UNDERSTANDING CRIME THROUGH SOCIOECONOMIC LENSES: EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract
This study investigates the correlation between socioeconomic factors and crime rates. A study revealed that higher levels of education, especially among women, can have an impact on crime rates. This impact can be attributed to improved reporting of crimes or increased socioeconomic tensions. Nevertheless, a robust inverse relationship was discovered between the level of education among women and the occurrence of crime, underscoring the significance of empowering women through education to mitigate criminal activity. Economic indicators, such as GDP, demonstrated a negligible direct influence on crime rates, indicating that economic expansion in isolation does not necessarily lead to decreased crime. The positive correlation between population density and crime indicates that densely populated areas have higher crime rates because of social tensions and resource competition. The study proposes a comprehensive strategy to tackle crime, which involves allocating resources to educational initiatives, fostering inclusive economic development, improving social services, addressing issues related to population density, implementing employment programs that target specific groups, and promoting community policing and reporting of criminal activities.

Keywords: Crime, GDP, Poverty, Women's Employment, Women's Education

1 Introduction

The increasing participation of women in the workforce is a notable feature of recent progress in developed economies. However, increasing the involvement of women as active participants in the labour market remains a significant policy goal in most emerging countries, including Pakistan. Both women's utilization of status and the extent of female involvement in economic behaviour are contingent upon market forces. However, the participation rate is observed to be low due to two factors: firstly, women's personal preference not to enter the labour market, and secondly, the unsuitability of the working environment for them.

Women's education is crucial for the efficient functioning of the economy, given that females in Pakistan make up 48% of the total population. The significance of this substantial

portion cannot be overlooked, as females play a crucial role in raising future generations. Therefore, female education is essential for ensuring sustainable development. According to our religion, Islam, both males and females must receive an education. Gender does not affect the right to receive education. Empirical evidence indicates that the proportion of educated women is significantly lower than that of men when considering the entire population.

As the literacy rate among women increases, so too must the employment opportunities for females. Gender and religious considerations should not be subject to any restrictions. The unemployment rate for educated women incurs significant opportunity costs that impact women's empowerment. To contribute to the family's finances, individuals must possess a self-sustaining means of income (Cain 1979). The advantages of earning income may be diminished by the cultural context, especially when women are compelled to surrender their wages to their families (Mason 1986, Sharma 1982, Wolf 1985).

Education amplifies a woman's influence in decision-making and empowers her by allowing her to express her views on achieving more equitable marital relationships and embracing the status of a nuclear family. An empirical study by Amphora and Mather (1997) has established a strong and consistent relationship between women's paid work and increased decision-making, which is seen as empowerment.

Moreover, when a woman receives an education, she gains confidence and knowledge to advocate for her fair share of resources within the household. Additionally, education plays a role in diminishing the perpetuation of patriarchal beliefs and values (Jeffery and Basu 1996). As women's education level increases, they are more likely to influence decision-making processes significantly. Age is also a significant factor in decision-making. As females get older, their influence on decision-making tends to increase. This is because the impact of females from different age groups on the decision-making process varies, as stated by the cohort effect.

An empirical analysis was conducted to establish the correlation between the level of education and female employment. According to Becker (1965), it has been argued that female participation in work has increased as education levels have improved. The majority of Pakistani women reside in rural areas, where they often go unnoticed, and their voices remain unheard. Rural females, predominantly from an underdeveloped region, work tirelessly from dawn to dusk. Women living in these underdeveloped areas face significant hardships. The human deprivation index is significantly elevated in these regions, particularly among females. Considering the circumstances, the plight of rural women is easily understandable. Anyone can readily observe the state of women in Pakistan. (Zia, 1998)

Women's labour supply is a crucial factor in the socioeconomic development of a nation. Furthermore, it is imperative for the advancement of women. Women embraced equality with men when they were equally engaged in economic activities, such as providing essential needs like food and clothing, and demonstrated their proficiency in production. This applies to primitive societies where production was primarily focused on domestic settings. As time progressed, men began working outside the home in factories, while women stayed at home to take care of family responsibilities. Unfortunately, the status of women declined over time because household production held little value in capitalist economies (Lisaniler and Bhatti, 2005).

Nations can achieve greatness only when women contribute equally to society alongside their male counterparts. Social integration plays a crucial role in determining one's decision to participate in the labour force and make a meaningful contribution to society. Providing unpaid

services while living at home is considered a crime, even though females possess many skills, education, and the ability to contribute significantly to the economy. It is not permissible in any jurisdiction for women to endure unacceptable living conditions. Gillani et al. (2009) conducted the study.

An elderly woman appears to have greater authority, especially over other women and children. On the other hand, a newly married woman is seen as having very little power in the new family, in contrast to the oldest daughter-in-law. There is ample empirical evidence that shows a strong correlation between a woman's age and her position within the family structure, particularly in terms of decision-making authority (Mason 1986). The duration of marriage is an additional factor that can influence the authority of female empowerment. It has been argued that the longer a woman is married, the more knowledge she acquires, which helps her establish a secure position within her family. The result of this is increased empowerment Mason (1997).

The education level and employment opportunities primarily influence the crime rate in any society. Crime statistics indicate that an individual's level of educational attainment, the number of schools available, and graduation rates significantly impact their involvement in criminal activities. Several empirical studies indicate that the level of education can influence the likelihood of finding employment. (Farnworth and Lieber, 1989). Despite laws that ensure everyone has access to free and appropriate education, many individuals still do not receive an adequate education in school (Rutherford, Nelson, and Wolford, 1986).

2 Literature Review

The participation of women in the labour force has been a critical area of study in economics and social sciences, reflecting diverse socioeconomic, cultural, and institutional factors. This literature review synthesizes findings from various studies examining female labour force participation (FLFP), the impact of education on women's empowerment, and the relationship between employment, crime, and social issues.

2.1   Female Labor Force Participation and Socioeconomic Factors

Some papers identified the factors determining FLP in various settings, especially in developing nations. Awan et al. (2015) also investigated the factors that influence the employed female rural labour market in Pakistan Rajanpur. Primary data was gathered using field surveys; the multiple regression method was used to determine the important variables like family size, health status of the woman, type of family, income of the husband and education level attained. It was, therefore, evident that age, family size, number of children and husband's income increase FLFP, but the area's purdah and religious aspect decrease FLFP.

In the same way, Gondal (2011) has employed the probit model for the analysis of FLFP in the provinces of Pakistan and found that women's flux of participation is comparatively higher in Punjab and Sindh provinces than in KPK and Baluchistan provinces. The study also found that age, the husband's farming income and the number of household members enhanced its positive contribution. On the other hand, the husband's age, nuclear family systems, and number of children in the family are some variables that weaken women's labour market participation. Similarly, Abbas (2013) took this account to Pakistan and Bangladesh and illustrated female labor supply decision-making in relationship with fecundity rate, rate of infant mortality, average per capita GDP and average education level. According to the above analysis, with the help of the Vector Error

Correction Model (VECM), it has been identified that education and lower mortality rates impact female labour participation in Bangladesh and Pakistan.

In addition, Khan and Khan (2009) discussed the main socioeconomic antecedent of Pakistani married women's employment status. The field survey data showed that women's age, educational level, household poverty, and husband's unemployment are positively associated with FLFP. However, the study also noted that household income, nuclear family settings, and the number of young children tend to discourage women's participation in the labour market. Research that has adopted regional perspectives, including the work of Verme et al. (2014), has shown that the employment rate of women in the Arab nations is comparatively lower than that offered in other regions. The cross-sectional, longitudinal & panel data confirm that secondary education, marriage & inactivity because of family responsibilities lower FLFP. The cross-sectional, longitudinal, and panel data analyses suggest that secondary education, marriage, and economic inactivity due to familial expectations reduce FLFP. In contrast, urbanization and higher education levels positively influence women's economic participation.

2.2 Impact of Education on Female Empowerment and Labor Participation

Schooling has been named repeatedly as a significant factor explaining women's employment and emancipation. Education can also bring effective change in gender inequality. Aslam and Rawal (2013) Education can change women's decisions and improve their economic standings. Specifically, the study found that there is a need to ensure and promote education among female candidates for equivalence in the labour market.

Following this, Bhattacharjee (2015) observed that education is significant for women's empowerment in India in that education leads to improved personal and social change. In its argument, the study claimed that education empowers women to escape social roles and become more involved in the job market and other affairs. Gulesci and Meyersson (2013) supported their arguments with the data derived from a survey conducted in 2008 that revealed that women with more years of schooling have more decision-making power and higher autonomy in environments that do not prohibit this kind of decision-making. A regression discontinuity design was applied to show that education has a causal effect on women's emancipation and employment.

According to Mehmood et al. (2015), education can be deemed a major factor in enhancing the FLFP in Muslim countries where traditional norms and values curtail the capability of women to participate in the economy. Education data were obtained from the WDI, whereas the employment and wages data were obtained from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Global Competitiveness Report, respectively. For this study, the Generalized Method of Moments (GMM) was used to estimate the causal effect of education on employment and wages for women. Mainali (2011) looked at the effect of early marriage on both the education and employment status of the women of Nepal. The findings revealed a negative effect on educational achievement brought about by early marriages, resulting in a decreased likelihood of women joining the labour force. The study proposed that delaying marriage could boost the results of education and the role of women in the economy. Woldemicael (2007) explored the effects of women's education on family planning and women's empowerment in Eritrea by employing the logistic regression models. This paper revealed the fact that higher education levels result in better-empowered decisions on family planning; hence, the extent of education among women is crucial in their ability to perform their societal roles.

2.3 Crime, Unemployment, and Social Issues

This is also true regarding the connection between employment, crime and elements of the social environment. The study by Ajimotokin, (2015) revealed a relationship between unemployment and crime, because, when unemployment is high, the levels of violent and property crimes are also high. Regression models were employed to establish the effect of socioeconomic factors on crime. From the observation it was determined that economic reforms in creating employment could greatly reduce crime. The study carried out by Levitt on the effect of unemployment on crime also used uniform crime report data. The study also revealed that more unemployment leads to higher crime rates, which implies that due to the insecurity of jobs, most people turn into criminals. On the other hand, employment was proven to negatively correlate with crime, whereby employment acted as a factor discouraging crime.

More specifically, in the case of the United States, Louchnor and Moretti (2004) found that education lowers crime, particularly violent crime. In the study, some information from the U. S. Census. OLS and IV estimators were used to show that increased levels of education reduce the chances of captivity and arrests, thus proving the importance of education in reducing crime. The above studies by Aslund et al. (2015) involved applying regression analysis to determine the effects of educational reforms on criminal behaviours in Sweden. This study also concluded early and thorough education decreases crimes among people, especially youths with a propensity for criminal behaviours. The conclusions made it possible for Mariana to indicate that learning equality policies act as potential ways of crime prevention. Swisher and Dennison (2016) have devoted their efforts to investigating such educational intergenerational pathways and crime rates in the United States. Besides, inverse binomial models showed that reductions in educational attainment predict increases and educational mobility, predicting decreases in crime, which implies that enhancing education attained across generations may decrease crime in the long run.

The review of the existing literature reveals the complexity of female labour force participation drivers concerning socioeconomic characteristics, education and social factors, including crime and unemployment. Promoting more women's education remains one of the significant strategies for empowering women and participating in the labour market. In contrast, economic security through employment remains one of the key strategies for minimum emergence of crimes. The gender-sensitive initiatives concerning women's education and the eradication of cultural and institutional hurdles can greatly contribute to the improvement of economic growth as well as the stability of society. Subsequent studies should also follow these relationship lines in other settings to increase the understanding of policy solutions accordingly.

2.4 Explanation of the Emergence of Themes

The facts regarding employment, crimes, and social aspects are rather broad. From a study conducted by Ajimotokin in 2015, he realized that there existed a direct relationship between unemployment and violent plus property crimes. Socio economic factors; factors used in the study and analysis of this factor; analysis of the multiple regression models for determining the impact of different socioeconomic factors on crime. It concluded that ways by which employment could be increased also GNH can reduce crime rates to a large extend.

Levitt (2001) examined the correlation between unemployment and crime, as the Uniform Crime Reports revealed. The findings indicate a positive correlation between elevated levels of unemployment and increased crime rates. Consequently, economic instability might catalyzer

individuals to engage in criminal activities. Conversely, employment has been demonstrated to have an inverse impact on crime rates by decreasing the probability of engaging in criminal behaviour. Lochner and Moretti (2004) discovered that obtaining a higher education in the United States substantially reduces crime rates, especially regarding violent crimes. This study employed data from the U.S. Census. It utilized both Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) and Instrumental Variables (IV) estimators to demonstrate that increased educational achievement decreases the likelihood of incarceration and arrests, highlighting the essential importance of education in reducing crime.

Åslund, Nilsson, and Pebley (2015) studied the correlation between educational reform and criminal activity in Sweden. The research was conducted quantitatively through the utilization of regression analysis. The reform implemented in this study significantly enhanced comprehensive education. It mitigated criminal activities, particularly among the youth most susceptible to criminal behaviour, which was perceived as evidence that educational policies promoting inclusivity and equality effectively contribute to education and decrease crime rates. Swisher and Dennison (2016) examined the impact of educational intergenerational pathways on crime rates in the United States. The researchers employed inverse binomial models to directly illustrate the correlation between lower education levels and higher crime levels and the inverse relationship between educational advancement and crime reduction. These findings indicate that improving educational opportunities for multiple generations can be a successful strategy for decreasing criminal activity (Yasmin & Ajaz (2021).

Participation in the female labour force is highlighted in the existing literature as being sensitive to factors such as; socioeconomic status, education, and other socio-political factors such as crime and unemployment is taken to be an important control. This also means that education empowers women, especially in acquiring jobs, due to increased discrimination in the hiring market. However, their economic security has to be provided to decrease the level of criminality, though. There is a need to promote education for women and disentangle cultural and institutional barriers that hinder the advancement of women in order to attain an inclusive growth that is economically and socially sustainable. Further research should be conducted to conduct a detailed analysis of the interdependencies of various factors in various circumstances and specify the directions for policy intervention.

Theme	Study	Key Findings	Explanation of How the Theme Emerges
Crime and Unemployment	Ajimotokin (2015)	Unemployment is positively associated with increased violent and property crimes.	This study shows a direct link between unemployment and crime, highlighting the socioeconomic impact of joblessness on criminal activities. Unemployment contributes to economic desperation, leading to higher crime rates.
Crime Reduction Through Employment	Levitt (2001)	Employment reduces crime rates; unemployment correlates with	Demonstrates an inverse relationship between employment and crime, suggesting that economic stability through

		increased crime.	employment reduces incentives for criminal behaviour.
Education's Role in Crime Prevention	Lochner and Moretti (2004)	Higher educational attainment reduces crime rates, especially violent crimes.	Highlights the role of education in crime reduction, showing that increased education leads to lower incarceration rates, suggesting that education is a preventive measure against crime.
Impact of Educational Reforms on Crime	Åslund et al. (2015)	More comprehensive education reduces criminal activities among high-risk youth.	Indicates that education reforms can significantly reduce criminal behaviours, especially among vulnerable populations, by providing better opportunities and deterring criminal tendencies.
Intergenerational Education and Crime	Swisher and Dennison (2016)	Declines in educational attainment predict increases in crime; upward educational mobility is associated with crime reduction.	Emphasizes the long-term benefits of education in reducing crime across generations, showing how lack of education or decline in education levels can contribute to higher crime rates.
Employment, Crime, and Life Course	Ellis et al. (2019)	Stable employment contributes to reduced criminal involvement over the life course; positive relation between employment and life course stability, an inverse relation with crime.	Explores the role of stable employment in decreasing criminal behaviour throughout an individual's life, suggesting that consistent employment opportunities can lead to long-term reductions in crime rates.

These themes collectively suggest that education and employment are pivotal in addressing crime and social issues. By providing economic opportunities and improving educational access, societies can reduce crime rates and enhance overall social stability.

3 Data and methodology

The study utilizes secondary data to conduct the empirical study; it is necessary to test our theories. Here, we utilize the panel data set. The data is collected from various sources, including the World Bank, covering the period from 2008 to 2022. The data encompasses 68 countries worldwide. This study examined the influence of education and employment on crime. The analysis encompassed the entire world. Due to the unavailability of data, information for several countries has been omitted. Data will be sourced from various entities such as the United Nations and the World Development Indicators.

4 Results and discussion

4.1   Correlation Analysis

It measures the degree of association among the variables. Analysis helps determine the existence of multicollinearity, which can be defined as a high degree of association among two independent variables that lead to the problem's existence. Otherwise, there will be no persistence of the problem of multicollinearity.

Table 2: correlation analysis

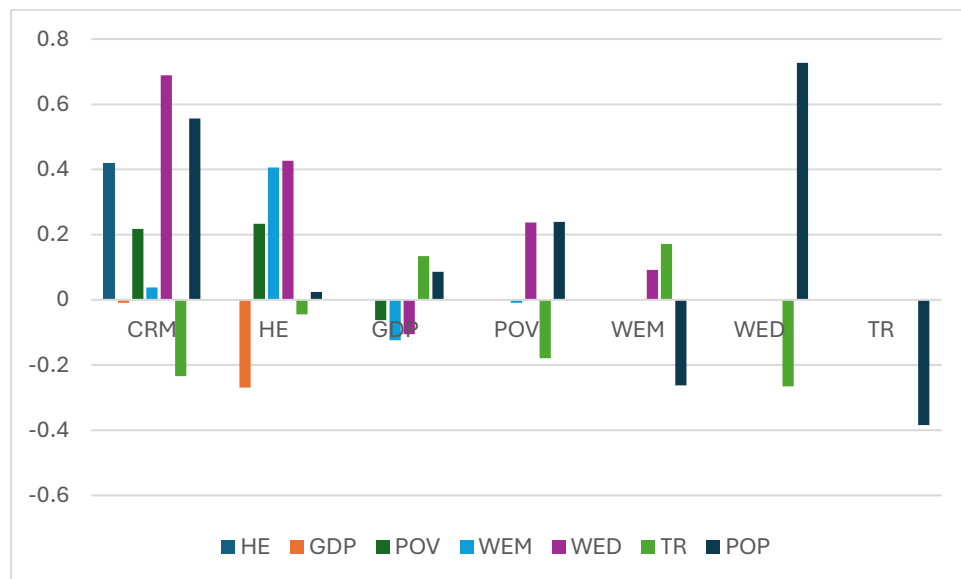|	CRM	HE	GDP	POV	WEM	WED	TR
HE	0.4193						
GDP	-0.0095	-0.2697					
POV	0.218	0.2334	-0.0622				
WEM	-0.0384	0.4064	-0.1237	-0.0094			
WED	-0.689	0.4267	-0.1057	0.2371	0.0924		
TR	-0.2336	-0.0449	0.1343	-0.1786	0.1717	-0.2652	
POP	0.5559	0.024	0.0862	0.2394	-0.262	0.7267	-0.3839

Figure 1: Correlation analysis

The correlation matrix uncovers significant associations between socioeconomic variables, including crime (CRM), higher education (HE), GDP, poverty (POV), women's employment (WEM), women's education (WED), a variable labelled TR, and population (POP). The correlation coefficient 0.4193 indicates a moderate positive relationship between higher education (HE) and crime (CRM). This suggests that areas with higher levels of education may have higher crime rates, potentially due to factors such as increased crime reporting or complex socioeconomic dynamics. The correlation coefficient between GDP and crime is highly insignificant and negative (-0.0095), suggesting that variations in GDP have minimal direct influence on crime rates. On the other hand,

there is a modest positive correlation (0.218) between poverty (POV) and crime, suggesting that higher poverty levels are, to some extent, linked with an increase in criminal behaviour. This association likely stems from the economic difficulties faced by impoverished individuals, which can contribute to engaging in criminal activities. The correlation between women's employment (WEM) and crime is characterized by a weak and negative coefficient of -0.0384, indicating a nearly non-existent direct relationship.

Nevertheless, a robust inverse relationship exists between women's education (WED) and crime (-0.689), indicating that as women's educational attainment rises, crime rates experience a substantial decline. This phenomenon can be attributed to improved socioeconomic circumstances or heightened involvement of educated women in community affairs. The variable TR exhibits a modest inverse correlation with crime (-0.2336), suggesting a marginal decline in crime as TR increases. Also, there is a positive correlation between population (POP) and crime of 0. 5559, which means that the higher the population density, the higher the crime rate. This could result from a higher rate of social tension and or improved chances of executing unlawful deeds. These correlations demonstrate the intricate relationship between socioeconomic factors and crime, with certain variables like population size and women's education exerting a more significant impact on crime rates, while others, such as GDP, have a limited influence.

4.2   Discussion

The correlation matrix provides useful insights into the relationship between socioeconomic characteristics and crime and reveals the hidden expected relationship and some interesting relationships. This is a moderate positive relationship that may take a lot of planning to understand fully, showing that there is no direct correlation between access to higher education (HE) and the commission of a crime (CRM). This implies that for areas that have received more education, we may find more awareness and reporting of crime (Yasin et al., 2023). Or it can be interpreted as socioeconomic conflicts connected with education in the context of the absence of new economic occupations. However, the negative relationship between GDP and crime is extremely low, indicating that economic development may not significantly solve the crime rates probably due to the fact that the increase in GDP does not cause improvement of the living standard and decrease inequality.

The relatively small and positive relationship between poverty (POV) and crime is in line with the general theories that associate poor economic status with high levels of crime due to the poor's need to engage in criminal activities due to a lack of other options. Hence, there is a weak negative relationship between women's employment (WEM) and crime, suggesting that there is little impact on crime when women's employment increases. This seems to indicate that other sociocultural factors affect crime besides employment rates. The negative and significant relationship between women's education(WED) and crime is quite high, suggesting that educated women reduce crime level because education will bring a better standard of living and economic improvement for society (Yasmin et al. 2023; 2022; 2021; Shaheen et al., 2021; Iqbal et al., 2021).

This is explained by the fact that as the population (POP) increases, so does the crime. Population density influences the crime rate, possibly due to increased social interaction, resource competition, and social conflict in densely populated regions. The variable TR exhibits a weak negative correlation with crime, suggesting a subtle inverse relationship. However, a comprehensive understanding of this connection would require further exploration into the nature

of TR. These correlations indicate that certain factors, such as women's education and population density, have distinct connections with crime. However, other factors, such as GDP and women's employment, exhibit more intricate relationships. The intricate nature of the issue highlights the necessity for comprehensive approaches that tackle various socioeconomic aspects to control and diminish crime efficiently.

5 Conclusion and policy recommendation

Looking at the correlation matrix, such relationships are rather complex and give a good insight into the connection between various socioeconomic status indicators and the crime level. The findings for crime awareness and level of education suggest that crime is not always a concept that is exterminated by education in general or women's education in particular; instead, it has a grey area in terms of complexity: it can be triggered by both more reporting courtesy of more education, and socioeconomic disparities in specific circumstances. On the other end of the scale, however, findings indicate a significant negativity between female education and crime and, therefore, an indication of the value of education, particularly female education, as a weapon in the crusade against crime. For instance, figures like the gross domestic product reveal that the relationship between economic factors and crime is not very strong, implying that economic development does not necessarily translate to reduced crimes, provided solutions do not result in enhanced living standards for the community or reduction of inequality. Moreover, the method that relates population density to crime indicates that there is a significance of more density in crime rates because social pressure and more competition for resources will also lead to increased crime rates in such areas. Such correlations demonstrate that crime is multidimensional and depends on different socioeconomic factors, which means that models promoting single measures to combat these problems could be rather ineffective.

Invest in Comprehensive Education Programs: Since women's education has reduced crime negatively, policymakers should make special efforts to develop education programs for women. The availability of education for women and making sure that the curriculum includes life and community aspects can reduce the incidence of crime due to social instability and lack of economic productivity. Due to the lack of effect from the GDP growth on crime reduction, the economic initiatives should aim at achieving inclusive growth that controls social imparity and improves population quality. Examples of this intervention are: social and welfare services, employment generation programs and micro and small enterprises investment that can create employment for poor population groups.

Enhance Social Services and Support Systems: To rectify the positive relation between poverty and crime, the social assistance services designed to aid people in financial difficulty should be improved. This includes welfare programs as well as issues relating to unemployment housing, among others, since these are some causes of desperation that lead individuals to engage in criminal activities. Analysis of the figure illustrates that as the population density increases, the crime rates rise, therefore calling for urban and social planning that minimizes the adverse credo of density living. Politicians should think about creating common territory and places, enhancing the safety management systems and using funds for social inclusion in densely populated areas.

Implement Targeted Employment Programs: Although employment of women did not relate to the decline in crime, proper employment of women is good for society in a general sense and thus, employment programs that seek to employ women effectively would ensure that women are

empowered and that they can regain meaningful jobs in the societies. Using such measures as vocational training for women, start up businesses for women and provision of childcare services that enables women to balance between their jobs and home will also try to address the issue of women's economic provision, indirectly addressing the issue of crime in our society. Encourage Community Policing and Crime Reporting: It may also be the case that the positive moderations correlating higher education and crime may result from higher reporting of crimes in educated areas. Effective support of ideas on community policing and raising police credibility can guarantee that the incidents are reported and acted upon without implying high criminality. With these policy approaches, the governments are therefore in a vantage political position to effectively tackle the various socioeconomic determinates of crime hence creating safer societies for its citizens.

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