programs. However, mixed effects of early school age and adolescence interventions on the reduction of criminal behaviours in adolescents, whereas positive effects on educational outcomes of the same have been found.

Afterwards, intervention studies were reviewed, and it was found that interventions can have a positive impact on reducing youth crimes by improving education levels. However, these studies have not revealed if these effects are a result of interrelationships or if they work through separate paths. Therefore, intervention studies have been documented for analyzing the effects of education level on the frequency and intensity of juvenile crimes. Studies establishing the relationship between education and early criminal behaviour have also been included.

Various Issues, Problems, Or Policies Associated With This Topic:

From the past literature, it has been found that schools keep juveniles away from criminal activities, particularly the ones related to property. Secondly, the chances of being incarcerated among young people are increased if they do not attend school. Both of these findings have been defended and defined as the incapacitation effect of schools. Thirdly, the probability of juvenile criminal involvement is reduced by the expansion of educational attainment. It has been indicated that higher educational attainment has a positive impact on risk aversion, patience, emotional development, and other skills that are negatively related to criminal behaviour. Lastly, it has been found that the criminal behaviour of juveniles from socially disadvantaged families can be reduced through post-compulsory education.

The Changes That This Work Suggests:

Previous research shows that early-school programs such as the Chicago Child-Parent Centers program, the Syracuse Family Development program, and the High/Scope Perry Preschool program for disadvantaged minority children lead to considerable reduction in the rates of juvenile crimes (Belfield and Levin, 2009; Lally et al., 1988; Schweinhart et al., 2005). Therefore, the blueprints of such programs must be applied to all other states.

Rigorous, small intervention programs aimed at groups with a high probability of crime have also been proven to be effective in reducing crime rates among juveniles (Lochner, 2007). The blueprints must be applied to maximum programs in other states as well.

Becoming a Man is another intervention program. It improves the social-cognitive skills of grade seventh to tenth-disadvantaged male youths from high-crime Chicago neighbourhoods (Heller et al., 2013). This program can also be implemented in other states.

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