An Overview of Juvenile Delinquency Among High School Students in the City of Ambon

Jinan Munirah¹*, Muhammad Salis Yuniardi¹ and Aransha Karnilla Nadia Putri¹

¹Faculty of Psychology, University of Muhammadiyah Malang, Indonesia
* tugasjinan@gmail.com

Abstract

Adolescence is a period that is vulnerable to negative influences and is very vulnerable and unstable in acting, one of the things that is prone to occur is juvenile delinquency. Juvenile delinquency is a manifestation of social problems in adolescents that arise as a result of certain social neglect. The level of juvenile delinquency is increasing and is becoming a concern for society, including in the city of Ambon. Ambon City is the capital of Maluku Province and has the highest crime rate in Maluku Province. This research aims to provide a general overview and outline further implications that can impact various aspects of social life and education. This research uses a descriptive quantitative approach. The research subjects were 137 students from 8 high schools in the city of Ambon who were recruited through purposive sampling, namely with the criteria of students who, according to the school’s assessment, were naughty. The questionnaire used was prepared based on aspects and factors of juvenile delinquency. The results found that male adolescents have a higher level of involvement in delinquency than girls, and this tends to occur in the age range of 15–16 years. The most common forms of delinquency are playing late at night and cheating on exam, while difficult economic factors (92%) are the main factors influencing juvenile delinquency. It is hoped that future research can develop correlation research by adding variables that can be linked to juvenile delinquency, such as family factors or juvenile delinquency and academic achievement.

Key words: Ambon, descriptive quantitative, juvenile delinquency

Introduction

The adolescent period is a developmental stage involving an individual’s transition from childhood to adulthood, encompassing changes in biology, cognition, and social emotions (Santrock, 2003). Piaget, as cited by Hurlock (1990), expressed that in psychological terms, the adolescent period is a phase where an individual begins to integrate or merge with adults. At this age, individuals no longer feel subordinate to adults but rather perceive themselves as being at least on par or equal with them.

The adolescent phase usually begins with a strong sense of self-esteem, the emergence of excessive courage, and expressions of pleasure. This often leads adolescents to create disruptive disturbances because they are easily influenced by a competitive atmosphere (Diananda, 2018). Issues faced by adolescents are related to immature
attitude control and the influence of increased affiliation with peers who have attitude problems (Racz et al., 2017). The adolescent period is vulnerable to negative influences, with a high level of vulnerability and instability in behavior, making guidance from parents, peers, and the surrounding environment crucial. If an adolescent cannot adapt well to themselves or their environment and lacks positive guidance, deviant behavior may arise, commonly referred to as juvenile delinquency (Sumara et al., 2017).

Juvenile delinquency is behavior that deviates from social norms and laws. In the study of social issues, juvenile delinquency can also be classified as deviant behavior from a criminological perspective. Deviant behavior is seen as a source of problems because it can threaten the stability of the social system (Mulyadi, 2018). Therefore, controlling juvenile delinquency is crucial, as allowing it to persist can lead to damage in their lives, both in the present and in the future. Based on the data, the number of juvenile delinquency cases in Indonesia has experienced a significant increase, as indicated by data from the National Commission for Child Protection (Komnas Anak). According to their records, there were 229 cases of student brawls during the period of January-October 2013. Furthermore, based on the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) data (Baiduri & Yuniar, 2017), the number of cases during the year 2018 reached 4,885, showing an increase from the previous year’s record of 4,579 cases. Cases involving children in a legal context ranked the highest, reaching 1,434 cases, including adolescent involved in drug use, theft, and indecent behavior (Branje et al., 2012). Apart from that, during the 2016-2020 period, the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) recorded that 655 children had to face the law because they were perpetrators of violence. Of this number, 506 children committed physical violence and 149 children committed psychological violence. The number of children involved in this violence was consistently above 100 per year during 2016-2019 (Pahlevi, 2022).

On the other hand, another form of delinquency that occurs among adolescent in Ambon involves physical altercations with their peers (Karouw, 2022). In 2022, both the victim and the suspect were adolescent. The suspect, BET (16), brutally assaulted the victim, RW, with his fists until she lost consciousness. The suspect used both his right and left fists to strike the back of the victim’s head. The victim’s mother, thinking her child had only fainted, immediately rushed her to the hospital because there was no heartbeat. Upon examination by the doctor, it was revealed that the victim had already passed away, and the case was reported to the authorities in Ambon. This phenomenon is also consistent with the initial interviews conducted by the author with the Head of a Senior High School, who stated that their students often engage in brawls outside of school because, upon returning home, students usually use public transportation, leading them to meet at the terminal and engage in fights between schools.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the level of delinquency in the city of Ambon falls into the large or high category, as seen from the number of cases in recent years involving drugs, assault, group attacks, theft, brawls, and so on. This research is important because delving into the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency among high school students in the city of Ambon not only provides a general overview but also outlines further implications that can impact various aspects of social and educational life.

Firstly, this research aims to provide a deeper understanding of various types of juvenile delinquency that may arise in the school environment. By detailing the level and types of delinquency, this study helps to acquire more knowledge about adolescent behavior in the city of Ambon. Furthermore, the research also seeks to identify the underlying factors of these behaviors. This can provide insights for the development of more effective prevention strategies. Thus, the findings from this research can serve as a guide for the government in formulating policies aimed at overcoming the problem of juvenile delinquency in the school environment, as well as helping to create a safer and more supportive environment for the development of children and adolescents.

Furthermore, the analysis of the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency can provide an understanding of how internal and external factors such as physical, cognitive, and social development can interact with the environment to shape adolescent behavior. This research can reveal how juvenile delinquency serves as a form of expression of the internal challenges and conflicts faced by adolescents. Understanding the causes and factors contributing to the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency can provide information on how the social environment, including family, peers, and school, can influence the development of adolescents and contribute to the occurrence of juvenile delinquency.

**Method**

This research uses a descriptive quantitative approach. According to Listiani (2017), a descriptive quantitative approach aims to examine, describe, and explain a phenomenon as it is, and draw conclusions based on observations of that phenomenon using numerical data. The descriptive quantitative approach is also defined as research that focuses on portraying the content of a variable in a study, without a specific goal of testing a particular hypothesis (Marlina, 2020).
Participants

The research subjects are 137 students from Senior High Schools in the city of Ambon, selected from 8 schools out of 35 in the city, including 5 public schools, 2 private schools, and 1 State Islamic Senior High School (Madrasah Aliyah Negeri). 137 students from senior high schools in Ambon city were selected from a total population of 7114 students from 35 schools, including 5 public schools, 2 private schools, and 1 Madrasah Aliyah Negeri. The sampling technique used is non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling type. Non-probability sampling is a sampling technique that does not provide an equal opportunity for each element or member of the population to be selected as a sample (Sugiyono, 2019). According to Sugiyono (2019), purposive sampling involves selecting samples based on specific considerations by desired criteria or based on certain characteristics considered relevant to the research objectives. In this context, the priority characteristic is student behavior that is assessed as naughty by the school.

Research Instruments

The variable focused on in this research is Juvenile Delinquency, referring to attitudes or behaviors perceived as violating social norms and typically carried out by adolescents. Moreover, this questionnaire was also developed based on aspects of juvenile delinquency according to Jensen (1985), which include delinquency that causes physical harm to others, delinquency that causes material harm, social delinquency that does not cause harm to other people, and delinquency that involves resistance to status and factors identified by Santrock (2003), including identity, self-control, age, gender, expectations regarding education and school values, family dynamics, peer influence, socioeconomic class, and the quality of the residential environment. Based on the description above, 35 items of questions have been formulated, consisting of both open-ended and closed-ended questions.

Data Analysis Techniques

The procedure in this research involves four stages: preparation, implementation, data analysis, and the writing of the final report. The first stage is preparation, which begins with determining the topic or issue to be investigated. Subsequently, the author conducts a literature review, formulates the research problem, compiles a literature review, determines variables and operational definitions, selects the sample, and constructs a research questionnaire based on the juvenile delinquency variable.

The next stage is the implementation, where the author seeks assistance from the Education Office in the city of Ambon to determine which schools can be investigated. From the selected schools, research permission letters are distributed, and the schools then identify which students will fill out the questionnaire. Once permission is obtained, the author will conduct the research by distributing the questionnaire in the form of a Google Form to facilitate the data collection process and reach respondents more widely through social media platforms such as WhatsApp.

The last stage is data analysis. After successfully collecting the data, the author analyzed it using Microsoft Excel and SPSS applications. The final stage is writing the final report. Following data processing with Microsoft Excel, the author will compile and write the final report in accordance with applicable guidelines.

Results and Discussion

Results

After conducting research by distributing Google Forms to 8 out of 35 high schools in the city of Ambon, the following results were obtained:

![Gender Pie Chart](image)

**Figure 1. Gender**

Based on the diagram above, it can be seen that the most common genders are men (65.69%) and women (34.31%).
Based on the diagram above, the ages of adolescent engaging in delinquency are 14 years old (5.84%), 15 years old (36.50%), 16 years old (33.38%), 17 years old (19.71%), and 18 years old (4.38%).

On the other hand, the following are the forms of delinquency that usually occur among high school students in the city of Ambon:

Based on the diagram above, it can be seen that the forms of delinquency among high school students that usually occur in the city of Ambon are, firstly, juvenile delinquency which can cause physical victims such as taking items from the house and selling them without their parents’ knowledge, 7% and 5% have used sharp objects such as knives, nails, and pens.
Second in figure 4, juvenile delinquency which can cause material victims is that as many as 18% of students have taken friends’ belongings by force, destroyed public facilities (50%), and 32% have extorted friends’ money.

![Figure 5. Juvenile delinquency that does not cause victim to others](image)

Third in figure 5, juvenile delinquency does not cause victims to other people, namely 1% of students have been involved in prostitution, consumed narcotics, and sold narcotics, and 17% have consumed alcohol for the reason of just wanting to try, accidentally, being curious, being invited by friends, and own will. 9% have had drunken parties and played music at high volume, read and watched pornographic themes (21%) for reasons of mere curiosity, unintentional, often appearing on social media, and following friends. 38% of students were involved in commotion in the surrounding environment, where this happened due to misunderstandings, the intention of helping friends, hitting other people, because they were insulted, or even to defend themselves, and 41% made fun of friends physically because some were just joking with friends, for fun, looking for attention, and also because someone insulted him physically first.

![Figure 6. Juvenile delinquency against status](image)

Fourth in figure 6, juvenile delinquency is against status, namely as many as 33% of students have left school without the knowledge of the school because they feel bored in class, follow their friends, go to a friend’s school, feel sleepy in class, are lazy about studying, and have their interests, 15% smoke. in the school environment, 12% have left the house for days without their parents’ knowledge. As many as 57% of students do not consistently pay attention to lessons while in class and 45% are also inconsistent in doing the assignments given. Students who have cheated on exams (67%) are because they don’t know the answer, are afraid of getting a low score, and work together with friends, difficult questions, not studying, and rushing. Students who had traffic violations (36%) were because they were not wearing helmets, going against the directions, there were no police on guard and were often...
in a hurry. Apart from that, 63% of students have played until late at night for games, watching movies, hanging out with friends, or having so much fun playing that they lost track of time.

![Figure 7. Parental status](image)

Based on the diagram, it can be seen that the majority of parents of high school students in the city of Ambon are still married (73.91%), but some are divorced (15.22%), deceased (9.42%), and orphans (0.72%).

Furthermore, based on the findings from the conducted research, there are several factors causing juvenile delinquency:

![Figure 8. Identify](image)

Based on the diagram above, it can be seen that several factors influence the occurrence of juvenile delinquency in high school students in the city of Ambon, first identity where as many as 67% of students are restricted by their parents, such as not being able to come home late at night, smoking, drinking alcohol, not maintaining social relations, dating, to going out at night and 28% are disturbed by the expectations given by the surrounding environment, such as parents expecting their children to be better than other people, achievements that have not been achieved, and comparisons with neighbors.
Figure 9. Self-control

The second factor is self-control, which can be seen from the diagram above showing that as many as 28% of students are selective in making friends.

Figure 10. Expectations of education and values in schools

The third factor is expectations regarding education and values at school where as many as 7% of students still think that education at school is not important.

Figure 11. Family process
The fourth factor is family processes, where from the diagram above it can be seen that family support is not always available (58%).

![Peer Influence](image1.png)

**Figure 12. Peer Influence**

The fifth factor is the influence of peers where as many as 31% of students have friends who encourage negative things and 9% of students do not have good friends.

![Socioeconomic Class](image2.png)

**Figure 13. Socioeconomic class**

The sixth factor is a socio-economic class where as many as 92% of students have experienced economic difficulties and have also done side jobs to help their parents (45%) such as selling rice, fried food, and ice cream, working in workshops, working part-time, selling at the market, to doing heavy work such as lifting sand, cement, gravel from grade 6 elementary school.

The seventh factor is the quality of the environment around where they live where 16% of students feel uncomfortable with their environment, while 33% want to move from the environment they live in.
Comfortable environment
Switch environment

Figure 14. The quality of the environment around the residence

Discussion

Based on the research data, the most prevalent type of delinquency is "delinquency by males" with a percentage of 65.69%. A study by Santi & Fithria (2017) found similar results, indicating that juvenile delinquency tends to be higher in male adolescents compared to female adolescents. Females are more likely to be sensitive because they are less aggressive, nurturing, gentle, and maternal, while males prefer to be aggressive and assertive to dominate the situations they are in (Sapara et al., 2020). Additionally, girls generally submit to greater control, whereas boys are freer to engage in risky and/or deviant behavior, and these differences explain the greater involvement of boys in delinquency (Giordano & Copp, 2019). Meanwhile, the rate of delinquency by females, at 34.31%, also reflects issues in the behavior of female adolescents. Although this proportion is lower, the data indicates that females can be involved in forms of delinquency to a lesser extent than males.

Based on data regarding juvenile delinquency by age, it is evident that the level of delinquency tends to vary according to their age range. From the research data, it is observed that at the age of 15–16 years, there is a higher level of juvenile delinquency. This is consistent with several studies indicating that adolescents aged 15–16 are more involved in juvenile delinquency (Hardin & Nidia, 2022; Maesaroh et al., 2019; Suwendri & Sukiani, 2020). This can occur because at this age, they are more inclined to seek self-identity and engage in deviant socialization, as the adolescent stage involves becoming egocentric or prioritizing oneself over others (Gee et al., 2022). Meanwhile, at the age of 17, the rate of juvenile delinquency decreases to 19.71%. This decline may be attributed to the fact that at this age, adolescents are approaching adulthood and tend to be more stable in their identity and behavior (Hashmi in Hasanusi, 2019). Furthermore, looking at the types of delinquency, it is evident that the most common type of delinquency committed by high school students in the city of Ambon is fighting, both in the home environment and within the school environment. This aligns with the findings of a study conducted by Basri (2016), which states that external factors outside the adolescent, such as the social environment around them, play a role in shaping the fighting behavior exhibited by adolescents.

Referring to the classification of juvenile delinquency attitudes by Santrock (2007), these forms of delinquency can be grouped into the Index Offenses and Offenses Status categories. Based on research data, delinquencies committed by teenage high school students in the city of Ambon are included in the form of Offenses Status, which are actions committed by adolescent but are not a form of criminal action such as skipping school, cheating, playing late at night, and so on.

Based on aspects of juvenile delinquency by Jensen (1985), types of juvenile delinquency in the city of Ambon can be grouped as follows. First, the behavior of taking and selling goods and using sharp objects is associated with aspects of juvenile delinquency that are physically detrimental. Second, taking friends' belongings, destroying public facilities, and extorting friends' money are related to aspects of delinquency that can cause material victims. Third, engaging in prostitution, consuming alcohol, narcotics, selling narcotics, throwing parties, watching porn, getting involved in noise, and physically teasing are related to aspects of delinquency that do not cause victims to other people. Fourth, skipping school, smoking, leaving the house, not paying attention to teachers, not doing assignments, cheating, traffic violations, and playing late at night can reflect juvenile delinquency that is against status.

Next, the percentage of parents who are divorced (15.22%) and those who have passed away (9.42%). The presence of the percentage of parents who are divorced or deceased in the data indicates variation in the family structure of adolescents in the city of Ambon. The situation of divorce or the loss of one or both parents can have a significant impact on the emotional and social well-being of adolescents (Ramadhani & Krisnani, 2019). This condition can influence their behavior in terms of seeking self-identity, coping with stress, and forming social relationships. It
is important to remember that each adolescent reacts differently to changes in their family. Some may experience difficulties in adjusting, while others may find strength and growth in facing such challenges.

The next factor based on the research data is the difficult economic situation experienced by some adolescents in the city of Ambon, reaching a percentage of 92%. Additionally, there are adolescents involved in part-time jobs to assist their parents, reaching 45%. Economic hardship can be an additional burden for adolescents in their daily lives. Economic pressure on families can significantly impact adolescent behavior (Jiang et al., 2020). When adolescents face economic difficulties, they may be forced to sacrifice various aspects of their lives, including focusing on their education and well-being (Aseri, 2021). This can trigger anxiety, stress, and even lead them to engage in risky behavior as a response to such pressure (Lu & Lin, 2021).

Based on the research data, the factor that most influences juvenile delinquency is economic difficulties with a percentage of 92%. When this factor occurs, adolescents tend to be driven to seek additional sources of income through various part-time jobs, including selling food, working part-time, or engaging in laborious work. These results align with earlier research conducted by Barus (2019) indicating that economic difficulties in the family environment can trigger higher levels of juvenile delinquency. Furthermore, the factor “restricted by parents” reached 67%, encompassing prohibitions on various behaviors such as staying out late, smoking, consuming alcohol, and going out at night. When parents enforce authoritarian restrictions, it can lead to aggressive behavior in adolescents and provoke delinquency (Santrock in Zahara & Nasution, 2019).

Apart from that, because the people of Ambon consist of various races, there are 4 main ethnic groups in Ambon: Buton, Bugis, Makassar, and Ambon. Conflict arises because of the dominance of one tribe, while other tribes feel disadvantaged and want to rebel. Even in the relationship between BBM (Buton, Bugis, and Makassar) and the Ambon tribe, it is difficult to establish good relations and live side by side (Indrawan & Putri, 2022). This can influence social dynamics in Ambon City and possibly create inter-ethnic tensions that can influence adolescent behavior. For example, adolescents who feel marginalized or feel that their cultural identity is not recognized fairly may experience internal tensions that encourage them to express themselves through delinquent behavior. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to cultural and ethnic factors in understanding and overcoming the problem of juvenile delinquency in Ambon City. In Ambon, there are also subgroups or fam-fam (clans), with various races and ethnicities that color the city. This is thought to cause conflicts between people (Indrawan & Putri, 2022).

Conclusion

Based on the results of this research, it appears that juvenile delinquency in the city of Ambon has mixed results. Adolescent boys have a higher level of involvement in delinquency than girls, and the peak of delinquency tends to occur in the age range of 15-16 years. The most common forms of delinquency are playing until late at night and cheating, which is included in juvenile delinquency which is against status and is a form of Status Offenses, while family structures that are intact through marriage constitute the majority among the adolescent studied. Difficult economic factors, strict parental control, and family situations related to divorce or loss of parents are the main factors that influence juvenile delinquency.

Implication

It is hoped that this research can provide social programs that support adolescent development, especially at critical ages such as 15-16 years. The need for special assistance and guidance in the adolescent age range who tend to be vulnerable to delinquency. Understanding the phases of adolescent development will help in developing more effective approach strategies to prevent negative behavior during the critical periods of adolescence. It is hoped that future research can develop correlation research by adding variables that can be linked to juvenile delinquency, such as family factors or juvenile delinquency and academic achievement. The implications of this research can also provide suggestions for government and school principal policies. The results of this research can be a basis for the government to design policies that are more targeted at improving adolescents’ welfare and development. Apart from that, school principals and teachers can also use the results of this research as a basis for developing more appropriate school programs, which do not only focus on academic aspects but also pay attention to students’ social and emotional aspects.

References


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