

Youth Violence and Crime in Urban Environments

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Submission Date: 01 Aug 2025

Approval Date: 29 Oct 2025

Release Date: 06 Dec 2025

Abstract

Crime in residential neighborhoods, especially urban areas, has drawn considerable attention worldwide, in both developed and developing countries, owing to its negative material and moral impact on individuals, families and society as a whole. These impacts affect psychological, social and economic fields especially in the light of increasing crime rates. Consequently, crime is considered a social issue that reflects the society's inability to regulate social relations, leading to a disruption of prevailing systems and values, which highlights a dysfunction in the structure and functioning of values.

Algerian society, like many others, suffers from violence in all its forms; physical and psychological, which often escalates into criminal acts that threaten the security and stability of the community. This phenomenon has become particularly acute in recent years, especially among youth, who have shifted from an active and productive national force to a destructive one squandering the country's resources. This persists despite the presence of legal frameworks that could work as effective deterrents and put end to this phenomenon.

Keywords: violence, crime, social issue, urban violence, urban crime.

Introduction:

Violence and crime are phenomena that have existed since the earliest forms of human society. The motives behind these phenomena, especially in residential neighborhoods, vary from one community to another. These phenomena are among the most dangerous social issues, raising significant concerns for policymakers, especially in developing countries. The motives and factors to committing criminal acts vary according to time, place, and individuals' needs. The motives behind the spread of this phenomenon are partly linked to the individual engaging in criminal and violent behavior, and partly beyond their control, driven by external social and economic factors thus, affecting youth and transforming them from a potential force for building the national economy into a destructive force against both the economy and society.

Despite the adoption of various measures to prevent all types of crime, and the allocation of large financial resources, crime keeps increasing at a rate that exceeds the efforts undertaken by these countries including Algeria, which suffers greatly from this issue that is spreading among young people in light of the social, economic, cultural and political changes that have disrupted the balance of various social relationships. In order to assess the reality of violence and crime, this article seeks to answer the following question: What are the factors that contribute to the spread of violence and crime, particularly among young people, what are their impacts, and what is the current state of this phenomenon in Algerian society?

- **The meaning of Violence and Crime**
The definition of Violence:
Violence, in its various forms and methods, has become a global issue, particularly in recent years. This has made it increasingly difficult for states, regardless of their capacities, to confront and contain the problem on their own.

Violence is defined as follows:

According to *Lisan al-Arab* (a classical Arabic dictionary), violence is defined as a lack of gentleness in dealing with matters, implying severity or harshness; to "act violently" means to handle something forcefully, and violence (Ta'nif) refers to reprimanding or blaming.

The World Health Organization defines violence as:
The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation. (Nermin Hussein Al-Satani, 2018, p. 14)

Thus, violence is the act of harming individuals, morally, physically, verbally, or manually and can be exercised individually, collectively, or systematically. It is the illegitimate or unlawful use, the infliction of harm on others, and leading to the disintegration of social bonds among individuals. Violence also encompasses the act of influencing the will of another individual, frequently as a response to frustration, with the intention of causing damage to another person or oneself. (Dalal Malhas Istiteh & Omar Mousa Sarhan, pp. 53–54)

➤ **Individual Violence:**

This type of violence is often referred to as psychosocial violence, as the perpetrator usually exhibits certain characteristics that make them inclined to engage in violent behavior regardless of the circumstances. (Medhar (S), p.35)

➤ **Collective violence:**

This form of violence includes the use of tools or means by a group of individuals to achieve political, economic, or social objectives. Collective violence takes several forms, including wars, terrorism, and violent political conflicts that emerge within or between states, in addition to complex forms of violence, such as organized criminal violence carried out by highway robbers or fraudsters. (Etnime (G) et al., 2002, p. 23)

Therefore, violence, through a sociological lens, is the use of force in a manner that unlawfully affects individuals' will. Violence is a disruption in the balance of social relationships among individuals, stemming from cultural and social factors that lead to aggression against one another. (Nermin Hussein Al-Satani, 2018, p. 14)

➤ **Meaning of urban violence:**

According to modern Italian architect Aldo Rossi, an urban community is a morphological and structural unit that has a distinct function, a particular social content, and an urban identity. (Aldo Rossi, 1987, p. 63)

In the field of neighborhood classification, a recent French field study on the social division of space in major French cities identified twenty-five types of neighborhoods. These types were classified based on the socio-professional classes residing in them, using various indicators to determine the neighborhood type. These indicators included nationality, legal status of housing ownership (owner or tenant), type of housing (individual or collective), the age of the housing (old or new), as well as the social, cultural, and professional backgrounds of the residents. (Jacques Brun et al., 1994, pp. 201–202)

The rapid urban growth witnessed by most developing countries in recent decades; a growth that does not align with their level of economic development has caused an imbalance between economic and social development. This imbalance has contributed to the emergence and escalation of several urban social problems, including urban violence. Urban violence is a reflection of the underdevelopment and dependency that characterize these societies, manifesting in issues such as unemployment, illiteracy, housing shortages, the spread of various forms of crime, the rising prevalence of informal and precarious housing, problems related to childhood, juvenile delinquency, street children, urban poverty, substance abuse, and others. (Saeed Nasif, 2006, p. 276) Moreover, there has been a noticeable increase in poverty rates and the number of urban poor. (Said Nacef, 2006, p. 323)

The population expansion and overcrowding of cities in third world countries led to the emergence of underdeveloped, poor and crowded neighborhoods that have engendered crimes of all kinds. The deprivation experienced by individuals living in such overcrowded areas erodes their sense of respect for others and fosters persistent feelings of frustration due to constant intrusions into their personal lives. In addition, external conditions amplify individuals' sense of pressure due to the overwhelming human density surrounding them. This environment increases the likelihood of criminal acts and facilitates the recruitment of others into criminal activities and subcultures, which are further reinforced by urban expansion and overpopulation. (Mohamed El-Djohary et al., 1995, pp. 216–217)

➤ **The definition of Crime:**

It is not easy to establish a comprehensive definition of crime due to the diversity of academic disciplines that have studied it and the ideological perspectives of the researchers involved. Each scholar has defined crime from their own viewpoint, based on their doctrine. Furthermore, the occurrence of crime varies depending on a range of social, cultural, environmental, economic, demographic, educational, and political factors. As a result, the following definitions can be proposed: (Bassam Mohamed Abu Alyan, 2016, pp. 13–15)

➤ **Legal definition of crime:**

Crime is defined as behavior punishable by law, constituting a violation of or threat to the fundamental values of society or the essential interests of its members or as determined by the legislator. The legal instrument for this determination is the penal code. (Samah Salem Salem, Baha Reziki Ali, Mohamed Salem Salem, 2016, p. 18)

A crime is any act or omission for which the law establishes punishment. In other words, it is the commission of an act prohibited by law, or the failure to carry out an act mandated by law

such as failure to report a crime or desertion from military service. (Al-Wuhaishi Ahmed Biri & Abdelsalam Bashir Al-Duwaibi, 2001, p. 93)

Additionally, a crime is an intentional act that violates criminal law and is committed without legal justification. Thus, it is considered socially harmful and offensive behavior, and its perpetrator is subject to punishment by state institutions.

This is what gives crime its essential elements, which must be present for an act to be considered a crime:

1. The material element: it consists of three components:

- The perpetrator must be either a sole actor or an accomplice
- The criminal outcome must be achieved.
- A causal link between the act and the outcome must be present

2. Legal capacity: the offender's legal responsibility.

3. The legality or statutory element: defines the act as a crime according to the law.

➤ **Social definition:**

According to sociologists, such as Durkheim, crime is a social phenomenon that resides in all societies, regardless of their level of development or size, whether small or large, advanced or underdeveloped, rural or urban, crime is seen as inevitable and normal. However, when crime exceeds usual rates, it becomes an abnormal and deviant phenomenon. (Al-Wuhaishi Ahmed Biri & Abdelsalam Bashir Al-Duwaibi, 2001, p. 92)

Accordingly, crime is any act committed by an individual based on purely personal motives that disrupt the life of the community and conflict with its prevailing moral standards at a given moment in time, and contradicts what is considered beneficial and just from the perspective of that society. (Al-Wuhaishi Ahmed Biri & Abdelsalam Bashir Al-Duwaibi, 2001, p. 92)

Crime is any violation of the familiar and accepted patterns of social behavior in a society, and therefore it is considered a deviation from normal behavior (Sabah Gharbi, 2020, pp. 52–53). Crime is an event or incident that occurs, an experience that is lived, whether intentionally and deliberately, or accidentally and without premeditation. The perpetrator is thus considered to have disobeyed the decree of Allah (God) revealed for the protection of humanity and the welfare of society, or to have violated the civil law that safeguards individuals from the aggression of others, deters anyone tempted to commit criminal acts, and punishes those who do. As such, they are counted among offenders. (Samia Hassan Al-Sa'ati, p. 23)

Hence, crime is a behavior that violates Allah's (God) commandments, infringes upon social values, and the provisions of criminal law.

➤ **Factors of crime and violence spread in residential neighborhoods:**

Most criminal statistics indicate that violence and crime are significantly increasing in urban areas, due to population density and the complexities of urban life, which make it easier for individuals to commit crimes and evade detection by authorities.

Several factors lead individuals to resort to violence and engage in criminal behavior. Some of these factors are related to the individual themselves, while others are external, stemming from

the surrounding environment. These environmental conditions often drive individuals toward violent and criminal conduct. Such factors include:

1- Individual-Related Factors:

Numerous legal and sociological studies have confirmed the influence of factors related to the individual, including heredity, physical makeup, gender, age, mental capacity, illness, and addiction to alcohol or drugs.

- **Heredity-Related Factors:** These refer to the transmission of specific traits from ancestors to descendants through reproduction. Therefore, heredity is deemed responsible for criminal behavior, as criminal tendencies can be biologically inherited just like physical traits such as hair and eye color, height, or skin tone. Cesare Lombroso was one of the earliest researchers to confirm that heredity is the foundation of all crime. He believed that individuals are born with inherited characteristics that predispose them to criminal behavior, especially when supported by the surrounding environment. (Al-Wuhaishi Ahmed Biri & Abdelsalam Bashir Al-Duwaibi, 2001, p. 99)
- **Physical composition:** This refers to the apparent physical characteristics that distinguish an individual from birth. Cesare Lombroso highlighted certain anatomical features, describing them as irregularities in the shape of the skull, a narrow forehead contrasted with large jaws, abnormalities in tooth formation, excessive arm length, and abundant hair, as well as some psychological traits such as a low pain sensitivity, harsh feelings, and lack of shame. (Samah Salem Salem, Bahaa Reziki Ali, Mohamed Salem Salem, 2016, pp. 76, 77). He considers criminals to be deformed individuals suffering from disability or deficiency from a biological perspective.
- **Gender:** Studies have shown a clear correlation between gender and criminal behavior, with notable differences in both the quantity and nature of crimes committed by men and women. Some scholars attribute this difference to biological and psychological factors inherent to each gender. Others link it to the social and environmental contexts in which individuals live. The small role that women play in society and their lack of exposure to public life reduces the chances of them committing crime. Others attribute the difference in crime rates between women and men to the way boys and girls are raised, as girls are expected to respect many moral and social rules that limit their ability to violate these norms, hence lower crime rate among women. (Samah Salem Salem, Baha Reziki Ali, Mohamed Salem Salem, 2016, pp. 76–79)
- **Age:** Researchers typically divide the human lifespan into four stages: childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and senescence. Each of these stages is associated with specific developments in biological, psychological, and cognitive capacities, as well as differences in how individuals respond to external stimuli and adapt to their social environment, as well as the opportunities this environment produces to satisfy the individual's desires. Thus, the rate of crime differs from one age to another. (Muhammad Abu Al-Ala Aqida, 2020, p. 153)

According to Quetelet, the tendency toward criminal behavior evolves alongside an individual's physical and emotional development, reaching its peak around the age of

twenty-five. At this stage, a person's physiological growth transitions from weakness to strength. This not only explains the volume of crimes committed during this period but also the nature of those crimes.

For instance, crimes related to property and morality are mostly common among individuals aged 17 to 25, a period marked by physical vigor and higher sexual drive. In contrast, crimes committed by older individuals tend to involve fraud, such as theft, which relies less on physical strength and more on cunning. As for crimes against persons, older age groups are more likely to engage in defamation and verbal abuse than violent offenses such as murder or assault. Similarly, in sexual crimes, there is a shift from offenses like adultery or rape involving women to indecent acts targeting minors. (Muhammad Abu Al-Ala Aqida, 2020, pp. 156–157)

- **Mental Capabilities:** The prevailing belief in the nineteenth century was that mental deficiency leads to criminality. Idiocy, in general, is a criminal factor, so that the higher the percentage of idiocy among individuals, the stronger the impetus for committing crimes. However, the modern trend in criminology has proven that if idiocy is a factor in committing crimes, intelligence also is a criminal factor if misused. (Samah Salem Salem, Baha Reziki Ali, Mohamed Salem Salem, 2016, p. 85)

Reality has proven that intelligent people tend to commit crimes such as fraud, forgery, economic crimes in general, and state security crimes, while less intelligent people tend to commit theft crimes, particularly honor crimes, and indecent acts (Muhammad Abu Al-Ala Aqida, 2020, p. 162)

Therefore, crime is not limited to stupid people, but a deficiency in mental development creates psychological and social problems for an individual, which makes them unable to adapt to social life and fulfill their needs and instincts in a legitimate manner. This rushes them towards crime to achieve their desires and satisfy their instincts or in response to society's attitude towards them.

- **Disease:** Criminological studies have confirmed a link between illness and criminal behavior. The presence of certain medical or psychological conditions in an individual may increase the likelihood of committing crimes. The impact of the disease in criminology can be direct or indirect. A range of abnormal psychological symptoms that reflect, in turn, on the individual's behavior who adopts criminal conduct accompanies some diseases such as tuberculosis, syphilis, meningitis, psychological anxiety, psychopathy, epilepsy, schizophrenia, hysteria, and others. The disease can affect the social life of the individual by making them lose their ability to work and earn legitimately, ultimately pushing them towards the path of crime. (Samah Salem Salem, Baha Reziki Ali, Mohamed Salem Salem, 2016, p. 86)
- **Alcohol and drug addiction:** Studies have demonstrated that the consumption or addiction to alcohol and drugs have a direct effect on individuals physically, mentally and psychologically. Addiction can trigger criminal tendencies, especially when accompanied by physical and psychological deterioration. The addict often lives in an unstable family environment, is at risk of losing their job and source of income, and

constantly needs money to purchase drugs. These circumstances frequently push the individual to adopt deviant methods to obtain money. (Samah Salem Salem, Baha Reziki Ali, Mohamed Salem Salem, 2016, p. 91)

Crimes committed under the influence of drugs involve physical harm, insult and slander resulting from the individual's inability to control their actions and words, in addition to crimes against public morals and honor, as well as crimes against property such as theft, breach of trust and fraud. (Samah Salem Salem, Baha Reziki Ali, Mohamed Salem Salem, 2016, p. 92)

2- Social factors: That include all conditions, surroundings and environments in which individuals grow up from childhood, and the diverse opportunities and possibilities that are either present or absent in their life, which are related to social factors such as ignorance, family disintegration, bad company and others. Supporters of this view include the French sociologist Gabriel Tarde, who argued that an individual is not born a criminal but becomes one, through the influence and imitation of others' behavior. According to him, criminal behavior is learned through interaction with others, especially tightly knit groups like the family or peer groups. The tendency to adopt criminal behavior increases when the individual is more frequently exposed to values that encourage lawbreaking than to those that discourage it. (Badr El-Din Ali, p. 25)

- **Family:** Family is the first unit in which the individual is raised, his personality and attitudes towards society are formed, and where his thoughts and beliefs are shaped. It is within the family that a child learns the concepts of good and evil, as well as the religious beliefs practiced by the parents. The family has a deep psychological impact on the child, especially because of the constant attachment during the early years of life. Moreover, the child views the parents as role models and ideal figures. (Muhammad Abu Al-Ala Aqida, 2020, p. 208)

Thus, studies have shown that most delinquents come from broken families, due to the absence of educational and disciplinary role of a cohesive family. There is a strong link between child delinquency and the deviant behavior of one or both parents. Additionally, a connection exists between parenting style, especially emotional and social treatment, and children's deviance. The use of improper parenting methods often results in negative outcomes for the children. (Samah Salem Salem, Baha Reziki Ali, Mohamed Salem Salem, 2016, p. 94).

- **School, neighborhood and friends:** After the age of five or six, the child starts interacting with the outside world, The first social environment the child engages with after the family is the school, where they start forming relationships with others—especially with friends and teachers. This environment provides the child with many opportunities for imitation in order to achieve a sense of social integration. Through these interactions, the child begins to acquire values, principles, and norms that contribute to the development of their personality and give it its distinctive character. (Al-Wuhaishi Ahmed Biri & Abdelsalam Bashir Al-Duwaibi, 2001, p. 106)

However, if a child encounters strict commands and obligations, and does not find care and guidance, he may deviate from the school. Consequently, the school becomes a contributing factor to their delinquency, which manifests in behaviors such as skipping school, frequent

absenteeism, chronic tardiness, academic failure, misbehavior within the school, assaulting peers, stealing their school supplies, or vandalizing school furniture. (Samah Salem Salem, Baha Reziki Ali, Muhammad Salem Salem, 2016, p. 101)

Peers and colleagues at work, school, and within the neighborhood are among the most significant external influences on an individual. The peer group serves as a source of inspiration, imitation, and the adoption of ideas and opinions. It is characterized by a strong force that binds the individual and subjects them entirely to its rules. These rules are often inconsistent with societal norms and laws, but they fulfill many instinctive drives that the individual could not satisfy in reality. Moreover, the degree of cohesion within the group is particularly high, especially within deviant groups, which exert full authority and control over the individual, compelling them to submit completely to its power and judgments. (Samah Salem Salem, Baha Reziki Ali, Muhammad Salem Salem, 2016, p. 104)

As for the role of the neighborhood, which determines where a family resides and where its relationships and interactions with other individuals, families, and groups take shape, it is in the neighborhood that friendships are formed, and certain habits, traditions, values, and behavioral standards are acquired. Thus, the neighborhood serves as a source of shaping proper behavior on one hand, and a contributing factor to the development of criminal behavior on the other. A corrupt neighborhood becomes a criminal hotspot, providing both children and adults with tendencies that encourage delinquency and crime. (Al-Wuhaishi Ahmed Biri & Abdelsalam Bashir Al-Duwaibi, 2001, p. 108)

3- Economic Factors:

Economic factors play a significant role in shaping aggressive behavior. The impact of poverty, unemployment, and housing conditions in driving individuals toward deviation and crime cannot be denied.

- **Poverty:** The impoverished environment in which an individual is raised makes them unable to meet their basic needs for maintaining physical and psychological well-being, such as adequate housing, nutritious food, medical care, and the minimum necessities required by life. This often forces women to work or compels fathers to travel for employment. Consequently, this has negative repercussions on the individual, both health-wise and educationally, due to weakened parental supervision and the absence of regulatory authority within the household. This leads to the development of deviant and criminal behavior among children, resulting in homelessness, begging in the streets, and committing property crimes such as theft to meet essential needs. It can also result in violent crimes due to the psychological distress and turmoil caused by poverty. (Samah Salem Salem, Baha Reziki Ali, Muhammad Salem Salem, 2016, p106)

Poverty, as a state in which a family's income is insufficient to meet its basic needs for maintaining its physical, psychological, and social structure, negatively affects health, cultural aspects, and access to educational opportunities, among other things. Poverty deprives families of social participation in all areas of life, including political, economic, and social spheres. It also affects the family's level of ambition and the psychological balance in the individual's relationship with their family and surrounding environment.

Consequently, poverty is considered one of the factors contributing to social deviations, including tendencies toward theft and crime, sexual deviations in various forms, and addiction to alcohol and drugs. (Abdul Azim Nasr Al-Mushaikhis, 2005, p174-175)

- **Unemployment:** The idleness experienced by an unemployed individual due to the lack of a permanent job leads to feelings of fear, anxiety, and frustration. This stems from their inability to meet their essential needs and those of their family. Such circumstances may drive them to seek income by any means, even if it involves unlawful methods, which then reflects on their behavior and attitudes, pushing them to vent through deviant behavior. (Samah Salem Salem, Baha Reziki Ali, Mohamed Salem Salem, 2016, p. 108)
- **Housing Condition:** the inadequacy of housing for family members, in terms of its size or the number of units compared to the family size, as well as the failure to uphold the principle of separation in sleeping arrangements among siblings or relatives, in addition to meeting health-related conditions such as ventilation, lighting, sanitation, access to clean water, electricity, humidity control, the location of the housing in relation to transportation, the neighborhood in which it is situated, and its socioeconomic level, serves as a driver of delinquency and a pathway to deviation. These factors have severe detrimental effects on family members in general and on children in particular, whether physically or psychologically (Samah Salem Salem, Baha Riziki Ali, Mohamed Salem Salem, 2016, p108-109).

Excessive overcrowding within the family forces children, both girls and boys, to share the same space, sometimes even with individuals outside the family. They may be compelled to share the same room, which can awaken their sexual instincts. This situation leads them, depending on their religious or moral inclination, either to suppress these instincts or to engage in sexual deviations or other forms of deviance.

Moreover, the cramped nature of the home often drives children to flee whenever the opportunity arises. They gather in the streets due to the stress and pressures they endure. These gatherings expose them to encounters with other youth, leading to the formation of gangs and the adoption of various deviant behaviors. Such activities become a psychological escape from the harsh reality these children experience in their daily lives.

The impacts of violence and crime in residential neighborhoods:

The proliferation of violence and crime in residential neighborhoods has several impacts, which can be summarized as follows (Al-Wahishi Ahmed Berry, Abd al-Salam Bashir al-Duwaibi, 2001, pp. 108-109):

- Violating social norms and values can undermine the social order and lead to imbalances in its structure. Society and the social system can only function well if its members behave in a way that is approved by the community and as expected of them. Crime, therefore, leads to a deviation from important values and norms, making social life difficult and potentially leading to conflict between deviant groups and healthy communities.

- Diverting many human and financial social resources towards various social control efforts to confront violence and crime, while these sources can be used in other aspects, such as building schools, hospitals, and productive institutions.
- The spread of criminal behavior in society, especially in residential neighborhoods, leads to a threat to trust between members of society. Social relationships are built on the belief and expectation that individuals will recognize each other according to known values and standards, so they do not break a covenant, exploit a friendship, abuse children left in their care, or rob people in the street. The widespread crime in society threatens trust and generates discomfort among members of society both criminal individuals and normal individuals alike.
- The loss of human potential within society occurs when individuals deviate and engage in criminal activities, thereby threatening the community's cohesion and jeopardizing the lives, property, values, and customs of its members. Consequently, these individuals become idle, unproductive, and a burden on society.
- The exacerbation of crime, especially among juveniles, hinders the state's efforts to promote the general development of society by spending huge sums of money on combating deviance, violence, and crime.
- The prevalence of anxiety, lack of security and tranquility in society, and constant fear of attacks and thefts, abuse and violence.

Factors of crime spread in the Algerian society:

In recent years, Algerian society has witnessed an unprecedented increase in the overall rate of crimes, particularly violence. This phenomenon now is a direct threat to the lives of both individuals and society as a whole. The forms of crime in Algerian residential neighborhoods have diversified, including crimes against property, such as various types of theft, and crimes against persons, like murder, intentional assault and beating, attacks on families, and offenses against public morals, among other related crimes.

A study conducted by researcher Zarara Lakhdar for his doctoral thesis in the 2007-2008 academic year, analyzing 149 finalized cases from the Batna Criminal Court, revealed that the most significant factors contributing to crime are high unemployment rates and the declining living standards of individuals amidst rising poverty levels in residential neighborhoods. This is linked with Algeria's housing crisis and inadequate services. These factors have led to a surge in crimes, particularly shop and home burglaries, which ranked first, often involving the use of bladed weapons, climbing, and forced entry. To a lesser extent, firearms were also used. Additionally, the study noted an increase in moral crimes and violations of honor.

Young people represent the largest percentage of perpetrators of property crimes and indecent assaults in residential neighborhoods and urban communities, and the low educational level and marital status (single) of young people play a role in the spread of crimes of all kinds.

The study conducted by researcher Zikiou Moustapha for his doctoral thesis in the 2015-2016 academic year, which was an analytical study based on official statistics from the period (2005-2013) for all Algerian wilayas (states), and supported by interviews with individuals relevant to the research in order to understand the meanings individuals attribute to their living conditions, reached the following conclusions:

The crime rate is increasing among young people between the ages of 18 and 39, in addition to young people who have an average level of education and single status, school dropout is a factor in the increase in crime among youth, in addition to the factor of high unemployment and the low economic status of young people.

During the study period, the volume of crime has witnessed a continuous increase, encompassing both crimes against the public order, specifically crimes against persons and against property. Among crimes against persons, intentional assault and battery are prevalent, especially in densely populated cities, alongside verbal assault. Additionally, homicide frequently occurs due to altercations between individuals, followed by homicides resulting from family problems. Both forms of homicide have been increasing in recent years. Furthermore, crimes against families and public morals also contribute to this rising trend.

Regarding crimes committed against property, theft accounts for over 80% of such offenses. The methods used predominantly involve bladed weapons, climbing, and being under the influence of hallucinogenic substances.

Consequently, crime is highly prevalent in cities, largely due to their urban nature characterized by weak social control, superficial relationships between individuals, and high population density. The proliferation of informal and popular neighborhoods lacking organization and development further contributes to this, making them breeding grounds for various types of crime.

Conclusion

The spread of crime in society, whether targeting property or individuals, poses a real threat to individuals, families, and the social fabric. It leads to a disruption of social values and the disintegration of social bonds among community members. To confront and combat criminal behavior, we propose the following suggestions:

- Training qualified social specialists to lead social work focused on juvenile care.
- Establish child counselling clinics and social service centers in residential neighborhoods.
- Prioritize family by working to reduce chances for conflict and disintegration among its members. This includes ensuring meeting children's emotional needs, fostering equality and justice among siblings, and instilling strong religious consciousness in children.
- Emphasize the social role of the mosque, enabling it to be a source of spiritual, intellectual, and cultural enlightenment, and a tool for nurturing and caring for youth.

- Raise awareness through various media channels about the negative impacts of all types of crime, aiming to shape, guide, and influence public opinion effectively.
- Utilize leisure time productively by establishing clubs, libraries, summer camps, and engaging audio-visual programs, along with diverse recreational activities. The absence of such outlets can lead to inappropriate use of free time and involvement with criminal groups and gangs.
- Provide employment opportunities for those in need.

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