

# Criminology

Q Write a comprehensive note on the risk and protective factors of juvenile delinquency in Pakistan.

## 1) Introduction:

Children are more prone to delinquency. There are number of risk factors that come into play at different points in a child's development, which make them more likely to engage in delinquent behaviour. However, exposure to multiple risk factors does not always result in delinquency. Everyone has their own resiliency, and there are also protective factors that lessens the likelihood of delinquency in a child.

## 2) Juvenile delinquency:

The term is derived from a Latin word 'Juvenilis' which means 'Youthful' and 'Delinquere' which means 'Failure in duty'.

### 7 Simple term:-

In simple term it can be defined as an act or offense committed by a child in violation of criminal law or due to his status as a child

### 7 Behavioural definition:-

According to Larry

Siegel

"It is the act of participating in unlawful behaviour as a minor or individual younger than the statutory age of minority"



## > Legal definition :-

Under the Juvenile Justice System Act 2018, a juvenile is anyone under 18 years, and a juvenile delinquent is a minor who has committed an offense under the law.

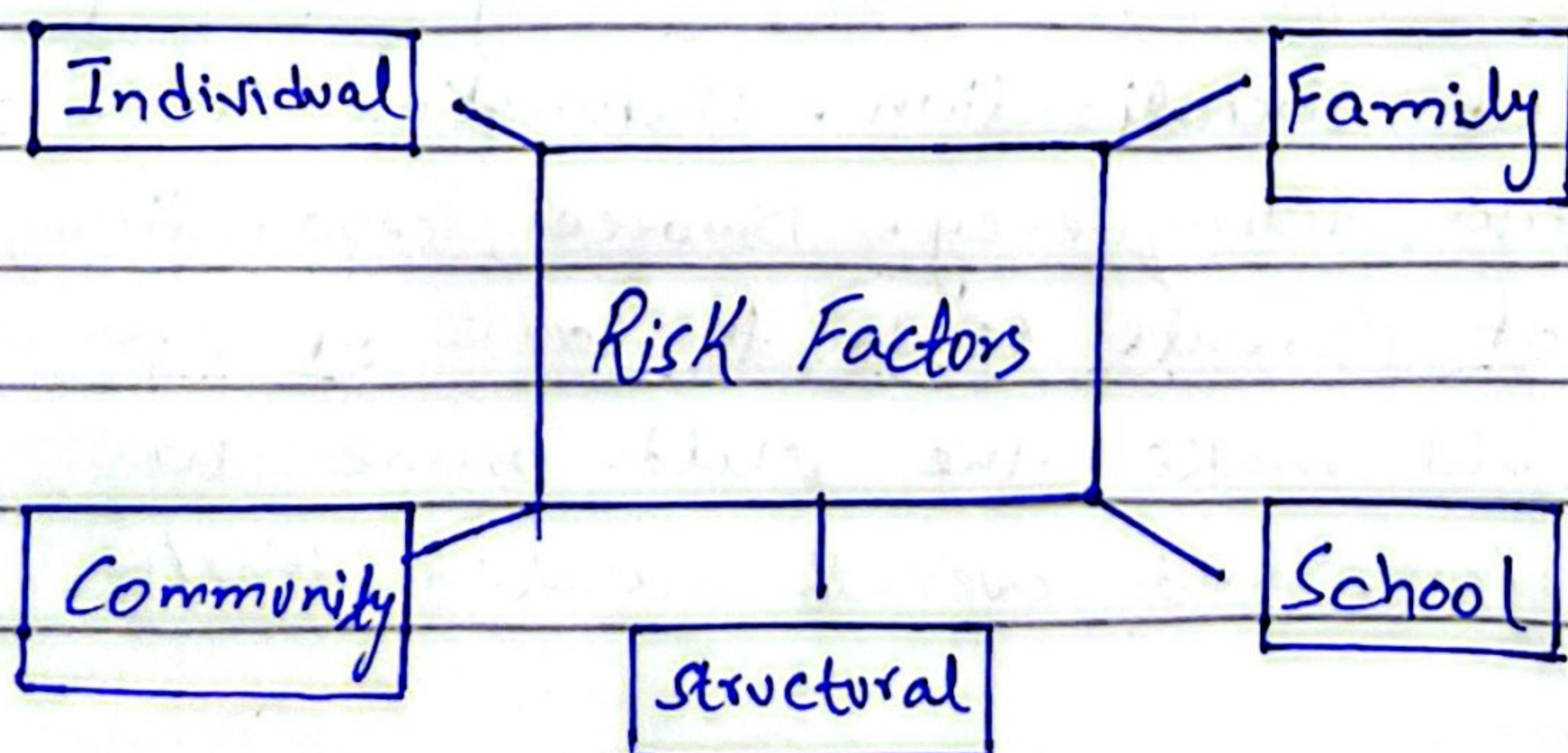
### 3) Nature and extent of juvenile delinquency:

The nature and extent of juvenile delinquency is multifaceted, incorporating violent crimes, property crimes and status offenses. Which are shaped by a child's psychological development, socio-economic factors, cultural context. All of which can be controlled by institutional role, therapy and increased care. In Pakistan it is important to study the nature and extent of juvenile delinquency. As, it has a high youth concentration ~~49%~~ 47% under the age of 18, according to Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.

So, it is important to understand nature and extent, so that the youth of Pakistan can have a dignified life.

### 4) Risk factors of juvenile delinquency in Pakistan:

Risk factors are characteristics or conditions increasing the likelihood of juvenile offending





## A) Individual Risk Factors

### > Impulsivity and aggression:-

Certain personality traits may lead to poor emotional control, which leads to violent behaviour. As per Sigmund Freud, Psychoanalytic Theory, ID consist of instinctual demands; so, if a person would have a weak super ego, he would fail to suppress ID. which would lead to deviant act.

### > Substance abuse and mental health issue :-

According to Anti-Narcotics Force, glue sniffing, meth use and cannabis are rising among Pakistani youth. This is trouble some as the pre-frontal cortex of the brain develops till the age 25, which is responsible for rationality. ~~drug~~ Drug use can cause hindrance, in its development, which may lead to crime. Along with that mental issues such as depression, trauma or ADHD, if let undiagnosed can increase the risk of criminality.

## B) Family Risk Factors

### > Broken homes :-

The family is the primary agent of socialization. Dysfunction here often leads to delinquency. Divorce, separation, or death of parents leads to lack of supervision. This could make the child prone to exploitation, and overall awaraken traits.



of criminality in them. In a case study by M. Naseem (Pakistan Journal of Social Science) found that 65% of juvenile delinquents in Lahore came from broken homes.

### > Parental neglect and abuse :-

Emotional and physical abuse, along with lack of focus, make juveniles hostile and also reduce moral control over youth.

"Children who experience violence are themselves at risk of becoming violent"

- WHO

### C) School and Peer Risk Factors

#### > Bullying / victimization :-

Bullying is common in schools, where the weak student is picked on and called names. This may lead to victims externalizing their anger later. Along with that labelling could lead to development of those characteristics in the child that is bullied, which is also supported by Labelling Theory.

#### > Deviant peer :-

Spending time with already delinquent peers, increases criminal behaviour. which is also what the Theory of Differential Association argues.

In Karachi, Police report (2023) highlight teenage motorcycle gangs formed around peer loyalty.



## D) Socio-economic and Community Risk Factors

### > poverty and unemployment :-

and unemployment are among the major contributors to juvenile delinquency. <sup>Poverty</sup>

According to Nadra Youth Offence study, 2021, 67% of juvenile offenders are from low income background. This could be further explained by Strain Theory, which states if a person has goals such as material gain and lack the means to obtain it, that person will resort to crime.

### > Urban Slums :-

: Urban slums such as Layari in Karachi, are overcrowded and exposed to crime, drug market and access to weapon. In such a community the likelihood of a child to develop deviant behaviour or delinquency increases. This claim is supported by Social Disorganization Theory.

## E) Structural/Institutional Risk Factors

### > Weak juvenile justice system :-

Overcrowded jails and delay in cases judgement are a serious issue in Pakistan, which exploits the juveniles. Along with under representation is a serious concern that enhances the risk factors.

"Justice delayed is justice denied"

- William Gladstone



## > Police brutality / corruption :-

A juvenile under any circumstances should not be kept in jail, but in Pakistan due to poor check. Juveniles are jailed and are subjected to torture. This cause for reduction in respect for law. Along with that corruption is a major issue due to which proper rehabilitation centers are not being established in Pakistan.

There are only two major Borstal institutes in Sindh and Bahawalpur.

## 5) Protective factors against juvenile delinquency in Pakistan:

Protective factors are conditions which help youth against risks, promoting resilience.

### A) Individual Protective Factors

#### > IQ / Social skills :-

A child having a high IQ. would be less likely to commit a crime, as he would not be impulsive and would be able to do a proper cost benefit analysis. Along with that crime is considered as an anti-social behaviour, so if a person child has decent social skills he would be less prone to crime.

"Socialization has the power to make every impossible possible"

- Book: Down to earth approach



## > Engagement in pro social activities :-

Engagement, sports and participation in campaigns are all which can reduce delinquency in a child. All of these incorporate a positive competition among the child to do better in life.

## B) Family Protective Factors

### > Parental supervision and care :-

The primary learning begins from childhood under the supervision of parents. If they are attentive and incorporate positive morals in the child it would reduce the likelihood of committing a crime in the children.

As mentioned by Gabriel Torde, "Every child's mind is a blank sheet of paper what ever he learns is printed on his mind."

### ➤ > Religious / moral guidance :-

Islam is a complete code of life. In Pakistan, Islamic teachings often reinforce moral limits. So, it is compulsory for all of the parents to incorporate teachings of Quran and Sunnah. So, that the child could differentiate between right and wrong.



## C) School and Community Protective Factors

### > Attachment to school :-

As mentioned by Travis Hirschi's Social Bond Theory that strong bonds foster internal and external control, so if a child has attachment to school, mentors or teachers, he would want to work hard to make them proud eventually staying away from the path of criminality.

### > Community programs :-

Initiatives such as Edhi foundation, SOS villages and even layari football and boxing club are greatly admired and are the main protective factors among youth. Along with initiatives such as introduction of Eagle Squad which is AI driven help in controlling crime. As mentioned in Routine activity Theory crimes occurs when there is motivated offender, suitable target and lack of guardian. The eagle squad eliminates criteria of suitable target which over all reduces crime.

## D) Institutional Protective Factors

### > Rehabilitative justice :-

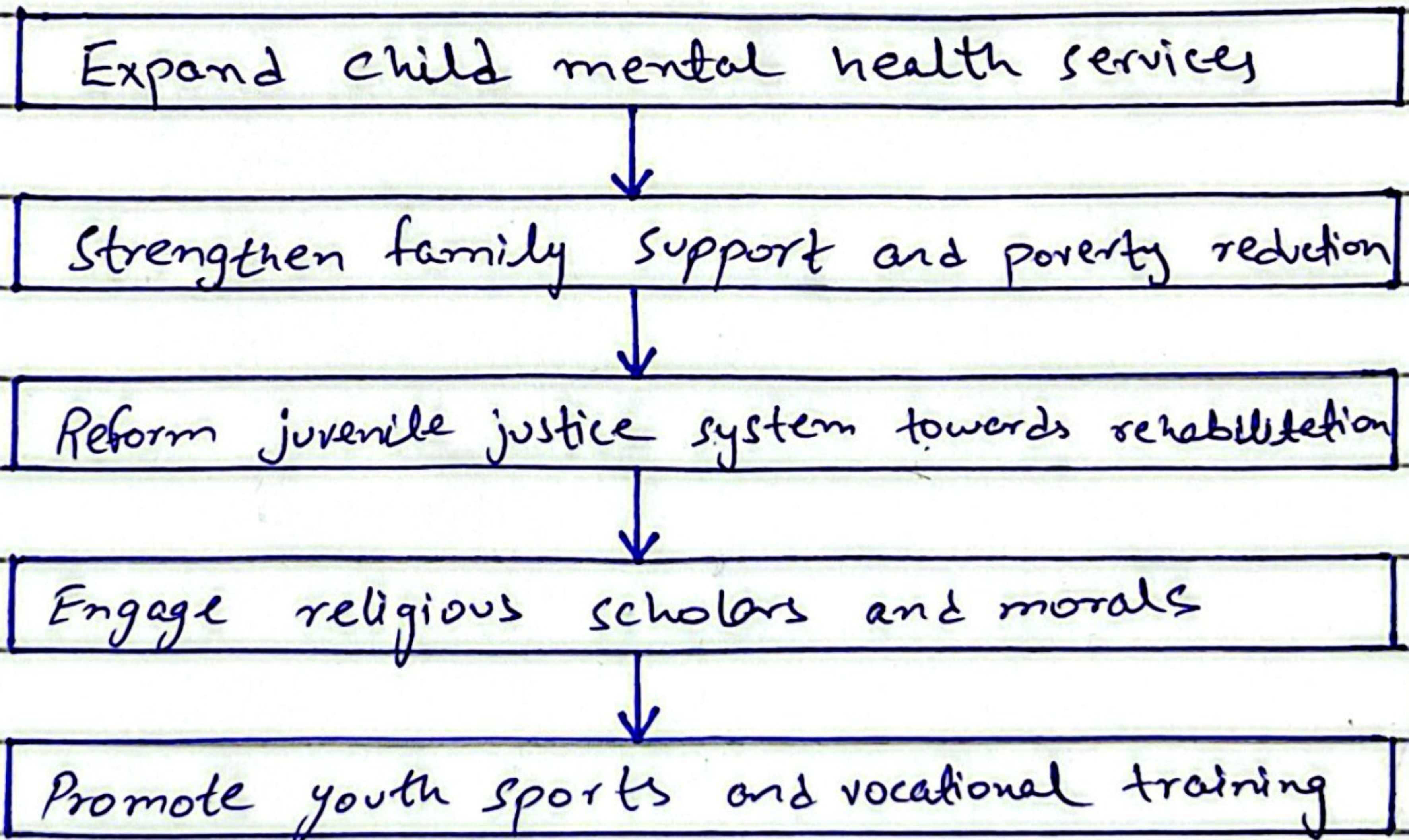
In Pakistan major issue is over crowding of juvenile offenders. According to HRPC, juvenile prison population remains 1500-2000 annually. Due to which there is delay in judgement and the offenders don't get the chance to rehabilitate.



So, every district should have its own juvenile court, with proper trained judges, and should be a 60 days deadline for proper addressal and reintegration after rehabilitation. Pehchaan Rehabilitation Center Punjab reduced youth recidivism by 28%.

- Youth crime prevention report, 2021

## 6) Recommendations for Pakistan:



## 7) Conclusion:

Juvenile delinquency in Pakistan results from a complex interplay of risks like poverty, broken families, and peer influence, but protective factors like supportive families, school engagement, and community programs can act as a powerful shield. Tackling risk and building protections is essential for a safer Pakistan.