

Crime-poverty nexus: an intellectual survey

Abstract

The nexus between crime rates and poverty is overwhelming subject of forensic science and development economics that eager to know the causal mechanism between the two stated factors. The study conducted an intellectual survey from the academicians of higher education institutes and asked the number of open ended and closed ended questions about the subject matter. The study finds the numerous factors, including lack of education, unemployment, inequitable judicious income distribution, injustice, price hikes, inadequate health provision, etc., which are the main antecedents of crime-poverty nexus in Pakistan. The study confirmed the causality relationship moving in a both directions, i.e., poverty leads to crime and crime rate leads to poverty incidence in a country, however, the strong causation and largely supported respondents data support the poverty incidence leads to crime rate (i.e., weighted response: 330 respondents), while small causation supports the reverse causality (i.e., weighted response: 100 respondents) from a given survey. The results conclude that government reforms in the form of provision of social subsidies for poor and marginalized peoples are needed in order to reduce poverty incidence and combat crime rates in a country. .

Keywords: crime rates, poverty, social expenditures, intellectual survey, Pakistan

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Introduction

The relationship between crime rates and poverty incidence is complex and multidimensional. The number of studies confirmed that poverty leads to crime rates¹⁻⁸ while on the reverse side, the causal mechanism has been observed and concluded that higher crime rates lead to poverty incidence across countries.⁹⁻¹³ These studies are largely discussed with different determinants of poverty and crime rates in different economic settings. These studies are on the same finding that poverty and crime interlinked with each other that affect socio-economic and environmental factors, which influenced country's sustained growth in the long-run. This study is one of the initiatives to assess crime-poverty nexus in the Pakistan's context, as the economy largely faced domestic and internal violence in the form of crime rates and terrorism since last many decades.¹⁴

Methodology

The study used social media to target the intellectuals that have at least Master degree and associated with the universities, higher education institutes, colleges, hospitals, civil servants, etc. The intellectuals have an age bracket fall from minimum 22 years to maximum 70 year. The weight is assigning to all intellectuals, i.e., intellectuals are 10 times more productive than an illiterate people; hence the total sample size is reached up to 350. The female intellectuals are 120 while male intellectuals are 230 that participated in this survey. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of the respondents for ready reference.

The study asked 3 closed ended questions, which is filled by either with 'yes' or 'no' option while asked 3 open ended questions that asked to enlist at least 4 major factors about crime-poverty nexus in a given country. The open and closed ended questions are as follows, i.e.,

Q.1) Does poverty incidence increases crime rate in a country? [Yes/No]

Q.2) Does crime rate increases poverty in a country? [Yes/No]

Q.3) Enlist 4 factors that may helpful to decrease crime rate a country?

Q.4) Enlist 4 factor that may helpful to reduce poverty incidence in a country?

Q.5) Does government policies sufficient to reduce crime rate and poverty incidence in a country? [Yes/No], and

Q.6) As an individual, how we may play our role to decrease crime rates and poverty incidence in a country? [Enlist at least 4 factors].

Table 1 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics	Weighted respondents	Frequency
Gender		
Male	230	65.71%
Female	120	34.29%
Age		
>22, <32	110	31.42%
>32, <42	150	42.85%
>42, >52	60	17.14%
>52	30	8.59%

Results

The survey results show that 330 respondents agreed that poverty incidence lead to crime rate in a country, while remaining 20 respondents does not agree with the statement. The 100 respondents confirm that crime rates increases poverty incidence in a country, while remaining 250 respondents rejected the claim and argued that crime rates does not lead to increase poverty incidence in a country. Figure 1 shows the causal mechanism between crime rate and poverty in a country.

Figure 1 illustrate that causality running in both directions, however, the respondents are invariant between the causal

mechanism, as the survey questions ask the reverse question about crime to poverty, and poverty to crime relationship and found that 330 intellectuals agreed the reverse causality running from poverty to crime rates while 100 respondents agree from the crime to poverty causality between them. The respondents suggested number of factors that may helpful to reduce crime rates in a country, including, provision of free education, employment generation, income equity, justice, health provision, good governance, strong surveillance, control over fundamentalism, accountability, social security, etc. Similarly, the respondents suggested multiple factors that may helpful to reduce poverty incidence in a country, including, investment in public goods, entrepreneurial education, technical education, subsidize farmers, tax reduction, employment generation, loans disbursement to the poor with free interest, etc. Figure 2 shows the different factors that helpful to reduce crime rates and poverty incidence in a country.

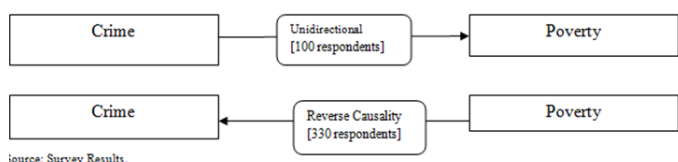
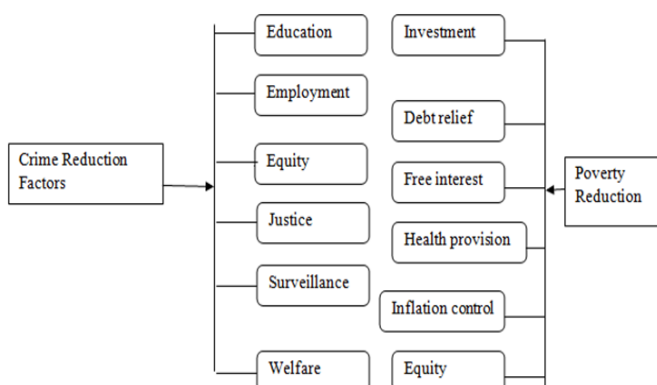


Figure 1 Causal mechanism between crime and poverty.



Source: Survey Results.

Figure 2 Factors affecting for crime and poverty reduction in a country.

The next question asked about whether government policies sufficient to reduce crime rates and poverty incidence in a country. The total 280 respondents given answer negatively while 70 respondents agreed that government strive hard to combat poverty and crime rate in a country. The final question is related with individual participation in the economy by controlling poverty and crime rate. The multiple suggestions received from the intellectuals, including, encourage private sector investment, awareness of crime, provision of law, open small businesses, general education on ethics, neighbourhood networking, community networking, police networking, educate the children, micro financing, etc.

Conclusion and policy implications

The study conducted an intellectual survey about the reduction of crime rates and poverty incidence through a self generated questionnaires from highly intellects people, including teaching faculty, doctors, civil servants, etc. The results show the numerous factors that would be helpful to reduce crime rates and poverty incidence in a country. The main factors are provision of health, education, equity, justice, employment, etc. The results confirmed

that the causal relationship between the crime rates and poverty is mutually exclusive, i.e., poverty leads to crime is rated by large number of respondents while only 30% respondents confirmed the causality in the reverse mode.

On the basis of survey results, the study confined the following policy implications, i.e.,

- Need a national action plan to control crime rates in a country.
- It is imperative to define and implement national priorities to take care of our valuable resources.
- Anti-social media campaign should be banned/control.
- Diversification is needed in economic portfolio by transforming agriculture to manufacturing sector to absorb disguised unemployment.
- Creates jobs and increase minimum wage rate legislation, and
- Adopt progressive taxation system and ensure easy tax collection procedure, which may spend further on the welfare of lower and middle income class by free education, free healthcare facilities, loaning facilities, subsidize agriculture, agriculture mechanization, farming, etc.

These policies may helpful to reduce crime rates and poverty incidence in a country.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare there is no conflict of interest.

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