



Causes and Correlates of Delinquency in Adolescent Girls

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ABSTRACT

Adolescence is considered to be highly crucial stage in human life which may engender deviancy in behavioral patterns. Neighborhood disorder, ineffective parenting, poor school achievement and youths' involvement with deviant peers are considered to be major risk factors associated with deviant behavior during adolescence. Both girls and boys experience similar risk factors during adolescent phase. The influence of certain risk factors like abuse in the family, prior victimization, lack of parental trust and interaction, deviant peers etc. have a significant role in developing deviance in girls. Bad neighborhood and improper schooling to some extent leads to development of behavioral problems in girls. The primary purpose of this paper is to find out the major risk factor/s that leads an adolescent girl into deviancy. The study further focuses on explaining correlation between various social as well as psychological risk factors causing behavioral problems in adolescent girls. 16 female juvenile delinquents present in Government run Observation and Special Homes for Women in the State of Odisha, India are taken up for the study. Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, percentage) and case study methods are used to show the relevance and correlation between various risk variables on juvenile offenders. The study has found the following results: first, 85% of the juvenile delinquents belong to poor rural neighborhood whereas 15% of the juvenile delinquents belong to urban poor neighborhood (slum/ platforms/ roadside). Second, 90% of the juvenile delinquents have not received proper guidance and supervision from their parents. Third, 60% of the juvenile delinquents have committed crime under peer influence. Four, 75 % juvenile delinquents have been victims of some kind of abuse and have committed crime for self protection. Finally, in majority of the cases abuse faced by the girls in the hands of family and others seems to be a major cause of violent crimes by girls. Influence of peers and lack of parental interest and trust on the girl child also act as contributors of female juvenile offending. It is therefore, important to identify protective factors for improving community, family, and peer group functioning as well as to create awareness regarding abuse and harassment faced by girls to reduce juvenile female crime rate, which is on rise.

Keywords: Adolescent, Abuse, Crime, Female juvenile delinquents, Deviant behavior, Victimization,



1. INTRODUCTION

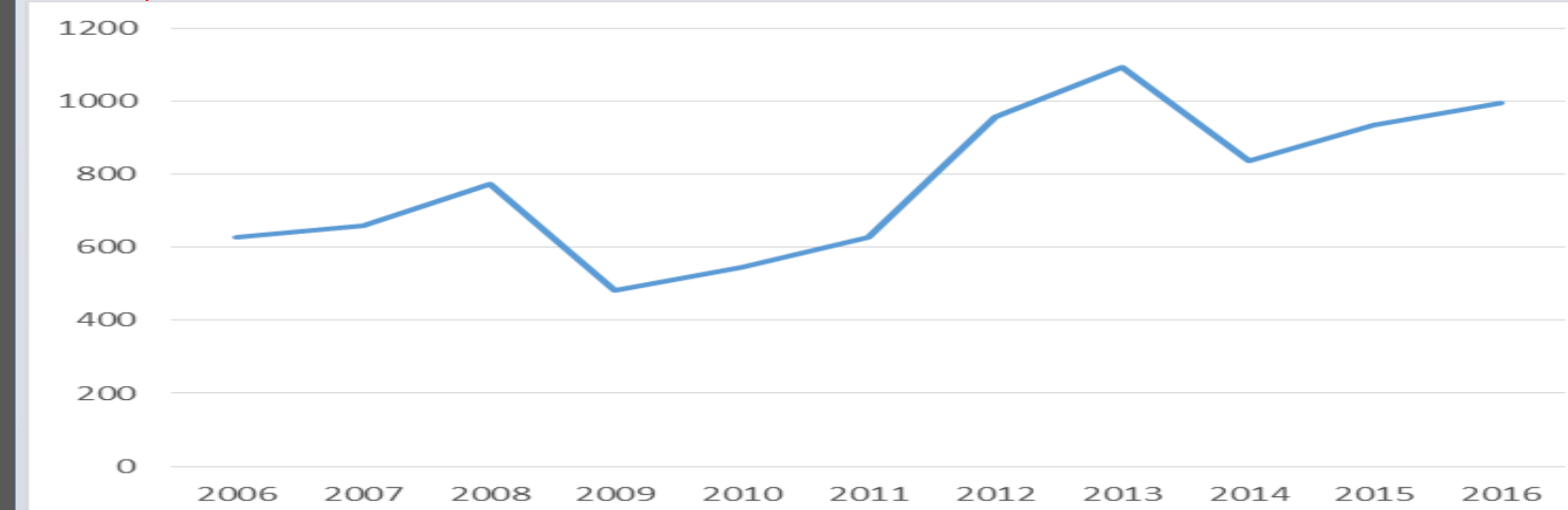
Juvenile delinquency and violence by youth has been growing at an endemic rate. An extensive amount of empirical studies have been carried out throughout the world to explain and understand the role of various risk factors in the development of criminal behaviour in the children since long. Most of these studies have focused on explaining delinquency in boys and few on girls. But in past few decades, a great deal of focus and attention is paid to girl delinquents and young female offenders by the researchers, policymakers and professionals (Javdani et.al, 2011), as their involvement in the criminal justice system has increased considerably (OJJPD, 2019). It is, therefore, essential to comprehend the unique problems faced by female juvenile delinquents which may have to lead them in the path of crime. Very few studies have been carried out by the scholarly committee, juvenile justice and rehabilitation officials of India to explain the role of risk factors behind the involvement of adolescent's girls in the criminal justice system.

FIG 1: TRENDS OF GIRL DELINQUENCY IN INDIA (2006-2016)



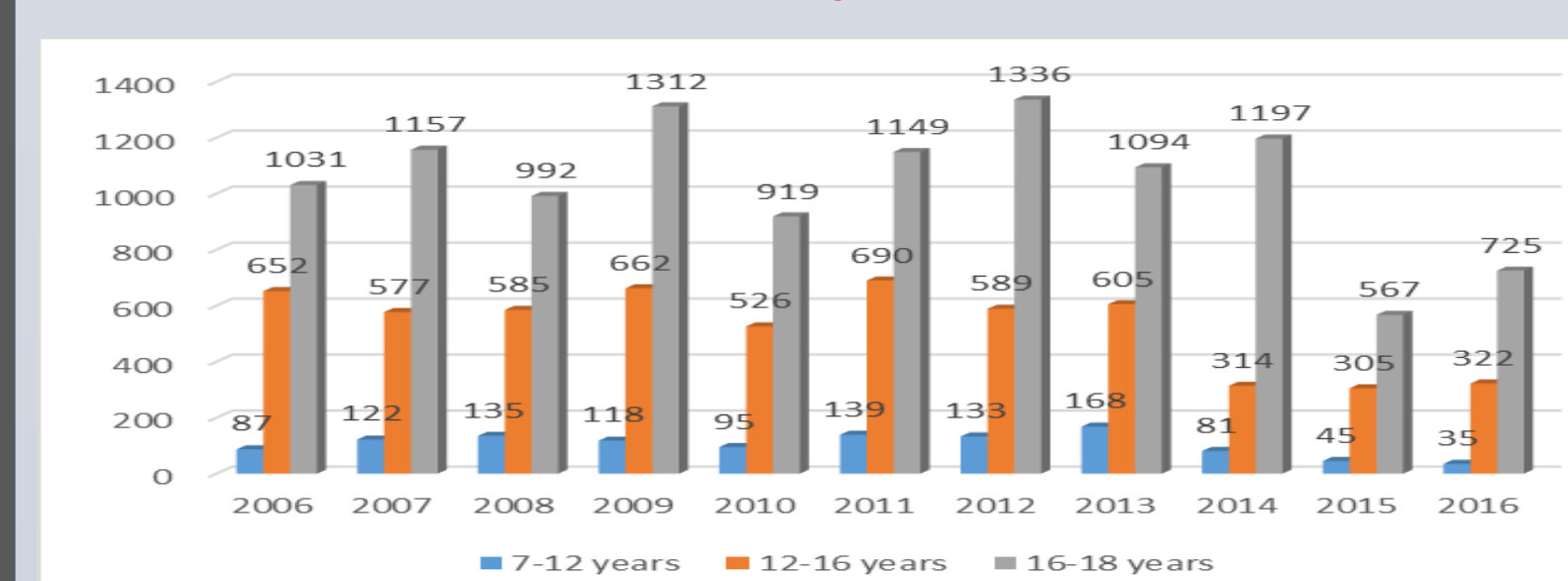
Source: National Crime Record Bureau

FIG 2: TRENDS OF GIRL DELINQUENCY IN ODISHA (2006-2016)



Source: National Crime Record Bureau

FIG 3: AGE-WISE GIRL DELINQUENCY IN INDIA (2006-2016)



Source: National Crime Record Bureau

2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present study seeks :

- 1) To determine the influence of various risk factors present in the family, school, neighbourhood, among peers leading to delinquency in adolescence girls.
- 2) To understand the impact of individual risk factors (victimization, stress, low self esteem etc.).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 PARTICIPANTS

All 16 female juvenile offenders were residing in the Observation and Special Home at the time of the study.

3.2 STUDY AREA

The study is carried out in the only Government Observation and Special Home (O&SH) for women situated in Berhampur, Odisha, India.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

- Permission from Ministry of Women and Children (WCD), Odisha is obtained.
- Permission from Superintendent of the O&SH is taken.
- Information regarding the girl delinquents are collected from the Individual Care Plan reports, Psychological Evaluation papers and FIR submitted to the Superintendent
- A semi-structure questionnaire is administered to the girls for collecting their personal information, information on family, peers, health, and education, psychological well being and emotional support.
- A semi-structured interview was conducted to understand their reasons behind committing crimes.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive statistics (i.e. Percentage, Mean, SD) are used due to categorical nature of data.

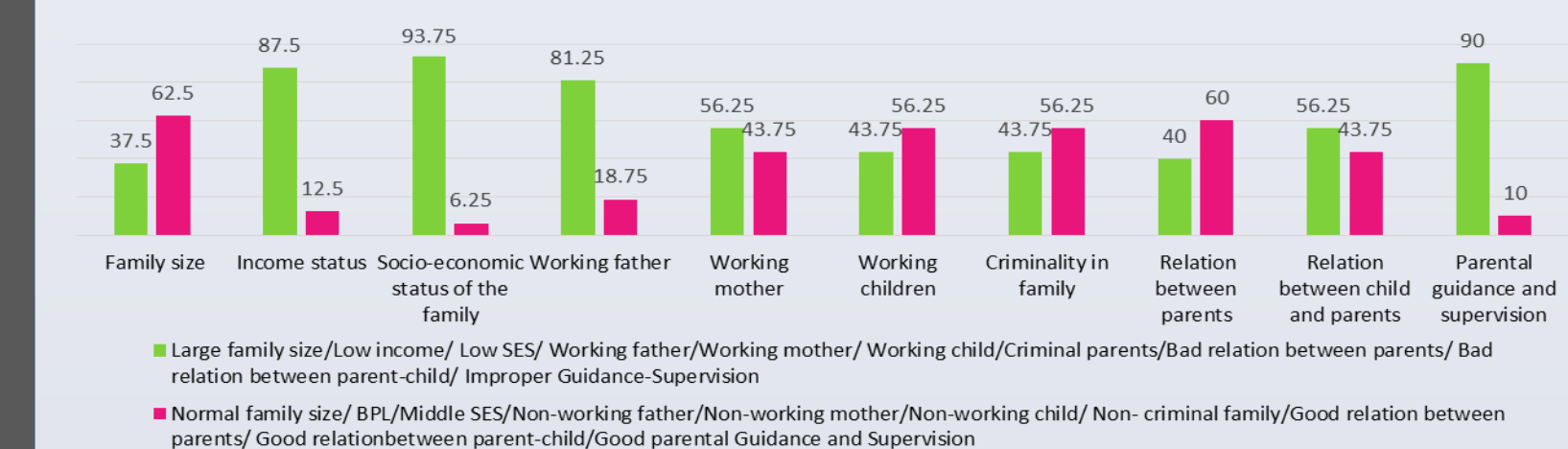
4.RESULTS

4.1 SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

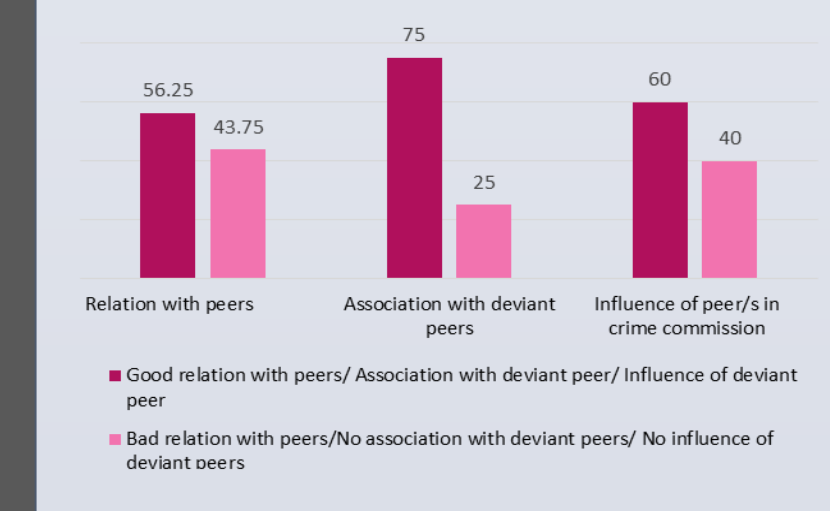
Age		
10-14 years (early adolescence phase)	4	25
15-19 years (later adolescence phase)	12	75
Social Status		
General	3	18.75
OBC	1	6.25
SC	2	12.5
ST	10	62.5
Religion		
Hindu	14	87.5
Christian	2	12.5
Muslim	0	0
Nature of offences		
Property crimes	3	18.75
Violent crimes	13	81.25
Type of crimes		
Murder	10	62.5
Theft	3	18.75
Kidnapping and abduction	3	18.75

4.2 RISK FACTORS

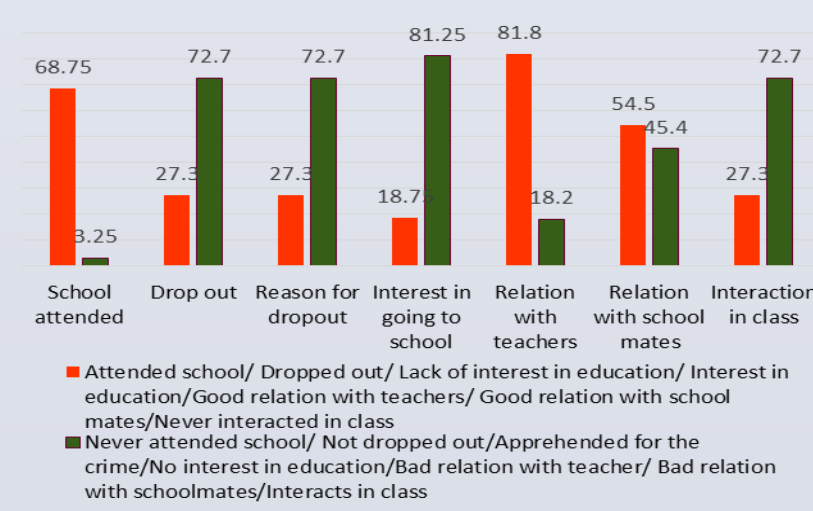
4.2.1 FAMILY-RELATED RISK FACTORS



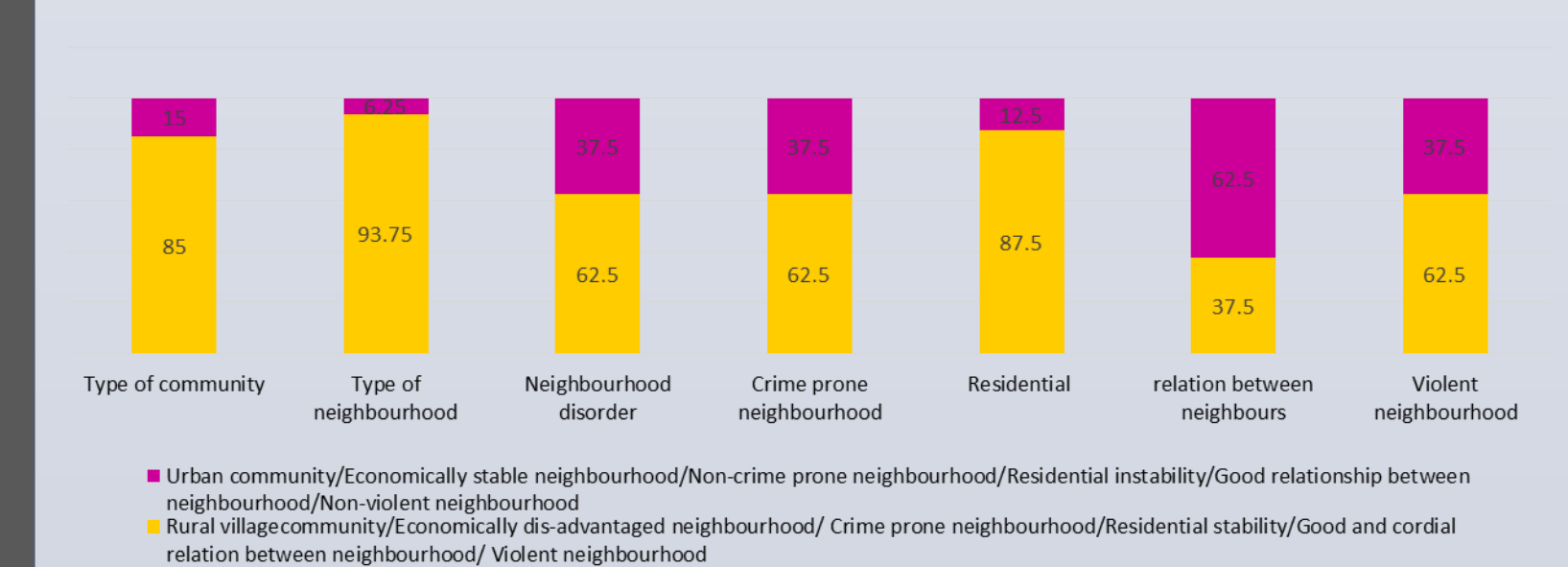
4.2.2 PEER RELATED RISK FACTORS



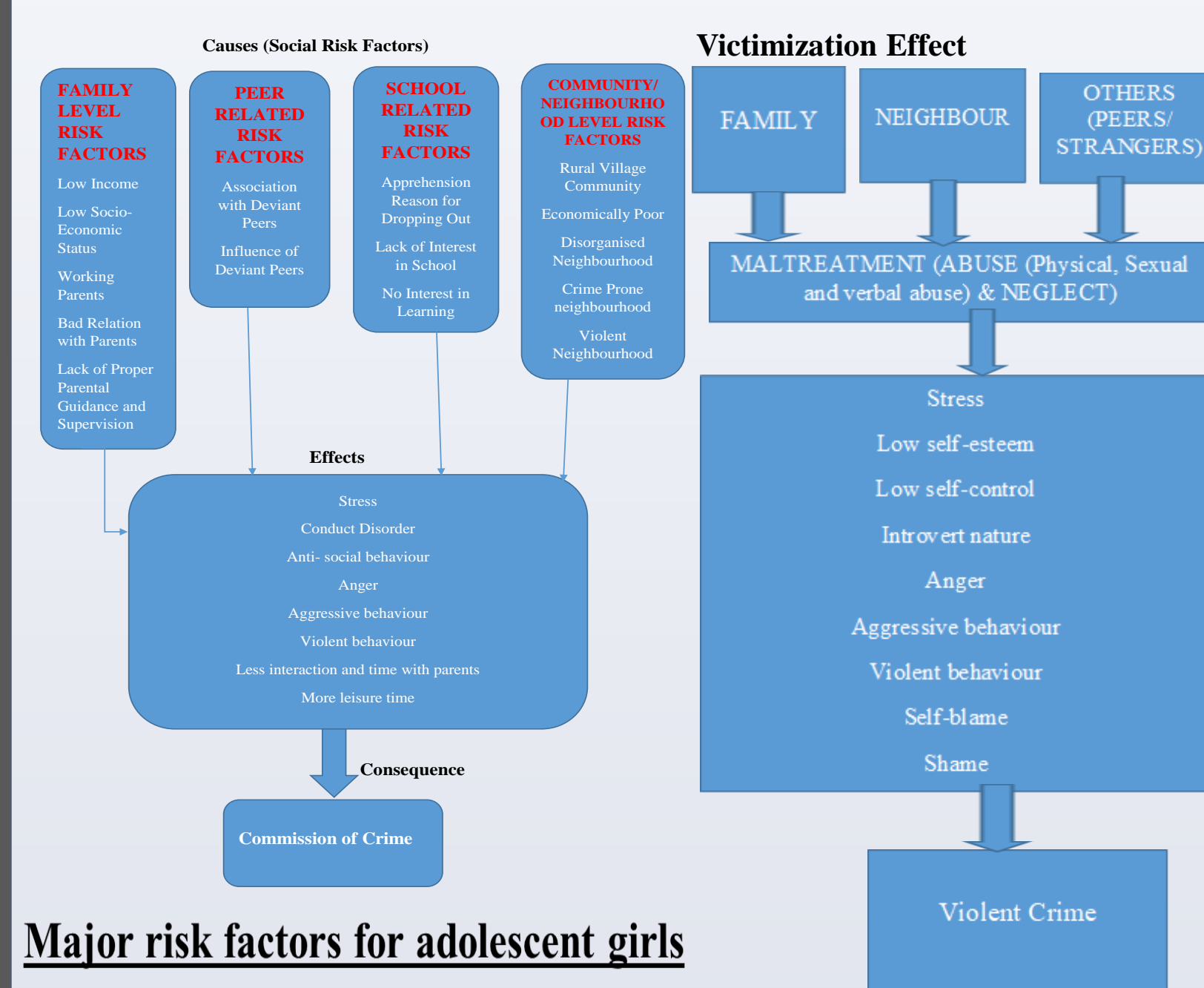
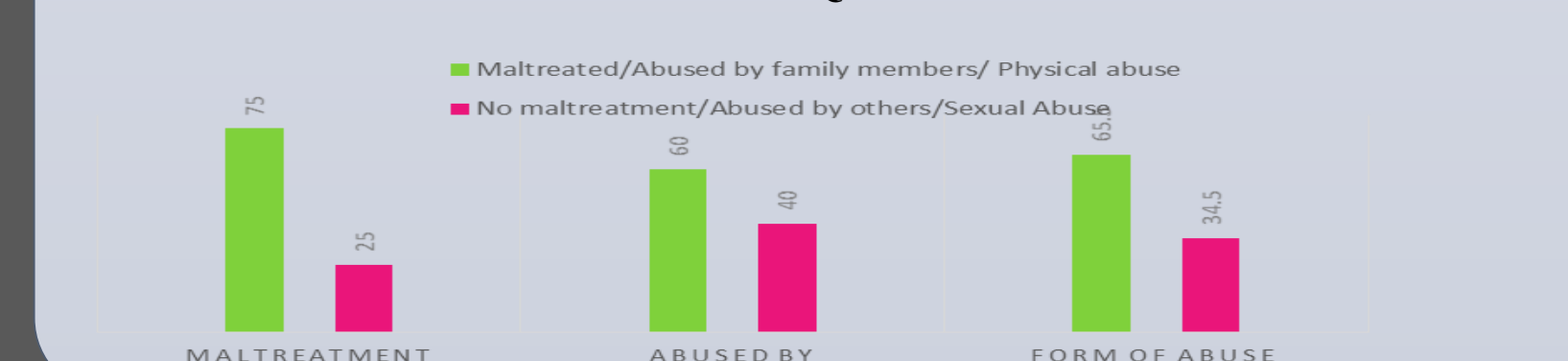
4.2.3. SCHOOL LEVEL RISK FACTORS



4.2.4. COMMUNITY/NEIGHBOURHOOD LEVEL RISK FACTORS



4.2.5. VICTIMIZATION OF THE DELINQUENT GIRLS



Major risk factors for adolescent girls



6. CONCLUSION

- Victimization of the adolescent girls and lack of parental trust (mother) together act as major cause for commission of violent crimes by girls.
- Better programs and policy should be made to reduce and control violence against girl which will further reduce girl crime.
- Proper counselling should be provided to the delinquent girls as well as the parents to create a friendly environment for girls in their home. Blaming of girls for every bad thing should be stopped, especially in Indian society.

References

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