

EDUCATION AND YOUTH CRIME: A REVIEW OF THE EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

Mohita Verma*; **Ruby Sharma****

*Assistant Professor,
Department of Education, Teerthanker Mahaveer University,
Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh, INDIA
Email id: mohitav.education@tmu.ac.in

**Assistant Professor,
Department of English, Teerthanker Mahaveer University,
Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh, INDIA

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ABSTRACT

By using Technologies of Skill Formation (Cunha & Heckman, 2007) as a theoretical framework, this article conducts a comprehensive literature evaluation on the connection among education and criminal activity in young people. Adult criminality is not the same as juvenile crime. We look at research that look at the impact of schooling on young people's criminal conduct, as well as studies that assess childhood and adolescent treatments. The first indicates that education and juvenile criminality are linked. The latter demonstrates that education lowers the likelihood of criminal activity in adolescence and young adulthood, while early criminal participation is likely to have a detrimental effect on educational achievement. In general, the underlying mechanisms of these effects are unknown, and they may include a variety of factors such as incapacitation, skill development, and peer effects.

KEYWORDS: *Education, Criminal Behavior, Interventions, Youth, Causal Evidence.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Early school dropout and adolescent criminal conduct are two major issues in any society, since both may result in personal and societal losses. Dropping out of school is linked to poorer economic growth, young unemployment, lower gross income, and greater crime rates (see Psacharopoulos, 2007). Calvó-Armengol & Zenou (2003) found that crime may raise community unemployment and have a detrimental effect on regional economic development (Detotto & Otranto, 2010). Through criminal justice system spending, security expenses, costs to repair damages, victimization costs, and health-care costs, crime produces significant societal costs. Criminals incur expenses connected with criminal charges, may face social stigma or social isolation (Hannon, 2003), and may witness a drop in wages and employment as a result of their arrest or incarceration (see Lochner, 2004).

Criminal conduct in youth has been linked to a variety of bad consequences in adulthood, including adult criminality, poor academic performance, and early school exit. At the same time, dropping out of school may inspire young people to engage in criminal activity. Lower

educational attainment and criminal participation, on the one hand, may create a dynamic connection. On the other hand, a large number of mutually confusing variables may influence both education and criminal conduct, making it impossible to identify a single causal chain.

Understanding how education and juvenile criminality are linked may point to potential solutions for reducing crime and educational disparity in society. The goal of this research is to offer a thorough and clear assessment of the literature on the connection between education and young people's criminal conduct. The words "youth," "young people," "adolescents," and "juveniles" are all interchangeable in this context. The term "education" is used in a wide meaning to refer to educational achievement, school attendance, and academic success, depending on the context. Finally, adolescent crime encompasses all contacts with the criminal justice system as a consequence of criminal conduct, as well as antisocial or hazardous juvenile behavior including drug misuse and premature sexual behavior.

From a theoretical and empirical standpoint, we examine how education and juvenile criminality are related. This connection is studied using the Technology of Skill Formation as a theoretical framework. This theory encompasses all major approaches to criminal behavior[1–8].

This research makes a two-fold contribution. It begins by documenting and analyzing the available data on the connection between education and young people's criminal conduct. The majority of prior research in this area has focused on the impact of schooling on adult criminal conduct. It's worth noting that the nature of juvenile and adult criminality may vary.

Preventing criminality in youth may have a long-term effect on behavioral and educational results in adulthood.

From a policy standpoint, causal data on the connection between schooling and juvenile criminality is particularly essential. It is critical to depend on causal data in order to create successful strategies targeted at decreasing school dropout and juvenile crime rates. As a result, we try to differentiate between causal and correlation studies that examine the connection between education and juvenile criminality in the second contribution. The following is a breakdown of the paper's structure. The nature of juvenile criminality is discussed in Section 2.

Section 3 explains the theoretical underpinnings of criminal conduct in relation to schooling. The search method and selection criteria for empirical research utilized in this review are described in Section 4. Section 5 discusses the impact of childhood interventions, early school age treatments, and adolescent interventions on educational and criminal behavior outcomes. Section 6 delves into actual research on the relationship between education and juvenile criminality. Finally, Section 7 summarizes the study's results and makes recommendations for further research.

2. THE NATURE OF YOUTH CRIME

The age-crime curve indicates that adolescence, between the ages of 15 and 19, is the peak period for criminal activity (Farrington, 1986; Piquero et al. 2007; Bosick, 2009). Juveniles that engage in criminal conduct throughout their teens are typically dealt with via the juvenile justice system (see Goldson and Muncie, 2006; Loeber et al., 2013).

The overwhelming bulk of current research on the link between education and crime ignores age differences and uses a mixed-age study sample. However, as demonstrated below, adolescent criminality differs from adult crime in a number of ways, and therefore its connection to

education may vary as well. To begin with, young people seem to be engaged in a wider range of criminal activity than adults, but also in less severe and sophisticated crime (Junger)[9–12].

Minor property offenses, vandalism, drug selling, disorderly conduct, and obstruction of justice are among the most common arrests among young people in the United States (Puzzanchera et al., 2010). Group fighting, weapon carrying, drug selling, theft, vandalism, and computer hacking are the most common crimes in European nations (Junger-Tas et al., 2009). Second, the motivations of young people and adults for engaging in criminal conduct may vary. Adults have a financial incentive to participate in criminal activity, according to economic theory (see Becker, 1968; Lochner & Moretti, 2004; Lochner, 2011). Although the primary motive for teenagers' criminal activity is to obtain economic and financial advantages, there are many additional motivations for their illegal behavior, including fun, excitement, entertainment, and pleasure (Goldson & Muncie, 2006; Farrington, 2001). According to Luallen (2006), adolescent mischief acts are typically the consequence of boredom rather than deliberate criminal intent (p. 88). Similarly, Scitovsky (1999) thinks that classroom violence is mainly caused by boredom and a lack of school activities. Juvenile offending conduct may be influenced by peer group pressure, mood fluctuations, and a lack of contemplation on emotional circumstances. Finally, a criminal act is often regarded by young people as a high-risk adventure that confers prestige and respect among peers (Cohen, 1955). The third distinguishing feature of juvenile crime is that, as compared to adults, adolescents are more prone to commit crimes in groups or with others (Zimring, 1981; Greenwood, 1995; Reiss, 1988). Unlike adult criminal organizations, juvenile offender groups are generally established through geographical affinity, and they are often random and less stable over time (Reiss, 1988). As a result, it seems that social contacts at school and on the street have a significant effect on young people's conduct. When compared to adults, juveniles are more likely to commit crimes with others of the same gender and age (Reiss, 1988). Young men, like adult criminals, are more likely than young girls to engage in criminal activity (Levitt & Lochner, 2001).

Finally, the onset of juvenile criminality differs depending on the kind of crime (see Gottfredson & Soule, 2005; Taylor-Butts, 2010). After-school crimes against people are most common between three and six o'clock in the afternoon (Snyder & Sickmund, 1999). (Newman, 2000; Taylor-Butts, 2010). The most common violent crimes, according to Gottfredson and Soule (2005), occur during school hours. Adults, on the other hand, are most likely to commit violent crime between the hours of midnight and three a.m. (Taylor-Butts, 2010). Youth violence is also on the decline.

Weekends are when young people contact less with their peers (see Jacob & Lefgren, 2003), yet violent adult offenses are on the rise (see Falk, 1952; Briscoe & Donnell, 2003).

The distinctions between juvenile and adult crime described above indicate that the connection between youth criminality and education may also be different. Furthermore, young people's criminal participation may affect their educational achievement, while adult criminality has a lower effect on educational attainment.

Theoretical literature on the fundamental causes of criminal conduct differentiates between biological, psychological, social, and economic factors (see Reid, 2011). (Becker, 1968; Freedman, 1999). Cunha and Heckman (2007)'s Technology of Skill Formation encompasses these many theoretical processes. The following equation is a modified version of their model:

$$\theta = \theta_0 + \sum_{t=1}^T \theta_t$$

Here where t denotes the abilities learned during a certain time period. The equation demonstrates that t_1 influences the learned skills in period t_1 . The dynamic character of cognitive and socio-emotional development is implied by this framework: various skills and the same skill at different times are highly linked. As a result, abilities connected to schooling and skills related to criminal activity may be linked and affect one another over time. Self-productivity is defined as the ability of one stage of the life cycle to increase the ability of another stage of the life cycle.

Furthermore, skills investments made at various phases of the life cycle may be complimentary, since later investments can build on the success of previous investments (Cunha & Heckman, 2007). During the first phase, the model shows that learned abilities are affected by θ (which reflects inherent child traits), which represents innate child characteristics. Biological theories postulate that criminal conduct is the consequence of biological abnormalities. Genetic propensity to criminality, brain abnormalities (such as brain injury and poor brain function), and neurotransmitter malfunction are all examples of biological aberrations (see Raine, 2002). We added X_t , a factor, since biological aberrations may happen at any point in one's life. This suggests that certain life situations may have an impact on the abilities gained during that time.

Criminal behavior is linked to an individual's emotional and intellectual development, information processing, and personality characteristics, according to psychological and psychoanalytical theories.

The importance of early childhood experiences is highlighted in particular (see, for example, Bartol, 2002). As a result, θ also represents innate psychological traits, whereas X_t represents psychological development elements that occur throughout time. The t I functions show that parents, peers, and schools (s), as well as governments (g), invest in the development of their children. The T investment functions occur in the skills production function because the amount of investments changes across time periods. T_1 captures how investments are based on past performances, such as skills and social conduct.

Cunha and Heckman (2007) suggest that present investments are more promising when earlier investments, t_1 , have been made. Also, if previous investments were successful, the investments are more likely to be undertaken. We use the easy assumption that investments (acquired skills) in period t are only affected by investments (learned skills) one period before, while in fact, all previous investments and acquired skills are likely to be significant.

The importance of sociological background elements (s) is highlighted in sociological theories. The viewpoints of social organization and social process are used to understand criminal conduct (see, Reid, 2011). The former believes that criminal conduct and acquired skills are influenced by social structure factors (e.g. school social bonds, school climate).

The latter (see Reid, 2011) connects criminal conduct to social learning, labeling, and social control.

Criminal actions, according to economic theories, are the result of a rational decision-making process in which costs and benefits are properly weighted (Becker, 1968; Freedman, 1999). As a result, one of the variables that affects the quantity of investment in a given time is effort, e .

Individuals will evaluate the costs (effort) of skill development (and the rewards produced by these abilities) against the costs (and benefits) of illegal conduct, according to economic models. To summarize, the Technology of Skill Formation paradigm allows us to examine the dynamic connection between schooling and young people's criminal conduct.

3. The Effects Of Interventions On Educational And Criminal Behavior Outcomes

Several social interventions have been undertaken in recent decades with the goal of developing skills and preventing problem behavior among at-risk children, mostly from low-income households and ethnic minority groups (see Blau and Currie, 2006; Olds, 2007; Decovic et al., 2012; Durlak et al., 2011). We look at a variety of intervention studies to see whether there is a connection between schooling and young people's criminal conduct. The interventions that have been chosen, as well as the studies that have been conducted to assess them, are included below, as well as in the tables that accompany this section. The tables detail early childhood interventions, early school-age treatments, and adolescent interventions. The columns show when and where an intervention took place, the target group of the intervention, the age of participants, the substance of the intervention, the length of the intervention, the assessment design, and the age of participants at follow-up in order from left to right. The impact of the treatments on educational outcomes (i.e. academic performance, educational attainment) and criminal behavior outcomes are shown in the final columns.

4. CONCLUSION

This research uses the Technology of Skill Formation as a theoretical framework to conduct a comprehensive literature review on the connection between schooling and juvenile criminality. This approach allows us to examine the dynamic relationship between schooling and juvenile criminality. We started with research that looked at the impact of interventions in childhood and adolescence on educational and criminal behavior outcomes. We discovered that early-childhood initiatives that target children from low-income households enhance educational results and decrease juvenile criminal behavior. Early childhood and adolescent interventions have favorable impacts on educational achievements, but their effects on juvenile criminality are equivocal. In general, research indicates that for disadvantaged children, early interventions are more successful than later ones (Cunha et al. 2006).

The mechanisms behind these effects are mostly unknown. Although numerous intervention studies indicate that interventions may improve education and reduce juvenile criminality, many research do not disclose whether these effects are caused by distinct pathways or are the consequence of a complex interplay. As a result, we compile research on the impact of education on juvenile crime as well as research on the link between early criminal conduct and education.

According to research examining the impact of education on juvenile criminal behavior, being in school prevents adolescents from engaging in crime, particularly property crime. Second, not going to school raises the chances of getting arrested.

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