

Article

## The Effect of the Social Environment on Juvenile Delinquency among Juveniles at Mafraq Center in Abu Dhabi, UAE: A Field Study

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### CITATION

Alqwatahiay. A. (2024). The Effect of the Social Environment on Juvenile Delinquency among Juveniles at Mafraq Center in Abu Dhabi, UAE: A Field Study, *Intercontinental Social Science Journal*. 1(2), 80-96 <https://doi.org/10.62583/f4wp9x23>

Received 02 Jan 2024

Accepted: 05 Feb 2024

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**Abstract:** Juvenile delinquency is a major social problem, which influences the stability of both families and communities, especially in the rapidly developing society. This paper will discuss how the social environment causes juvenile delinquency among juveniles who are staying at Mafraq Centre in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates. The study is based on four major aspects of the social environment that include family disintegration, socialisation processes, peer influence and media exposure. The descriptive survey design has been used, and the data were collected using a structured questionnaire that was given to a sample size of 140 juvenile participants. The findings indicate that the most significant aspects in relation to juvenile delinquency include family disintegration, ineffective socialisation processes, peer influence, and media exposure. The findings also indicate that family conflict, parental neglect, and ineffective supervision are the main factors that lead to the emergence of delinquent behaviour, whereas affiliation with deviant peers and exposure to harmful media materials support such behaviour. The research concludes that social and environmental factors are key factors influencing juvenile delinquency and not merely an individual behavioural problem. It also points to the necessity of holistic intervention programs that would stabilize the family, enhance the socialisation process, facilitate positive relationships with peers, and control media exposure. The implications of the findings are that they are useful to policy makers, social workers and juvenile care institutions in formulating preventive and rehabilitative programmes.

**Keywords:** *Juvenile delinquency, social environment, family disintegration, socialisation processes, peer influence, media exposure*

## **Introduction**

Juvenile delinquency is one of the most severe social problems that modern societies are faced with due to the direct impact the issue has on the youths, families and community stability (Abhishek & Balamurugan, 2024). Delinquent behaviour is not a phenomenon that comes out of thin air but it is a phenomenon that is cultivated in a wider social context that influences the attitudes, values and behavioural trends of the juvenile (Jephcott, 2023). The family, peer group, school and the media are all significant in the process of socialisation and when these institutions operate appropriately they assist in the process and when they operate poorly then they assist in deviant behaviour (Khomiachenko, 2022).

As children grow up and enter adolescence, the juveniles go through significant developmental stages where they learn behavioural patterns, emotional reactions and societal values (Spytsk, 2024). Under normal circumstances, socialisation is used to ensure that the child internalizes accepted norms and controls behaviour in line with the social expectations (Grusec & Davidov, 2021). Nevertheless, in case juveniles are subjected to family conflict, neglect, inadequate supervision, contact with deviant peers or exposure to negative media messages, these youths may learn to hold attitudes and practices that are likely to make them engage in delinquent practices (Papakitsou, 2024). It is against this reason that juvenile delinquency can be interpreted as a result of both personal and environmental factors, and not as an individual issue (Trinidad et al., 2020).

A very important element in the interpretation of juvenile delinquency is therefore the social environment (Abhishek, R., & Balamurugan, 2021). Strong parental neglect, poor peer association, exposure to violent or deviant media products, family disintegration, etc. may all lead to the formation of juveniles' behaviour in a negative manner (Andrejić, 2024). The role of these influences is further enhanced in the institutional context where juveniles are already engaged in delinquent behaviour since in this context there is a first-hand opportunity of studying how the juveniles themselves perceive the environmental factors.

The problem of juvenile delinquency is to be paid close and renewed attention in the context of the United Arab Emirates, Federal Law Concerning Juvenile Delinquent and Juvenile at Risk of Delinquency (2022); Gulf news, (October 04, 2004), and the city of Abu Dhabi in particular. Even though the UAE has good institutional and legal frameworks to protect youths, the social transformation, media growth, and family and peer interactions may result in the need to re-analyse the environmental contexts that relate to juvenile delinquency. The example of Mafraq Center in Abu Dhabi

is particularly significant as it allows studying the field setting where the juveniles that have already established contact with the delinquent behaviour and the institutional care are studied.

This paper will in this regard discuss the influence of social environment on juvenile delinquency among juveniles in Mafraq Center in Abu Dhabi, UAE. Four key dimensions of the social environment are considered in the study, they include family disintegration, socialisation, peer influence, and media. The exploration of these dimensions aims at gaining a better insight into the social aspects that are linked to juvenile delinquency and also to present evidence that can possibly lead to prevention and interventions.

### **Literature review**

The existing research revealed that delinquency among juveniles is directly associated with social and environmental situations and not personal factors. Several researchers have underscored the fact that family issues, poor supervision, adverse peer pressure, and destructive social experiences are some of the factors that create delinquency among the juveniles. There is also available literature which speculates that delinquency is formed due to social learning, interaction and having repetitive exposure to deviant models of behaviour.

Thaqil (2020) analysed parental, neighbourhood level, and exposure to films as social factors on the influence on juvenile delinquency. Conducting a study based on a descriptive design and a questionnaire that was conducted on 100 respondents, the research concluded that harsh or too soft paternal treatment was one of the key determinants of juvenile delinquency. This observation brings out the outstanding importance of family relations in development of deviant behaviour among youth. In a long-term study carried out in London, Burt (2020) has discovered that environmental factors both inside and outside the home were some of the most significant factors contributing to the juvenile delinquency. The paper also highlighted the peer influence, mood instability and absence of good upbringing. In his research on 250 juveniles, Al-Harthy (2019) also found that one of the most salient causes of deviance was association with bad peer influence. These results reinforce the thesis that juvenile delinquency is highly influenced by the juvenile social environment.

Abdullah (2019) examined the causes of juvenile delinquency based on how delinquents and workers in care institutions perceive the factors. The research concluded that the abuse of free time was one of the most prevalent contributory factors. Similarly, William (2018) in his Canadian study has made the same conclusion that poor social control and inability to regulate behaviour play a major role in

contributing to juvenile delinquency. These studies indicate that, in case family, institutional and social controls are weak, juveniles tend to run towards deviant behaviour.

In a sample of juvenile delinquents, Blakely (2017) compared the social factors and discovered that the family size and social conditions were more problematic among the juveniles who committed delinquency. Exposure to childhood abuse by delinquent and non-delinquent juveniles also has statistically significant differences, which were observed by Saeed (2016). Hamid (2016) also revealed that violent behaviour among the juvenile delinquents depended on the length of punishment and the enclosed institution setting. Combined these studies support the theme that social and family conditions are the main focus in the explanation of delinquent behaviour.

Differentiation Association Theory is also employed to explain juvenile delinquency in the current research study. Sutherland and Cressey, (1979) state that criminal and deviant behaviour is acquired by interacting with other people and particularly in the close association with persons who have positive definitions of deviance (Akers, 2015). Delinquency in this case is not hereditary but learned in the course of communication, exposure, imitation, and recurrent interaction in the social environment of the individual. This theoretical approach is especially applicable to the current research since it can be used to explain the role of family relations, peer groups and media exposure in the learning and reinforcement of delinquent behaviour in juveniles.

Based on the study problem and in line with its objectives, the present study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the effect of family disintegration on juvenile delinquency among juveniles at Mafraq Centre in Abu Dhabi, UAE?
2. What is the effect of socialisation on juvenile delinquency among juveniles at Mafraq Centre in Abu Dhabi, UAE?
3. What is the effect of peer influence on juvenile delinquency among juveniles at Mafraq Centre in Abu Dhabi, UAE?
4. What is the effect of the media on juvenile delinquency among juveniles at Mafraq Centre in Abu Dhabi, UAE?

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This study employed a descriptive survey design to examine the social environmental influence on the juvenile delinquency among juveniles at Mafraq Center in Abu Dhabi, UAE. The descriptive approach

was considered to be appropriate since the study was intended to establish and analyse what the juveniles perceived regarding the most important social variables with regard to delinquent behaviour. The independent variable and the dependent variable in the present-day research are the social environment and juvenile delinquency respectively.

**Study Population and Sample**

The specific target population was the juveniles residing in the Mafraq Center in Abu Dhabi in the UAE. The final sample of the paper was 140 juvenile participants and the sample was used for statistical analysis. The sample used in the study was the juveniles at Mafraq Center because they represent a sample that is directly applicable when assessing how family, peers, socialisation, and media contribute to the development of delinquent behaviour.

**Table 1**  
*Demographic Characteristics of the Study Sample*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	98	70.0%
	Female	42	30.0%
	Total	140	100%
<b>Age Group</b>	Under 15 years	28	20.0%
	15–17 years	84	60.0%
	18 years and above	28	20.0%
	Total	140	100%
<b>Educational Level</b>	Primary	49	35.0%
	Secondary	77	55.0%
	Other	14	10.0%
	Total	140	100%
<b>Family Structure</b>	Living with both parents	56	40.0%
	Single parent	63	45.0%
	Other (relatives/institution)	21	15.0%
	Total	140	100%

The demographic traits of the research sample (N = 140) are provided in Table 1, which shows that there are more male participants (70.0%) than females (30.0%). Regarding the age distribution, most respondents are aged between 15 and 17 years (60.0%), with smaller percentages of the respondents below 15 years (20.0) and above 18 years (20.0).

In terms of the level of education, majority of the participants are in secondary education (55.0%), followed by primary education (35.0%), and a smaller proportion of the participants are under the other educational categories (10.0%).

With regard to the family structure, the highest percentage of juveniles live in single-parent households (45.0%), and the second percentage live in two-parent families (40.0%), with a minor number living in other settings including with relatives and institutional care (15.0%).

In general, the sample is well-balanced in terms of demographics, which is suitable to investigate the impact of the factors of socialisation on delinquent behaviour. The presence of adolescents in the majority and the difference in family settings give a pertinent background to examine how family, peers and social settings contribute to the development of behavioural outcomes.

### **Study Tool**

The research tool was a questionnaire, which was crafted by the researcher. It consisted of two large divisions. Part I was composed of personal and demographic information because it contained gender, age, level of education, number of siblings, number of stepmothers and type of crime. The second section was rooted on four overriding dimensions in relation to the societal setting and its influence on juvenile crime: Family disintegration and its impact on juvenile delinquency, Juvenile delinquency and socialisation, Peer influence on the juvenile delinquency and Media exposure and its effects on the delinquency among the juveniles.

The questions in the questionnaires were developed with a perspective of capturing the perceptions of the juveniles to the extent to which each of these social factors contributed to a delinquent behaviour.

### **Validity and Reliability**

To ascertain the validity of the questionnaire, the instrument was test piloted on a sample of experts at the College of Education at Al Ain University to understand the suitability of the items, whether the use of words were easy to understand as well as whether each item was appropriate to each dimension. They were taken into consideration during amendments of the final version of the questionnaire and their comments and suggestions. Cronbach's Alpha and reliability coefficient was used to test the reliability and reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was determined to be 0.84 and this was considered as good in internal consistency and was enough to prove that the instrument was valid to be used in the study. Look at table 2.

**Table 2**

*Reliability of the Questionnaire*

<b>Instrument</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Level of Reliability</b>
Questionnaire	0.84	Good Internal Consistency

**Data Collection Procedures**

The participants of the questionnaire were one hundred and forty juveniles in the Mafraq Center, Abu Dhabi, in the UAE. When the questionnaires were received, the answers were analysed, coded and were available to be analysed statistically. The final dataset was 140 responses that were applied to analyse the research questions.

**Statistical Analysis**

Data collected were analysed with the SPSS 26. In the study, frequencies and percentages were used to describe the properties of the sample used. In an effort to answer the research questions, means and standard deviations of the questionnaire items and dimensions were computed in order to determine to establish the level in which the respondents believed each factor to affect juvenile delinquency.

**Results**

The study results are provided below as per the research questions. In a bid to provide the answers to the study questions, Means and standard deviations were computed on the responses of the study sample on the four dimensions of the social environment, which are family disintegration, socialisation, peer influence and media. The results are provided in order as per the research questions.

**Results related to the first question:** What is the effect of family disintegration on juvenile delinquency among juveniles at Mafraq Centre in Abu Dhabi, UAE?

The responses of the study sample to the items of family disintegration and its impact on juvenile delinquency offered Means and standard deviations to respond to the first research question.

**Table 3**

*Means and Standard Deviations of the Study Sample’s Responses to the Dimension of Family Disintegration and its Effect on Juvenile Delinquency*

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
There is a negative impact of problems in the family on your psychological state.	4.05	0.44	High
The problems of your family led you to commit a delinquent act.	4.01	0.58	High
Following the example of a family member led you to commit a crime.	3.74	0.86	High
You ran away from home as a result of the unbearable family atmosphere full of problems.	3.70	0.93	High
You ran away from home due to parental abuse.	3.69	1.07	High
Your family’s indifference to your running away from home led you to continue in crime.	3.08	1.87	Low

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
Problems between father and mother led you to neglect school education.	2.91	2.50	Low

As indicated in Table 3, the Mean of the items that concerned family disintegration had a range of between 2.91 and 4.05 which indicated that family-related issues tended to be perceived to have a significant impact on juvenile delinquency. The statement that there is negative influence of problems in the family on the psychological state of the juvenile had the highest Mean of 4.05 with a standard deviation of 0.44. This was then preceded by the fact that the issues of the family caused the juvenile to engage in a delinquent act with a mean of 4.01 and a standard deviation of 0.58. The results suggest family conflict and psychological distress are some of the most significant family-related factors that are related to juvenile delinquency. In comparison, the lowest Mean was obtained on the statement that father-mother problems made the juvenile to neglect school education with Mean of 2.91 and a standard deviation of 2.50. It was then succeeded by the fact that family indifference to fleeing home resulted in continuation of delinquent behaviour, an Mean of 3.08 and standard deviation of 1.87. All in all, these results support the claim that family disintegration is a significant aspect of juvenile delinquency.

**Results related to the second question:** What is the effect of socialisation on juvenile delinquency among juveniles at Mafrag Centre in Abu Dhabi, UAE?

To answer the second research question, Means and standard deviations were calculated for the study sample's responses to the items related to socialisation and its effect on juvenile delinquency. The results are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4**

*Means and Standard Deviations of the Study Sample's Responses to Items Related to Socialisation and its Effect on Juvenile Delinquency*

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
My father and mother do not care about me.	4.42	0.86	High
My father and mother care about me too much.	3.63	1.16	Moderate
Your father and mother monitor your behaviour and perform your religious duties, such as prayer, fasting, etc.	3.59	1.25	Moderate
Your parents' treatment of you is one of the reasons that prompted you to run away from home.	3.52	1.13	Moderate
Your family searches for you when you run away from home.	3.22	2.14	High

Table 4 demonstrates that the Means of the items corresponding to socialisation were between 3.22 and 4.42 with the Mean of 3.68 appearing to be a generally high effect of factors relating to socialisation

on juvenile delinquency. The statement, which had the highest Mean, was that the father and the mother do not care about the juvenile, the Mean was 4.42 and the standard deviation was 0.86. This implies that perceived parental neglect is among the most prominent socialisation-based causes of delinquent behaviour. The rest of the items were in the average to high categories such as excessive parental care, parental monitoring, parental treatment, and family reactions when the juvenile runs away home. These results suggest that socialisation failures, in particular, parental care and treatment have a close relationship with juvenile delinquency.

**Results related to the third question:** What is the effect of peer influence on juvenile delinquency among juveniles at Mafraq Centre in Abu Dhabi, UAE?

Means and the standard deviations were computed to address the third research question by the responses of the study sample to the items pertaining to the peer influence and their impact on juvenile delinquency. The findings are discussed in Table 5.

**Table 5**

*Means and Standard Deviations of the Study Sample Response to Items dealing with peer influence and how it influences Juvenile Delinquency*

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
I spend my time with my friends practising immoral behaviours.	3.88	0.73	High
My friends are the ones who pushed me to cause problems with others.	3.70	0.98	High
I spend my free time with my friends.	3.27	1.51	Moderate
I participate with my friends in charitable works.	3.07	1.43	Moderate
I spend my time with my friends reading and learning.	3.01	1.51	Moderate

Table 5 illustrates that the Means of the peer influence related items were between 3.01 and 3.88 with an Mean being 3.38 which is a moderate overall effect of peer influence on juvenile delinquency. The largest Mean was obtained on the statement that the juvenile spends time with friends practicing immoral behaviours, the Means of the statement are 3.88 with a standard deviation of 0.73. This was followed by friends compelled the juvenile to trouble others, which had a mean of 3.70, standard deviation of 0.98. These findings suggest that having negative peer influence is a major influence that promotes delinquent behaviour. The rest of the items were average, which may indicate that peer relations possess both social negative and non-outstanding aspects. On the whole, the results support the claim that peer influence is a critical factor of juvenile delinquency especially where peers elicit deviant or problematic behaviour.

**Results related to the fourth question:** What is the effect of the media on juvenile delinquency among juveniles at Mafrag Centre in Abu Dhabi, UAE?

In order to respond to the fourth research question, Means and the standard deviations of the responses of the study sample to the items concerning the media and its influence to juvenile delinquency were obtained. Table 6 provides the results.

**Table 6**

*Means and Standard Deviations of the study sample response to the items of the media and how it would affect juvenile delinquency.*

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
I imitate most of the motions I see on television, including beatings and violence.	4.02	0.63	High
Your parents monitor the available media to you, such as the phone and the internet.	3.68	0.88	High
I imitate abnormal movements and behaviours that are displayed on Internet sites.	3.37	1.41	Average
I spend most of my time watching violent films.	3.17	1.53	Average
I imitate all the behaviours I see on television, including beatings and violence.	3.09	1.61	Low

Table 6 demonstrates that Means of the items associated with the media varied between 3.09 and 4.02 and the total Means of the media were 3.60, which revealed a moderate overall impact of the media-related issues on juvenile delinquency. The maximum Mean was obtained with the statement about the juvenile imitating most of the movements observed on television such as beatings and violence, the Mean was 4.02 and the standard deviation was 0.63. This was followed by parents control the media to which the juvenile has access including the phone and the internet with an Mean of 3.68 and standard deviation of 0.88. These findings indicate that media-related factors that are influential in delinquent behaviour are imitation of violent content and media exposure. The other ones were in the average to low category which means that the impact of the media depends on the nature of the media content and the degree of exposure. On the whole, the findings reinforce the perception that media exposure is a factor behind juvenile delinquency, particularly when the juveniles emulate violent or deviant behaviours, which are produced by the media through the television and internet.

Combined, the results of the study show that there is an evident impact of the social environment on the juvenile delinquency of juveniles in Mafrag Centre located in Abu Dhabi, the UAE. Family disintegration and lack of socialisation were found to be the most powerful dimensions, then the role of peer influence and the media. These findings indicate that the problem of juvenile delinquency is

closely interrelated with social and environmental issues but not just an individual issue. Specifically, the family conflict, parental neglect, deviant peer influence, exposure to violent media content seem to be some of the most significant contributing factors.

### **Discussion**

The aim of the current study was to analyse how juvenile delinquency is affected by the social environment in juveniles in Mafraq Centre in Abu Dhabi, UAE, in four major dimensions which include family disintegration, socialisation, peer influence, and media. The findings indicate that the juvenile delinquency is directly linked to social and environmental factors and not an isolated behavioural issue. Generally, the findings indicated family disintegration and socialisation as the most influential factors, then peer influence and the media. This implies that the direct social environment of the juvenile is decisive in the development of delinquent behaviour.

On the issue of family disintegration, the results were found to be that family problems were strongly followed in juvenile delinquency. The most frequently answered questions were those that covered the influence of the bad family issues on the psychological state of the juvenile and how family issues caused the juvenile to engage in a delinquent act. Such results imply that family conflict is not limited in the domestic setting, but it also impacts the emotional and behavioural growth of the juvenile. In case of family instability, abuse, or neglect, or in case of constant conflict, the juvenile is more exposed to frustration, emotional imbalance, and deviant behaviour. In this regard, the results uphold the argument that family is the initial and strongest environment of social control and social learning and that in case the environment turns weak or dysfunctional, delinquent behaviour is more probable. These results are largely in line with the researches by Abdullah, Hamid, and Burt, who highlighted the role of the factors related to the family in explaining the juvenile delinquency.

The results that were associated with socialisation also supported the robust effect of the family and early childhood upbringing on the formation of delinquency tendencies. The greatest response in this dimension concerned the perception that the father and the mother do not care about the juvenile. This finding clearly indicates that parental neglect is one of the main factors that contribute to delinquent behaviour. It further implies that, the lack of enough emotional support, guidance, or supervision of their parents by juveniles can lead to the failure of the socialisation process. Even though some of the items in this dimension were average, the overall score was high and it is an indication that the manner juveniles are nurtured and handled under the scale is a key determinant in their transition to

delinquency. These results are in line with the line of thought that poor parental attention and poor upbringing provide the environment in which the deviant attitudes can be more readily developed.

Concerning peer influence, the results revealed that the moderating effect has a significant but intermediate impact on juvenile delinquency. The highest scores in this dimension were associated with spending time with friends when engaging in immoral behaviour and being provoked by friends in an attempt to cause problems with others. These results suggest that one of the most direct forms, by which juveniles can learn, imitate, and normalise deviant behaviour, is peer influence. Even though certain peer-related materials indicated less harmful and more regular types of peer relationships, the general tendency still validates the fact that bad peer influence is a significant source of delinquent influence. This finding adds to the long-standing opinion in criminological and sociological research that peers are particularly powerful in adolescence and that juveniles can be susceptible to deviant behaviour when they are exposed to delinquent friends repeatedly. The current finding is thus consistent with previous research, especially the ones which found bad peer influence as one of the major causes of juvenile delinquency.

The media aspect, too, had an intermediate impact on the juvenile delinquency. The highest mean score was connected with the imitation of violent movements, which were observed on the television and the second was the supervision of media available by parents. The results suggest exposure to violent media content can affect the juveniles because they will offer behavioural models, which can be followed or internalised. The results have further implications in that media influence varies depending on the nature of media content consumed by juveniles and the exposure of the juveniles to violent or abnormal behaviour on television and internet. By this, the outcomes have supported the opinion that the media can help to bring about delinquency when the juveniles are exposed severally to harmful material without any form of supervision, guidance, or critical awareness.

It can also be assumed that the findings of the present study could be viewed through the prism of Differential Association Theory. This theory describes delinquent behaviour as learned in the process of contact with other people and through the exposure to definitions that are conducive to deviance. In this light, the effects of family break-ups, ineffective socialisation, peer pressures as well as the detrimental media material are explicable. When a juvenile is exposed severally to negative values, poor supervision, violent role models, or delinquent peers, the chances of acquiring and imitating delinquent behaviour are high. The present results are thus in line with the wider theoretical argument

that delinquency is socially acquired and solidified during normal interaction in the immediate environment.

In general, The findings indicate that juvenile delinquency of juveniles in the Mafraq Centre is inexplicable outside of the broader social context under which the juvenile is placed and raised. The most powerful and strongest domain is still the family, especially when conflict, neglect, and weak care are taken into consideration. The processes of socialisation are also significant when they do not give discipline, emotional support and moral guidance. Friends play the role of normalising and promoting deviant behaviour, and the media offers extra behavioural examples, which might support violent or abnormal behaviour. Collectively, The results suggest juvenile delinquency is a complex social issue that needs to be addressed at both the juvenile level as well as the family, peer and media context in which the juvenile lives.

### **Conclusion**

This paper has focused on exploring how the social environment impacted juvenile delinquency in juveniles at Mafraq Centre in Abu Dhabi, UAE. The results revealed that the social and environmental factors play a critical role in the occurrence of juvenile delinquency and not merely an individual behavioural issue. Specifically, the findings showed that family disintegration and lack of socialisation were the most significant dimensions, then came the impact of peer influence and the media.

As it was shown, family conflict, parental neglect, poor emotional support, and poor home conditions are significant contributors to the possibility of developing a delinquent behaviour in juveniles. The results also indicated that ineffective socialisation processes, especially lack of care, supervision and proper guidance, play a bigger role in the emergence of delinquent tendencies. Furthermore, peer influence was also observed to mediate the behaviour of juveniles by promoting deviant behaviour and strengthening criminal social relationships. Another factor that came out as relevant was the media which in this case exposed children to violent or abnormal information which could be emulated.

Generally, the research reaches a conclusion that juvenile delinquency is strongly associated with the social environment within which the juvenile is raised and interacted. The delinquency problem must thus be solved in a holistic social process which integrates the family, peer group, educational and care institutions and the media awareness and not just the juvenile as a case in point.

### **Limitations**

The current paper had several issues and drawbacks that need to be mentioned. To begin with, the research was confined to juveniles in Mafraq Centre, Abu Dhabi, which implies that the results cannot

be extended to the entire body of juveniles in the UAE. Secondly, the research was based on the use of the questionnaire as the primary data collection instrument and self-reported data can be influenced by interpersonal interpretation, reluctance, or social desirability.

The other challenge was the sensitivity of the study population that is, the research entailed juveniles in an institutional care environment. This could have influenced the candidness of some of the responses or the possibility of digging deeper into some of the issues. Moreover, it was on four dimensions of the social environment alone that is family disintegration, socialisation, peer influence and the media, yet other aspects can also lead to juvenile delinquency, including school environment, economic conditions or psychological factors.

Lastly, the research design was descriptive; this type of design is appropriate to determine the patterns and perceptions, but one will not be able to make strong causal inferences. The results are hence the perception of the respondents and the relationship that was observed in the study environment instead of conclusive causation.

### **Recommendations**

A set of recommendations is offered in the light of the findings of the study and they are the following: It is necessary to pay more attention to enhancing family stability and minimizing family conflict since it is identified that family disintegration was one of the most effective correlates of juvenile delinquency.

Guide and awareness programmes should be offered to the parents to enhance their ways of bringing up, supervising, and emotionally supporting their children.

Juveniles in care institutions need to have specialised social and psychological support programmes to enable them cope with family issues, emotional stress as well as behavioural challenges.

The role of peer influence should be considered more where the juveniles should be encouraged to promote positive peer relationships and other positive social activities.

Media awareness programme is recommended to be implemented in order to inform the juveniles and their families about the dangers of watching violent and harmful media content and introducing responsible and controlled media use.

Juvenile institutions need to embrace a combined preventive and rehabilitative approach that incorporates social environment in which the juvenile is located instead of emphasising punishment or behavioural management.

### **Future Research**

The future studies ought to broaden the research study to cover juveniles in other centres and institutions in various emirates within the UAE in order to present a wider picture of the social factors linked with juvenile delinquency. It could also be beneficial to put juveniles under institutional care against non-delinquent juveniles in the broader community.

Secondly, the role of digital and social media, school environment, economic hardship, psychological well-being, and other factors, which the present study did not address, can be done in more detail in the future studies. It is also important to promote qualitative or mixed-method research by researchers to gain a better understanding of the lived experiences of juveniles, family conditions and social connections.

Lastly, longitudinal research would perhaps particularly come in handy when investigating the effects of social and environmental variables on juvenile behaviour and the circumstances that either predispose to delinquency or rehabilitate and reintegrate.

**Conflict of Interest:** The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest related to the publication of this research.

**Funding Statement:** This research received no specific grant from any funding agency, institution, or organisation.

**Data Availability Statement:** The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

**Acknowledgements:** The authors would like to express their sincere appreciation to all the people who participated in this study and contributed their time and insights to support the research.

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