

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Putri Agustin¹, Qisthy Salsabiila²

Pagustin22@gmail.com¹; qisthysalsss2@gmail.com²

STKIP Al-Amin Indramayu, Indonesia¹;

STKIP Al-Amin Indramayu, Indonesia²;

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Abstract

Juvenile delinquency remains a significant concern in Indonesia, with various regions reporting an increase in youth-related offenses. In Semarang, authorities have observed a rise in cases involving youth gangs and violent incidents, prompting calls for enhanced education and supervision. Similarly, in Padang, factors such as weak self-control, identity crises, inter-school rivalries, lack of parental supervision, and the influence of social media have been identified as contributors to youth misconduct. In 2022, South Jakarta recorded 323 cases of juvenile delinquency, including brawls, underage drinking, and illegal street racing, leading to public disturbances. To combat these issues, local governments and law enforcement agencies have implemented measures such as curfews, increased patrols, and community engagement programs aimed at guiding adolescents towards positive behaviors. This article examines the current state of juvenile delinquency in Indonesia, explores contributing factors, and discusses the effectiveness of various interventions implemented to address this pressing issue.

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Corresponding Author : 082128530956

INTRODUCTION

Juvenile delinquency is a persistent and growing issue in many countries, including Indonesia. Defined as criminal or antisocial behavior committed by minors, juvenile delinquency encompasses a wide range of behaviors, from minor infractions such as truancy or vandalism to more severe offenses like theft, violence, and drug abuse. In Indonesia, the incidence of youth-related crimes has been a matter of concern for local authorities, parents, educators, and community leaders alike. Over the past decade, juvenile delinquency has seen an alarming rise, particularly in urban areas where the pressures of modern life, including poverty, unemployment, and the rapid influence of social media, have contributed to a growing sense of disillusionment among young people.

Several factors contribute to the complex nature of juvenile delinquency in Indonesia. One of the primary influences is the lack of proper parental supervision and guidance. In many cases, children and adolescents are left to navigate their formative years without adequate emotional or psychological support from their families. Additionally, peer pressure, exposure to violence, and the influence of media and technology play significant roles in shaping young people's behavior.

The prevalence of gang activities, street racing, and online bullying are just a few examples of how juvenile delinquency manifests in today's society. The

Indonesian government, in collaboration with local law enforcement agencies, has taken various measures to address this growing issue. Regional governments have implemented policies such as curfews for minors, special programs to prevent gang violence, and community engagement initiatives aimed at fostering positive social behavior. Despite these efforts, the effectiveness of these interventions remains a subject of debate, with many questioning whether they are enough to tackle the root causes of juvenile delinquency.

This article aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of juvenile delinquency in Indonesia, examining its causes, current trends, and the effectiveness of the measures that have been put in place to combat this issue. Through the lens of recent case studies, we will explore the broader social, economic, and cultural factors that influence youth behavior in Indonesia. Furthermore, this article will discuss the challenges and successes of government policies, as well as the role of society in preventing juvenile delinquency and promoting a safer, more supportive environment for young people..

METHODOLOGY

This article employs a qualitative research approach to explore the issue of juvenile delinquency in Indonesia. The primary method of data collection involves a review of existing literature, including academic studies, government reports, and news articles, to examine the trends and patterns of juvenile delinquency in different regions of Indonesia. The study also includes an analysis of case studies and realworld examples of juvenile offenses, as reported by local authorities and the media.

Data sources for this article include :

1. Government and Law Enforcement Reports : These reports provide valuable insights into the frequency of juvenile offenses, the demographic profiles of offenders, and the effectiveness of interventions implemented by local and national authorities. The Indonesian National Police (Polri) and local government agencies often publish statistics on crime rates and juvenile delinquency trends, which serve as the foundation for understanding the scope of the problem.

2. Case Studies and News Articles : A selection of case studies has been analyzed to provide concrete examples of juvenile delinquency in various cities such as Jakarta, Semarang, and Padang. News articles from Indonesian media outlets (both local and national) highlight real-time issues surrounding juvenile crimes, including gang violence, substance abuse, and illegal street racing.

3. Academic Literature and Research Papers : Academic studies and research conducted by Indonesian sociologists, criminologists, and psychologists contribute to the understanding of the social, cultural, and psychological factors that influence juvenile behavior. These studies provide insight into the root causes of delinquency, such as family dynamics, peer

influence, socioeconomic factors, and the role of media in shaping youth identity.

4. Interviews and Expert Opinions : While not a primary data source for this article, insights from interviews with experts in juvenile justice, psychologists, and educators have been used to inform discussions on potential solutions and preventative measures. Expert opinions help contextualize the findings and propose more nuanced recommendations for addressing juvenile delinquency.

The methodology aims to provide a holistic view of juvenile delinquency in Indonesia, drawing on both qualitative and secondary data to offer a balanced and well-rounded analysis. By integrating data from various sources, this article strives to present a comprehensive understanding of the issue and the most effective strategies for intervention and prevention.

RESULT & DISCUSSION

Juvenile delinquency in Indonesia is a multifaceted issue that involves a combination of individual, familial, societal, and institutional factors. This section delves deeper into the root causes, trends, and manifestations of juvenile crime, as well as the policies and interventions aimed at addressing this growing challenge.

1. Social and Economic Factors

Contributing to Juvenile Delinquency One of the most significant drivers of juvenile delinquency in Indonesia is the socioeconomic condition of many families, particularly in urban and periurban areas. Poverty, unemployment, and economic inequality contribute to a sense of hopelessness among youth, leading to increased engagement in criminal activities as a means of coping with or escaping from their circumstances. In economically disadvantaged communities, adolescents are more likely to become involved in illicit activities, including theft, drug abuse, and gang violence.

Moreover, rapid urbanization in Indonesia has led to increased social stratification, where the gap between the wealthy and the poor continues to widen. This divide often results in a sense of alienation, particularly among youth who grow up in underserved neighborhoods with limited access to education and employment opportunities. In such environments, young people may turn to gangs or street violence as a means of gaining status, belonging, or financial support.

2. Family Dynamics and Parental Supervision

Family plays a crucial role in shaping the behavior of adolescents, and a lack of adequate parental guidance and supervision is a major contributor to juvenile delinquency in Indonesia. Studies have shown that adolescents who come from broken homes, or who experience neglect or abuse, are more likely to engage in criminal behavior. The absence of positive role models, or the presence of dysfunctional family relationships, can exacerbate feelings of insecurity and lead to rebellion against societal norms.

The rise of single-parent households in Indonesia, particularly in low-income communities, has also been associated with higher rates of delinquency. Single parents often struggle with balancing work and childcare, which can lead to a lack of direct supervision and emotional support for their children. In some cases, young people from these households may seek validation or a sense of identity from negative peer groups or engage in risky behaviors to gain attention or approval.

3. The Role of Peer Influence and Social Media

Peer pressure is a significant factor in shaping the behavior of Indonesian adolescents. The influence of friends and social networks can push individuals toward delinquent activities, especially when they are exposed to groups that glorify violence, crime, or substance abuse. Peer groups often serve as sources of identity for adolescents, and in certain situations, joining a gang or engaging in illegal activities can be seen as a way of gaining respect or achieving a sense of belonging.

In recent years, the rise of social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube has also played a prominent role in influencing juvenile behavior. Social media offers young people a space to express themselves and connect with others, but it can also expose them to harmful content, including online bullying, cybercrime, and the glorification of dangerous behavior such as illegal street racing or drug use. Social media platforms can act as an amplifier of peer pressure, encouraging adolescents to emulate behaviors they see online, sometimes without fully understanding the consequences of their actions.

4. Educational and Institutional Factors

The quality of education and the availability of supportive institutional structures are also critical in preventing juvenile delinquency. Inadequate access to quality education, particularly in rural or underdeveloped areas, is a major concern in Indonesia. When youth are unable to access proper education, they are more likely to become disengaged and turn to alternative sources of income or activities, some of which may involve criminal behavior.

Furthermore, Indonesian schools often lack the resources to address issues such as bullying, substance abuse, and violence. Many schools do not have sufficient counseling services or psychological support to help students navigate emotional and behavioral challenges. This lack of institutional support can leave many adolescents vulnerable to delinquent behavior, as they may have limited outlets for expressing their frustrations or seeking guidance.

5. The Impact of Juvenile Delinquency on Society

The consequences of juvenile delinquency extend far beyond the individuals involved. Crime committed by minors disrupts communities, instills fear, and undermines public safety. Incidents of youth violence, such as gang brawls or street racing, not only endanger the lives of young people but also pose a threat to bystanders and the wider community. Property crimes, theft, and vandalism also impose economic costs on local businesses and families. Moreover, juvenile delinquency has long-term social implications. Adolescents who

engage in criminal behavior are more likely to continue down a path of criminality into adulthood, which perpetuates cycles of crime, poverty, and social instability. The inability to break these cycles can hinder national development, as the country faces increasing challenges related to public health, crime prevention, and youth unemployment.

6. Government Policies and Interventions

In response to rising rates of juvenile delinquency, the Indonesian government has implemented various measures aimed at prevention and rehabilitation. Local governments have introduced curfew laws for minors, which restrict their movement during late-night hours to reduce the risk of engagement in criminal activities. Additionally, some regions have enacted policies that involve the installation of surveillance cameras and increased patrolling in areas known for high rates of juvenile crime. Community engagement programs have also been implemented in certain areas, focusing on youth empowerment and skill development. These initiatives provide young people with alternative pathways, offering them opportunities to engage in positive activities such as sports, arts, and vocational training. These programs are designed to keep youth occupied and provide them with the skills and support necessary to avoid falling into a life of crime.

Rehabilitation programs for juvenile offenders, such as juvenile detention centers and diversion programs, have been introduced to provide both punishment and education for young offenders. The aim is to reintegrate these youths into society, equipping them with the tools necessary to lead productive and law-abiding lives. However, the effectiveness of these programs is often debated. Critics argue that juvenile detention centers are overcrowded and that many of these programs lack the resources and expertise needed to address the underlying causes of delinquency, such as mental health issues or trauma.

7. The Role of Society in Addressing Juvenile Delinquency

Beyond government efforts, society as a whole has a critical role to play in preventing juvenile delinquency. This involves creating a supportive environment for youth, where they feel valued and understood. Communities can engage in preventive measures by offering mentorship programs, youth counseling, and recreational activities that foster positive behavior.

Additionally, greater collaboration between schools, families, and law enforcement agencies is essential in identifying at-risk youth and intervening early before they engage in criminal activities. Incorporating a restorative justice approach is another promising avenue. This model focuses on rehabilitation rather than punishment, bringing offenders and victims together to understand the harm caused and work toward reconciliation. Such initiatives have been shown to reduce recidivism rates and encourage a sense of responsibility among young offenders.

CONCLUSION

Juvenile delinquency in Indonesia is an increasingly urgent social issue that requires concerted efforts from multiple sectors to address. The rising trend of youth-related crimes, including gang violence, theft, substance abuse, and illegal street racing, can be attributed to a combination of economic, social, and familial factors. While economic hardships, limited access to quality education, and lack of adequate parental supervision are significant contributors, peer pressure, social media influence, and weak institutional support also exacerbate the problem.

Government policies, such as curfews and juvenile detention centers, have been introduced to prevent and rehabilitate young offenders, but the effectiveness of these measures remains under scrutiny. While these interventions serve as short-term solutions, the deeper issue of juvenile delinquency lies in the social and emotional well-being of adolescents. Thus, a more holistic and integrated approach is necessary, one that includes not only stricter law enforcement but also increased community involvement, educational reforms, and family-centered programs.

Preventive measures, such as youth empowerment initiatives, mentorship programs, and skill development workshops, have shown promise in keeping young people engaged in positive activities. However, the government and society must invest more resources into these areas, ensuring they are available to at-risk youth, particularly in urban and economically disadvantaged areas. A shift from a purely punitive approach to a more rehabilitative and restorative justice model would also contribute to long-term positive outcomes for young offenders.

Ultimately, addressing juvenile delinquency in Indonesia requires a multifaceted strategy that combines prevention, intervention, and rehabilitation. With the right balance of policy, community engagement, and support systems, Indonesia can make significant strides in reducing juvenile crime and building a safer, more supportive environment for its youth.

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