




SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS AND YOUTH VULNERABILITY TO CRIME: A DIAGNOSIS AMONG STUDENTS AGED 11 TO 17 YEARS AT THE JONATHAS ATHIAS SCHOOL IN DOM ELISEU/PA¹

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ABSTRACT

Adolescence is a transition phase between childhood and adulthood, marked by questioning and constant learning. The education of adolescents is directly linked to the perception and influence of the family and social environment. Therefore, this study investigates the relationship between socioeconomic factors and youth vulnerability to infractions, focusing on students aged 11 to 17 years at the Jonathas Athias School, in Dom Eliseu/PA. The research will analyze the socioeconomic and family profile of adolescents in the 9th grade in the morning, seeking to understand how these conditions influence their involvement in illicit activities and identify the main risk factors associated with juvenile crime. The central problem addressed will be the relationship between the socioeconomic and family context and the vulnerability of these young people. The study will adopt the deductive method, starting from pre-established hypotheses and combining the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data. The legal approach will follow the stages of thesis, antithesis and synthesis, allowing an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. For data collection, structured questionnaires with closed questions will be applied, in order to obtain objective and systematized information.

Keywords: Adolescence. Vulnerability. Family. Factors.

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INTRODUCTION

In the field of Brazilian legislation, the Statute of the Child and Adolescent, brings in its article 2 the concept and the difference between child and adolescent, because for each case there is a specific conduct that must be molded according to this classification. Therefore, it is understood that a child is a person who is up to 12 years old, while an adolescent is one who is from 12 years old to 18 years old – this will be the age parameter used in the work to define an adolescent (BERNARDINA, 2020).

It is known that adolescence is a phase of constant discoveries where a whirlwind of knowledge is exposed that will serve as a basis for adult life. In summary, it is the period of conquest of identity.

However, despite being a passage that every individual goes through, it does not have the same regularity for everyone. Each adolescent experiences it in a unique way. There are situations, however, where conflicts become apparent and, consequently, the adolescent labels himself as non-standard. Becoming the problem boy or girl. All public policies know them, however they are characterized as an invisible being. At this moment, the adolescent develops a feeling of discredit. (GALINARI, 2019).

Adolescence is a phase between childhood and adulthood. It is a period full of questions and the emergence of several doubts. Doubts, the most diverse arise! But learning is constant. In addition to the apparent changes, there are also transformations with regard to emotional and hormonal aspects (GOULART, 2019).

The formation of the adolescent is also related to the perception that the family has of his behavior. When the family is silent, the young person becomes more susceptible to misconduct. The problem, initially small as a bean, quickly turns into a big snowball. In addition, the issue no longer affects only the individual, but also impacts the innocent around them (MUINHOS, 2020).

In this context, the main objective of this work is to analyze the economic factors and youth vulnerability to the infraction, based on a diagnosis carried out among students aged 11 to 17 years at the Jonathas Athias School in Dom Eliseu/PA. This approach will be carried out with two 9th grade classes, where the socioeconomic and family profile of these adolescents, the main causes and risk factors related to their involvement in illicit activities, as well as the support measures implemented to deal with the infraction behavior will be investigated.

Considering the importance of understanding these issues, this research aims to provide fundamental insights for the development of more effective prevention and intervention strategies. By better understanding the socioeconomic and family context of

adolescents in conflict with the law, it is possible to identify specific vulnerabilities and direct support strategies to this school unit.

In addition, by investigating the causes and risk factors associated with the involvement of these young people in illicit activities, more assertive preventive approaches can be developed, aiming to interrupt the cycle of delinquency.

Thus, the main objective of this work is to analyze the socioeconomic and family context of adolescents enrolled in the Jonathas Athias Municipal Elementary School in Dom Eliseu/PA.

THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL INEQUALITY ON JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Social inequality is one of the determining factors for the increase in juvenile delinquency. In societies where income distribution is unequal, many young people face precarious living conditions, with difficulties in accessing education, health, decent housing, and employment opportunities. This reality makes them more vulnerable to involvement with infractions, whether due to financial need, influence of the environment or lack of prospects for the future (FILHO, 2020).

The absence of effective public policies to reduce inequality further aggravates the problem. In poor communities, the lack of investment in quality education and extracurricular activities limits adolescents' possibilities for growth, increasing exposure to violent environments and the influence of criminal groups. Often, crime emerges as a quick alternative to meet basic needs, leading young people to commit infractions (FREIRE, 2020).

In addition, the family context also plays an essential role, families living in extreme poverty, with financial and emotional instability, may face difficulties in guiding and supervising their children. The lack of support and family structure can lead adolescents to seek groups that welcome them, even if these groups are linked to marginality (CHAVEIRO, 2024).

To combat this problem, it is essential to invest in social policies that reduce inequality and promote social inclusion. Access to quality education, professionalization programs and leisure opportunities are essential measures to keep young people away from crime. In addition, strengthening family and community ties can act as a protective factor, helping to build a safer and more promising future for this portion of the population (DE ANDRADE CARNEIRO, 2023).

Thus, understanding the relationship between social inequality and juvenile delinquency is essential to develop effective prevention and intervention strategies. Only

through an integrated approach, involving the State, society and the family, will it be possible to offer better opportunities to young people and reduce crime rates among adolescents (FILHO, 2020).

Thus, social vulnerability is linked to neediness, in several ways. According to Freire (2020), the term vulnerability, among several connotations, is used to designate individuals or groups at a disadvantage, considering the criteria for the distribution of services such as health, education, income, among others, in need of help and protection to guarantee their rights as citizens.

Social vulnerability is linked to amplitude factors, such as family composition and the fragility of affective bonds. The National Social Assistance Policy – PNAS (2004) refers to social vulnerability as a condition of the individual.

The Federal Constitution of 1988, in its article 6, states that "Education, health, food, work, housing, leisure, security, social security, protection of maternity and childhood, assistance to the helpless are social rights [...]". Health, in turn, is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as "[...] the total physical, psychic and social well-being of the individual, and not the absence of a disease or an infirmity", which makes it necessary to adopt a biopsychosocial conception of the human being.

Regarding the recognition of education as a fundamental right of a social nature, its protection aims at an interest beyond the individual, characterizing society as a common good. (ANDRADE, 2023).

THE ROLE OF THE FAMILY AND THE SCHOOL IN THE PREVENTION OF JUVENILE CRIME

The psychological aspects of personality development with the presence or absence of behavioral disorders and their relationship with the deficiencies, negligence, violence, and abuse experienced in childhood, which compromise the healthy "functioning" of human beings, deserve special attention from society as a whole (BRANCO, 2022).

In childhood, the child has essential needs that must be met for adequate psychosocial development, and these needs are linked to affection and stimulation. When these demands are not met during childhood or adolescence – a crucial phase for physical and emotional development – the individual may begin to show different patterns resulting in emotional or behavioral disorders, which can impact their life throughout their existence (ORTH, BOURGUIGNON, 2022).

In this scenario, the relevance of the family as a fundamental and natural institution is highlighted, playing a central role in the socialization of the individual. This is because it is

in the family environment that the child in the development phase finds the necessary conditions for his growth, learning from his parents the social and cultural values essential for living in society (BRANCO, 2022).

The importance of the family institution is enshrined in the Federal Constitution, which provides in its article 226:

Article 226. The family, the basis of society, has special protection from the State. [...] Paragraph 8 - The State shall ensure assistance to the family in the person of each of those who are part of it, creating mechanisms to curb violence in the context of their relationships.

It is observed that the Constitution clearly sought to promote the prevention of violence in the family environment. This concern arises due to the serious consequences generated by exposure to violence, whether physical or emotional. The aggressions suffered by children and adolescents leave deep scars that go beyond physical pain.

The child who lives in a violent environment within his home, a place that should be of protection and affection, often experiences feelings of injustice, anger, rejection, indifference, lack of empathy or regret towards others, originating from the lack of affective bonds with his parents, which compromises his ability to establish affective relationships with others, being able to go from victim to aggressor (SALES, 2021).

Childhood and adolescence are stages of development in which the individual, still in the process of formation, is susceptible to stimuli and influences, needing protection, guidance and support. Adolescence, in particular, is a challenging phase, characterized by internal and external conflicts, and can be seen as a decisive milestone in the construction of the human being. In this period of search for identity, young people often find themselves exposed to risky behaviors.

For Freire, (2020):

The absence of representative figures in the family and family ties are the reality of many of the young people in conflict with the law. These factors do not guarantee or prevent delinquency, however, there is a greater probability of the appearance of delinquent behaviors or, on the contrary, their inhibition. Thus, taking into account the risk and protective factors mentioned, it is evident that family interactions and the strategies used by parents can reinforce or inhibit the emergence of such behaviors in children.

For the author, it is essential to consider that the practice of deviant behaviors is not always linked to the malfunctioning of the family system, as there are young people with this type of behavior from families that do not present the risk factors mentioned, as well as there are young people who do not develop such behaviors, but belong to dysfunctional

families. In view of this, it is important to investigate factors from other contexts of adolescent socialization, with emphasis on the group of friends.

For Arroyo (2016, p.48),

It is essential that society understands that it is necessary to be more concerned with the precarious conditions in which children and adolescents live, than with their indiscipline and violence. When human beings do not have a basis for survival, their control of conduct becomes difficult.

For Silvia (2020), juvenile delinquency has increased significantly in recent years.

This situation has provoked a feeling of fear, distrust and insecurity throughout the community. This is a problem that is not limited only to large metropolises, but also affects small towns in the interior, traditionally quieter. Due to this growth in delinquency, there is a growing demand for the State to intensify its actions in all areas related to public policies.

Most adolescents who commit acts contrary to the law come from poor and disorganized families. Ending up experiencing aggression and pressure constantly, seeking on the street to complement the needs suffered at home. It is at this moment that small infractions begin. And there are still those who are introduced to the crime by their own family members (TAUHATA, 2020).

Thus, the social environment in which he is inserted does not offer him many different opportunities, because the environment in which he lives does not help him to produce the modes of inclusion within more integrative projects in society.

From this perspective, the issue of the legal treatment of adolescents accused of committing an act described in the legislation as a crime or criminal offense must be evaluated considering the set of fundamental rights and human rights. The reaffirmation of these rights, in its subjective dimension, defines the Legal Status of citizenship, both in its interactions with the State and in the relationships between individuals (BERNARDINA, 2020).

Thus, the Statute of the Child and Adolescent was created with the objective of positively intervening in the exclusion experienced by our childhood and youth, through two main proposals: to ensure that Brazilian children and adolescents, previously seen only as objects of intervention by the family and the State, are treated as subjects of rights; and to develop a new policy for child and youth care, based on the constitutional principles of political-administrative decentralization, with the consequent municipalization of actions and the participation of civil society (SANTOS, 2019).

The intention of the Statute of the Child and Adolescent, in its origin, was to give socio-educational measures a pedagogical-protective character. If this is complied with in practice and applied to a specific case, there is no doubt that the law will be effective. It is essential that there is a real and effective commitment from the institutions involved to

ensure that the rights of these young people are respected and that they have access to the necessary conditions for their education and social reintegration (MUINHOS, 2020).

Therefore, when talking about the effectiveness of socio-educational measures, it must be agreed that the topic is controversial. Some understand that they have the character of re-educating, resocializing the adolescent and others understand that the Statute has a sanctioning nature, as a response of society to the infraction he committed.

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY WITH STUDENTS AGED 11 TO 17 YEARS OLD AT THE JONATHAS ATHIAS SCHOOL IN DOM ELISEU/PA

The main objective of this work is to analyze the economic factors and youth vulnerability to the infraction, based on a diagnosis carried out with students aged 11 to 17 years at the Jonathas Athias School, located in the municipality of Dom Eliseu, in the State of Pará. The research will be developed with two classes of the 9th grade of the morning shift, and will seek to investigate the socioeconomic and family profile of these adolescents, the main causes and risk factors related to involvement in illicit activities, as well as the existing support measures to deal with infractional behaviors.

Data collection will take place on March 17, 2025, at 10 am, through the application of a structured questionnaire, composed of closed questions with "yes" or "no" answers. The instrument includes the following thematic axes:

SOCIOECONOMIC PROFILE AND FAMILY CONTEXT

1. Do you live with your parents or guardians?
2. In your household, is at least one person in the family unemployed?
3. Have you ever had to work to help with your household expenses?
4. Has your family ever faced financial difficulties that affected food or housing?
5. Do you feel like your family offers emotional support whenever you need it?

EDUCATION AND SCHOOL

6. Have you ever thought about dropping out of school due to financial or family difficulties?
7. Do you believe that the school offers enough opportunities for your professional future?
8. Has any of your colleagues ever dropped out of school due to the need to work?
9. Do you think that the school should offer more extracurricular activities to keep young people busy?

10. Do you believe that the school has a direct influence on reducing the involvement of young people with crime?

INFLUENCE OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

11. In the neighborhood where you live, are there many young people involved in illicit activities?
12. Have you ever been invited or encouraged to participate in any criminal activity?
13. Have you ever participated in any criminal activity?
14. Do you have friends or acquaintances who have ever gotten into trouble with the police?
15. In your community, is the police presence sufficient to guarantee security?
16. Do you believe that the lack of leisure and cultural opportunities contributes to the involvement of young people with crime?

PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

17. Do you feel that you have good prospects for your professional future?
18. Do you believe that studying can change your living condition?
19. Have you ever felt pressured to take wrong actions due to the influence of friends or the environment in which you live?
20. Do you consider that social inequality is one of the main factors that lead young people to crime?
21. If there were more opportunities for courses and jobs in your city, do you believe that fewer young people would get involved in crime?

The data obtained allow us to draw an overview of the conditions experienced by these adolescents and the challenges they face on a daily basis.

Regarding the profile of the participants, the sample was composed of 26 boys (47.27%) and 29 girls (52.72%). Most of the students interviewed are 14 years old (58.18%), followed by those aged 15 (20%) and 16 years old (10.90%).

SOCIOECONOMIC PROFILE AND FAMILY CONTEXT

The data reveal that the vast majority of students (98.18%) live with their parents or guardians, which indicates a family structure that is still present. However, almost half of the respondents (49.09%) stated that there is at least one unemployed person in their household, evidencing a reality of financial instability. In addition, 21.80% of the students

have already had to work to help with family expenses, and 30.90% reported that their family has already faced financial difficulties that directly affected food or housing.

Another relevant fact is that 45.4% of adolescents feel that they do not receive emotional support whenever they need it, which can directly impact their emotional and social stability.

EDUCATION AND SCHOOL

Despite the difficulties faced, most students (90.90%) never thought about dropping out of school for financial or family reasons. In addition, 83.63% believe that the school offers enough opportunities for their professional future.

However, more than half of the interviewees (52.72%) stated that they know colleagues who dropped out of school to work, which reinforces the impact of economic conditions on the educational trajectory. In addition, 72.70% believe that the school should offer more extracurricular activities to keep young people busy.

A worrying fact is that 69.09% of students do not see the school as a direct factor in reducing involvement with the offense, which suggests the need for more effective strategies to strengthen the institution's role in the prevention of juvenile crime.

INFLUENCE OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

The social context in which adolescents are inserted is a determining factor for their vulnerability to crime. The survey pointed out that 67.20% of respondents live in neighborhoods where there are many young people involved in illicit activities. In addition, 20% of the students have already been encouraged to participate in criminal activities and 7.27% admitted to having been involved in some illicit action.

The impact of these influences is also observed in the fact that 81.80% of the students have friends or acquaintances who have already had problems with the police. In addition, 69.09% consider the police presence insufficient to ensure security in their community, which reinforces the feeling of vulnerability of these young people.

Another worrying factor is the relationship between the lack of opportunities and youth crime. For 60% of the interviewees, the absence of leisure and cultural activities contributes to more young people getting involved in infractions.

PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Despite the difficulties faced, the adolescents show optimism about the future. Most of the interviewees (85.45%) feel that they have good professional prospects and 92.72%

believe that studying can change their living conditions. However, the pressure exerted by the social environment is still a reality for many: 58.17% stated that they have already felt pressured to take wrong actions due to the influence of friends or the environment in which they live. In addition, 76.30% believe that social inequality is one of the main factors that lead young people to the infraction.

Finally, a relevant fact is that 78.10% of respondents believe that offering more opportunities for courses and jobs could reduce the involvement of young people with crime, which reinforces the importance of public policies aimed at social inclusion and the development of concrete perspectives for youth.

The result of the questionnaire shows that socioeconomic, family and community factors play a crucial role in the vulnerability of young people to crime. The lack of financial structure, the influence of the environment and the absence of emotional support and opportunities are challenges that need to be faced to ensure a better future for these adolescents. Investing in education, culture, leisure and job opportunities can be an effective strategy to reduce this vulnerability and provide better conditions for these young people to build a path away from crime.

Given this scenario, it is essential to implement strategies that minimize the impacts of socioeconomic factors on the lives of young people. One of the fundamental measures is the expansion of access to educational and vocational programs, ensuring that adolescents have concrete alternatives to build a promising future. Encouraging public policies aimed at the first job, combined with technical training, can be an effective means of reducing the need for early work and providing real opportunities for social ascension (SANTOS, 2019).

In addition, the creation of leisure and cultural spaces can play an important role in reducing youth vulnerability to the offense. The absence of recreational and sports activities is often pointed out as a factor that leads young people to get involved in crime. Investing in community projects, such as cultural, sports and technological workshops, can provide healthy and productive alternatives for these adolescents, keeping them away from negative influences.

The performance of the security forces must also be rethought so that it is more effective in protecting youth. The police presence, when well structured and accompanied by preventive actions, can contribute significantly to the sense of security in the communities.

However, increased repression alone is not enough. It is essential that the police act together with other institutions, promoting educational and social actions that strengthen the ties between young people and the community.

Youth vulnerability to infractions is a multifaceted problem that demands an integrated and strategic approach. The results of this research demonstrate that social inequality, lack of opportunities, and the influence of the environment are determining factors for the insertion of young people in crime (BRANCO et al, 2022).

Therefore, effective solutions must involve not only strengthening education, but also creating public policies that promote social and economic development.

Thus, it is essential that the State, in partnership with civil society and the private sector, adopt measures that guarantee real opportunities for youth. Only through continuous investments in educational training, job creation and the appreciation of culture and sport will it be possible to build a safer and more promising future for the new generations.

CONCLUSION

The present research sought to analyze the relationship between socioeconomic factors and youth vulnerability to crime, based on data collected at the Jonathas Athias School in the Municipality of Dom Eliseu/PA. The results showed that financial precariousness, the absence of educational prospects and the influence of the social environment play a determining role in the insertion of adolescents in illicit activities. These findings corroborate the specialized literature, which points to social exclusion and economic inequality as risk factors for youth involvement with crime.

The data obtained revealed that a significant portion of the students interviewed face financial difficulties at home, which directly influences their future decisions and aspirations. The need to contribute to the family income or even the lack of access to leisure and cultural opportunities make them more susceptible to external influences.

Given this scenario, the need for public policies aimed at the social and educational inclusion of these young people becomes evident. School permanence programs, access to vocational courses, and investments in leisure and cultural spaces can be effective strategies to reduce this vulnerability.

In addition, actions that involve families and promote awareness about the importance of education can contribute to a more promising future for these adolescents.

Therefore, the research reaffirms the importance of understanding juvenile crime not only as a public security issue, but as a complex social phenomenon, which requires a multidimensional approach.

The fight against youth vulnerability to the infraction necessarily involves investments in education, social assistance and opportunities for these young people to build life



trajectories away from crime. Only through a collective effort between the State, society and educational institutions will it be possible to reverse this situation and provide a more dignified future for Brazilian youth.

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