

Designing a Social Marketing Mechanism Approach to Juvenile Crime Among 14–17-Year-Olds in Azerbaijan

*By Habib Mahmudov**

The problem of crimes committed by children aged between 14 and 17 has become more noteworthy in Azerbaijan in the last 5 years. With its wide range of juvenile delinquency at this age group, the importance of a timely action is extremely crucial. Although, traditional methods of these type of crime solving cases might be valuable, implementation of social marketing practices can significantly boost the process of mindset shift and behavioural change for not only the targeted age group, but also the age dimensions of 18-24, 25-29, and 30+ in Azerbaijan. Formulation of a right social marketing mechanism with a sound and clear communication could have a positive effect on the representatives of this age group and ideally prevent the reoccurring and new scenarios related to different forms of crime in Azerbaijan. During the implementation phase the CSD-IES framework, an acronym created from the six stages of the framework: consumer research, segmentation, social program design, implementation, evaluation, and sustainability, can ease the whole process and bring clarity to the execution of the social marketing program designed particularly for the set social problem.

Keywords: *Social problem, social marketing mechanism, crimes, children, Azerbaijan.*

Introduction

Juvenile criminality is an ongoing and changing societal issue that threatens youth development, social cohesion, and national security. Children aged 14 to 17 in Azerbaijan are increasingly involved in both direct criminal activities and crimes done under peer pressure or in group settings. Long-term data indicates that overall offences have decreased throughout the 1990s, but in recent years, there has been a rebound, especially in serious crimes, which raises questions about how successful current measures are (The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2024a, 2024b). Furthermore, modern treatments are reactive and punitive, rather than preventative or rehabilitative—despite worldwide evidence that community-based and communication-driven solutions are more effective in addressing the fundamental causes of young crime (Farrington and Welsh, 2007).

The aim of this study is to analyse long-term patterns in juvenile criminality in Azerbaijan and create a targeted social marketing mechanism to avoid future development among teenagers aged 14–17. The study has the two following objectives:

1. To investigate the statistical patterns and kinds of juvenile crimes perpetrated or involving children in Azerbaijan from 1993 to 2023;

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2. To create a behaviour-focused social marketing framework geared on reducing teenager criminality through community involvement and preventive communication.

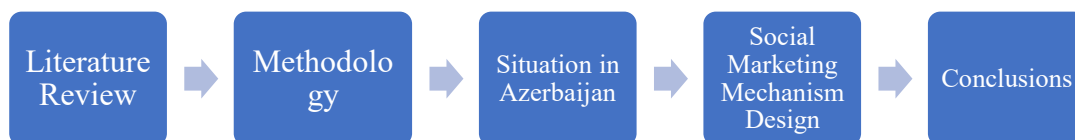
Despite rising concern, there is a scarcity of thorough, data-driven research in Azerbaijan that examine long-term patterns in teenage criminality and propose strategic, behaviour-based solutions. This study addresses that gap by using statistical analysis and social marketing concepts to create a targeted, preventative approach for reducing teenage crime.

This study seeks to investigate the fundamental causes of juvenile offenders in Azerbaijan by examining crime patterns over the last three decades using statistical and visual techniques. In Azerbaijani regulations, juvenile delinquency refers to criminal behaviour perpetrated by persons who are legally minors, often aged 14 to 17. Such behaviour can vary from petty violations to significant, violent crimes, and it is frequently driven by peer pressure, socioeconomic circumstances, and a lack of supervision. Furthermore, the study seeks to suggest a targeted, evidence-based social marketing mechanism—a method that use commercial marketing strategies to induce voluntary behavioural change for the benefit of both people and society. This approach will be supported by a behaviour-change framework that uses communication tactics, incentives, and community-level participation to drive intervention design. These basic principles will be expanded upon in the subsequent literature review and conceptual framework sections. Policymakers, educators, law enforcement, and community stakeholders who are striving to lower juvenile crime and provide safer conditions for adolescent development are among the target audience members.

Precisely, conduction of this study is important and timely due to the unavailability of such type of research in the country, in terms of understanding the social problems and addressing them with social marketing initiatives. Given the case of Azerbaijan, this study will help to fill the gap in the current state of research on juvenile criminality and find possible solutions in form of a social marketing mechanism, that will help in not only resolving this pressing issue but also assist in prevention of such negative behaviours to reoccur in the future.

Following is a roadmap outlining the key components of the paper:

Chart 1. *Roadmap to the Study*



Source: Self elaboration.

Literature Review

This chapter presents multiple definitions of “Social Problem” and “Social Marketing” terms, as well as theoretical overview and breakdown of CSD-IES framework.

Social Problem

The concept of a “*Social Problem*” has changed significantly over the course of sociological literature, with scholars focusing on a variety of aspects such as norm breaches, public concern, negative outcomes, and the need for group action. Although early definitions set the groundwork, subsequent contributions have expanded our knowledge of how social issues arise, are identified, and are resolved—often by examining them through the prisms of cultural norms and structural inequalities.

Among the first to characterise social issues as circumstances that a sizable segment of society views as undesirable or detrimental were Charles Cooley (1909) and Robert Merton (1938). Merton emphasised that the agreement in society that intervention is necessary is just as much a part of social issues as the actual state. These early formulations set a standard for seeing social difficulties as widely acknowledged disturbances of the social order rather than only as objective harm.

By more clearly connecting social issues to departures from cultural norms and expectations, other academics expanded on this. Thompson, Hickey, and Thompson (2016), for instance, characterise social difficulties as circumstances that prevent people from realising their full potential, citing prejudice, unemployment, and poverty as examples. In similar terms, Schaefer (2024) and Marger (2013) define social issues as actions or circumstances that deviate from generally acknowledged social norms and values and have a negative impact on people or communities. These viewpoints are especially pertinent to comprehending juvenile criminality, which frequently deviates from both legal requirements and societal norms about the conduct of young people.

The notion of public interest and consensus is also emphasised in several formulations. According to Coleman (2005) and Skocpol (1995), a condition is considered a social problem when a significant segment of the public believes that it has to be addressed. This perspective is supported by Eitzen, Smith, and Zinn (2023), who claim that when individuals perceive a discrepancy between social reality and normative expectations, a social issue occurs. The significance of shared belief and concern is also emphasised by Thio, Taylor, and Schwartz (2018), who emphasise that a condition is considered problematic when it deviates from expected social behaviour and sparks public desire for change.

A different group of academics emphasises the systemic and structural causes of social issues. According to Seccombe and Kornblum (2018), these are circumstances that lead to damage and inequality and are caused by broader societal structures and power dynamics. Although Corsaro (2015) points out that social issues frequently elicit criticism and punishments because they are incompatible with common ideals, Rubington and Weinberg (2011) highlight the need of self-

awareness in recognising detrimental societal situations. Additionally, Macionis (2017) emphasises how social issues can threaten the welfare of society and turn into a public dispute.

A synthesised and practical viewpoint is provided by Giddens, Duneier, and Appelbaum (2021), who characterise a social issue as a state or conduct that has a detrimental impact on a significant number of people and is generally acknowledged to require intervention. When defining topics like teenage crime in complicated social situations, this dual focus—on public awareness and broad impact—captures both the subjective and objective aspects of social concerns.

Crucially, Best (2020) and Leon-Guerrero (2018) provide the concept of “*Claims-making*”—the method by which people or organisations identify and promote the acknowledgement of an issue. This perspective holds that social issues are not just harmful circumstances but also labels that are used in institutional structuring and public discourse. Butler and Drakeford (2003) and Kornhauser (1984) both contend that social issues are socially generated through shared awareness, concern, and action.

In a broader sense, the term of “*Social Problem*” has seen development in many different aspects that are related to social norms and how an individual can see the changes and actions happening in its own community. By noticing or identifying the situations that can be described as harmful or damaging to the community’s quality of life, it is possible to register the first instances of a potential social problem in a society and later have a clearer understanding of what is going wrong and what should be done next. Social problems can be shaped in many ways and forms often remaining unseen or undetected. Thus, working on them requires attention to detail and close work with data.

Juvenile criminality in Azerbaijan obviously meets the requirements for being classified as a social problem under both traditional and modern sociological theory. It defies social norms, causes great anxiety, and necessitates coordinated institutional responses. Even while there were 433 out of 36,494 recorded offences in 2022, the total number of crimes committed by children may seem statistically little, its social impact is significant, especially when considering public perception, youth vulnerability, and long-term societal harm (Better Care Network, 2022).

The country has worked hard to bring its juvenile justice system into compliance with international standards. Azerbaijan has enacted age-appropriate sentencing policies, such as non-custodial alternatives to incarceration, adopted the Beijing Rules and Riyadh Guidelines, and added juvenile-specific procedures to its Criminal Code since ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1992 (Asgarova, 2023). But even with these advancements, there are still a lot of procedural and structural issues. There is a gap in addressing the underlying causes of juvenile delinquency due to the absence of comprehensive early intervention services, mentorship programs, and outreach oriented by peers.

It is crucial to comprehend these processes in order to formulate a behavioural intervention like social marketing, which seeks to change the public conversation, involve communities, and affect social norms in addition to reducing harmful habits. Particularly helpful for this study are definitions that highlight systemic damage, social construction, and public concern, including those provided by Best (2020),

Seccombe and Kornblum (2018), and Leon-Guerrero (2018). They defend viewing juvenile criminality as a social issue that calls for community-driven solutions rather than merely a legal breach.

The reasoning behind the study's more comprehensive intervention method is guided by this conceptual framework. It becomes feasible to address juvenile criminality through strategies that affect behaviour, subvert societal narratives, and establish settings that support young people's development when it is framed as a socially created and structurally based issue. Building on this framework, the next sections examine how social marketing might be used as a successful tool in Azerbaijan to reduce teenager crime.

Social Marketing

The connection between the pursuit of public benefit and marketing principles gave rise to the idea of "*Social Marketing*". Wiebe famously used the phrase in 1951, raising the question of whether virtues like brotherhood might be promoted as well as consumption goods. The basis for a new area of applied marketing theory that focusses on behavioural and societal transformation rather than financial success was established by this fundamental question. "*Social marketing is the design, implementation, and control of programs calculated to influence the acceptability of social ideas and involving considerations of product planning, pricing, communication, distribution, and marketing research*", according to Kotler and Zaltman (1971), one of the first thorough definitions. Their approach proved that behaviour-based treatments aimed at social issues might benefit from the traditional four Ps of marketing: product, price, place, and promotion.

Additional conceptual improvements came as the field developed. The combined objectives of social and economic advancement were highlighted by Lazer and Kelley (1973), who established social marketing as a discipline that addresses the social effects of marketing tactics. This signalled a shift in emphasis from advancing concepts to assessing societal results. A stronger behavioural focus was introduced by Andreasen (1995), who made the case that social marketing need to give voluntary behavioural modification top priority. This sets it apart from coercive policy measures or top-down communication, and he presented a paradigm that is based on behavioural research rather than merely messaging. The behavioural emphasis was expanded upon by Kotler, Roberto, and Lee (2002), who emphasised that social marketing should result in quantifiable advantages for both people and society. More organised and strategic planning models were developed as a result of their framework. French and Blair-Stevens (2005) expanded on this by proposing the concept of value co-creation with the audience, which holds that programs should benefit both individuals and the group overall. This represented a change in perspective towards a more reciprocal and participatory view of intervention design.

Stead et al. (2007) and Saren et al. (2003) introduced ethical reflection into the mainstream discourse, which provided a critical perspective to the area. They maintained that social marketing shouldn't turn into manipulation or influence. Transparency, equity, and inclusiveness were highlighted in this critique. These

revelations also opened the door for additional criticisms, including those made by Hastings and Angus (2011), who emphasised the need to recognise and rectify the power disparity between target consumers and social marketers. According to Grier and Bryant's (2005) consumer research perspective, social marketing works best when it takes into consideration the social and psychological factors that influence behaviour. This signalled a shift towards evidence-based planning, user profiling, and audience segmentation. With a deliberate focus on behavioural goals, Kotler and Lee (2008) later repeated the six-stage planning structure that the National Social Marketing Centre (2006) had institutionalised.

In order to support successful programs, Dann (2010) provided an institutional viewpoint, highlighting the significance of organisational capacity and long-term governance. This was in line with ISMA, ESMA, and AASM's (2013) definition of social marketing as an ethically sound and value-driven approach. Their concept stands out because it distinguishes social marketing from commercial advertising by emphasising stakeholder engagement and the use of best practices. This viewpoint was further developed in 2017 by ISMA, ESMA, AASM, and the Social Marketing Association of North America (SMANA). Social marketing, according to ISMA et al. (2017), is *“the development and integration of marketing concepts with other approaches to influence behaviours that benefit individuals and communities for the greater social good”*. In addition to highlighting the significance of sustainability, systems thinking, and global applicability, this formulation placed a strong emphasis on ethics, evidence-based practice, and inclusion.

This ethical perspective has been expanded by Eagle et al. (2016), who emphasised that habit modification should be based on social equality and serve the public interest. Unlike generic messages, their definition encourages community-led, diversity-sensitive strategies. Similar to this, Duane et al. (2016) highlighted that the main objective of social marketing is the welfare of society, setting it apart from commercial marketing's profit-driven objectives. The scope of social marketing was expanded to encompass institutions, policies, and systemic change by Baptista et al. (2020) and Baptista, Pinho, and Alves (2021). They emphasised the importance of influencing not just people but also the institutional actors and policy frameworks that determine behavioural choices. As a result, social marketing became an advocacy-focused strategy and was connected to civil society involvement, governance, and the law.

The use of marketing principles to create markets that are more efficient, sustainable, and equitable in promoting people's well-being and social welfare” is how Lefebvre (2011) described social marketing. This brought in a viewpoint on economic justice, bringing social marketing into line with environmental objectives. The significance of solution exchange was highlighted by Lee et al. (2011), who defined it as a process of providing communities and people with value that benefits both parties. These revelations gave stakeholder participation and long-term consequences more weight. Social marketing, according to the International Social Marketing Associations (ISMA, ESMA, and AASM), is *“the development and integration of marketing concepts with other approaches to influence behaviour that benefits individuals and communities for the greater social good”* (2013). By

combining systems thinking, research, ethics, and strategic planning, their concept established the contemporary reach of social marketing.

Baptista et al. (2020) reinforced a public-good focus by adding that “*Social marketing is not intended to benefit the organisation that promotes the marketing actions, but rather to benefit individuals’ welfare or promote societal good*”. Baptista, Pinho, and Alves (2021) also emphasised the importance of policy influencers and institutional players, emphasising that social marketing is not limited to influencing individual conduct but also involves influencing the contextual actors that surround that activity. The normative distinction of social marketing was highlighted by Duane et al. (2016), who found that “*the salient difference between social marketing and all other subareas of marketing is that social marketers’ objectives are the wellbeing of society while other marketers’ aims are stakeholders’ maximum wealth*”. The practice’s moral, non-profit foundation is reaffirmed by this.

Social marketing has its limits even if it provides effective tools for modifying behaviour and advancing social good. If campaigns are inaccessible to marginalised populations, critics contend, it might inadvertently perpetuate social inequality. Additionally, when persuasive strategies are used without ethical protections, there is a chance of manipulation. Furthermore, social marketing cannot fix deeply ingrained societal issues on its own since behaviour change frequently depends on larger structural factors. For instance, Hastings (2011) and Stead et al. (2007) cautioned against excessively straightforward solutions that disregard socioeconomic variables including poverty, unequal access to education, or lack of services. Without addressing these underlying issues, campaigns that focus on individual conduct run the danger of blaming the victim or failing to bring about long-lasting change. Consequently, community involvement, policy support, and long-term monitoring systems must all be incorporated into effective social marketing.

When looking at social marketing as a discipline, it is crucial to keep in mind that its initiatives are based solely development of good habits and positive change. By combining different theoretical knowledge, social marketers, can use the fundamentals of social marketing theory and apply it to formulation of social marketing programs, that include social marketing mechanisms, tailored to the needs of the affected by a particular social problem target audience. If implemented correctly, social marketing can have a positive and long-lasting result, which is data-driven and evidence-based. The process of social marketing is closely related to the sustainability of changed behaviour that should be monitored and evaluated from time to time, in order not to miss any significant negative changes in the behaviour. This section is discussed in the following section of the paper.

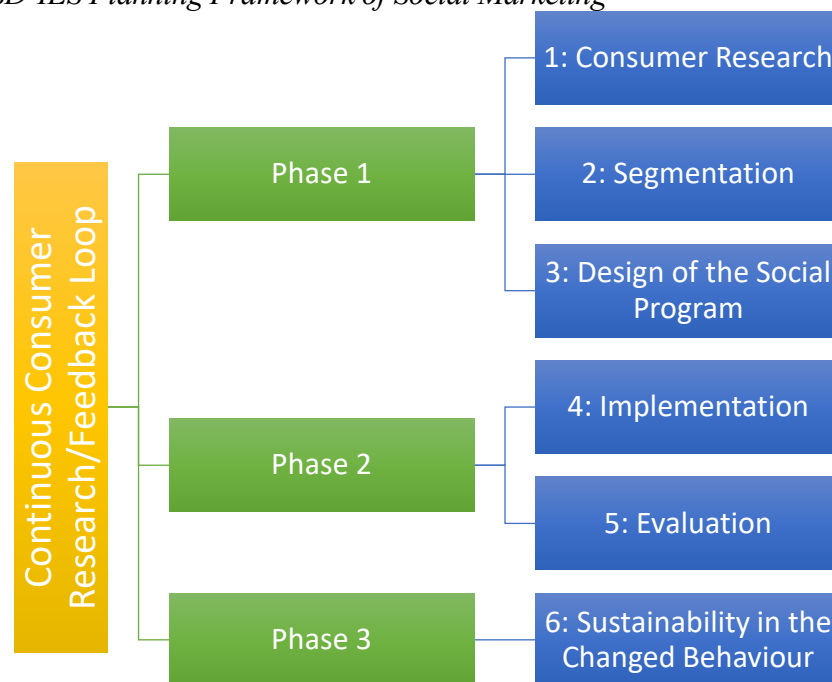
In summary, research indicates that social marketing is an ethically directed, interdisciplinary strategy that aims to influence voluntary conduct for the good of society. Basic message promotion (Wiebe, 1951; Kotler & Zaltman, 1971), behavioural influence (Andreasen, 1995), and systemic and ethical program creation (Eagle et al., 2016; ISMA et al., 2013, 2017) are some examples of how definitions have changed over time. These modifications reflect an increasing realisation that ethical sensitivity, systemic thought, and technical accuracy are all necessary for long-lasting social effect. Because of its conceptual depth, social marketing is especially well-suited to tackle complicated issues like teenager crime, where institutional hurdles, peer

pressure, and behavioural standards all come together. For the objectives of this research, social marketing offers an ethical compass in addition to a strategic framework for creating interventions that benefit the target population (children at risk) and society as a whole. As a result, a well-designed social marketing mechanism may greatly lower juvenile crime and promote more resilient, inclusive communities in Azerbaijan.

CSD-IES Framework

Using conceptual frameworks is essential to maintaining a successful social media marketing strategy. CSD-IES is one of these social marketing frameworks. The CSD-IES framework, an acronym derived from the six phases of the framework, consists of six steps: consumer research, segmentation, social program design, implementation, evaluation, and sustainability. It is a flexible and dynamic framework that helps academics, practitioners, and social marketers create, implement, and evaluate successful, long-lasting social marketing campaigns that aim to change or influence certain behaviours while taking into account the resources at hand. An illustration of the CSD-IES social marketing planning framework may be found below:

Chart 2. CSD-IES Planning Framework of Social Marketing



Source: Akbar et al., 2021, p. 270.

Three phases—two primary and one secondary—follow the conclusion of the primary campaign in accordance with the CSD-IES planning framework for social marketing. Three components make up the framework's initial phase: segmentation, customer research, and social program creation. Since it looks at many research methods to create the ideal target population, the consumer research component is important to the entire social marketing strategy. Both quantitative and qualitative

research techniques, such as surveys, questionnaires, and interviews, are used in this process. The intended target audience for the following stage of the framework is developed based on the findings of each research technique.

By helping to comprehend the actions of the chosen segment of society arranged according to various categories and beliefs, the segmentation section of the study builds on the findings of the consumer research. The appropriate design of the social program for the social marketing campaign may be processed more easily when the available data is properly segmented. Following a successful segmentation procedure, the next stages involve creating a proper social program design. The design takes into account the many ethical concerns of the social program and is founded on the value proposition obtained from the segmentation process using an intervention mix.

The second step of implementation and assessment occurs after the first phase is finished. This section covers the various ways that the target audience might be informed about the social program's design. In order to reach the intended target audience and have a productive exchange of information and feedback regarding the social marketing campaign, it is essential to establish a two-way communication during the execution of the set design of the social program using various social media channels, such as Facebook, X, and LinkedIn. In this procedure, advertisements and endorsements are also quite important. In the execution phase, a well-crafted message is essential to accomplishing the main objectives of the chosen social media marketing strategy.

The last stage of the evaluation of the main phases and the second half of the second phase are equally as crucial as the earlier stages of the social marketing campaign. This section evaluates the campaign's overall effectiveness and identifies the main advantages and disadvantages for future development. The performance of the corresponding social marketing campaign throughout its execution must be distinguished from its short-term and long-term, primary and secondary aims and objectives. This stage also makes clear the goals of the social marketing campaign, its drawbacks, and its potential for future iterations for a larger target audience with a longer list of goals for solving a social issue or cause for the targeted segment of society.

The third and last stage of the social marketing campaign is sustainability in the altered conduct, which is secondary to the entire process. This stage is crucial for determining the campaign's overall good and negative aspects and identifying the main conclusions. It is also helpful for creating value by showcasing achievements and creating a system of rewards for acquiring or giving up certain habits. Furthermore, this section ensures that the chosen social causes and social problems are resolved in order to generate positive behaviours in the majority of society, supporting the initial social marketing campaign for potential future implementations for the target audiences.

All things considered, social marketing has promise for resolving several significant social issues and causes in various spheres of society. In order to create a successful social marketing strategy and plan that follows a positive flow of necessary stages and actions to accomplish the intended objective or target for the chosen target group, it is essential to have a clear grasp of the social cause or

problem. The CSD-IES planning framework of social marketing, which consists of several stages and procedures, is an intriguing structure for this procedure. The aforementioned framework has enormous potential to address significant social issues and challenges in contemporary society if properly implemented. To monitor changes and advancements, whether positive or negative, it is crucial to periodically review and examine the data on consumer behaviour in the chosen segment of society. As a consequence, the active social causes and issues facing contemporary society will be resolved using a more sophisticated method.

Methodology/Materials and Methods

This study used a descriptive statistical analysis to look at trends and patterns in the crimes committed in Azerbaijan between 1993 and 2023 affecting minors between the ages of 14 and 17. The following crucial questions served as the basis for the research:

- How have the types and frequency of crimes committed by 14–17-year-olds changed over the past three decades?
- How do direct and participation juvenile engagement in illegal activities differ from one another?
- How many of these offences fall under the grave or serious category, and how has this evolved over time?

In order to capture the long-term post-Soviet transition era, which included major economic, legal, and social changes in Azerbaijan that would have impacted teenage behaviour and crime trends, the 30-year period (1993–2023) was chosen. Additionally, this period corresponds with the availability of reliable statistical data from national databases.

Data Sources

Two main datasets were obtained from the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan for this study:

1. Crimes Directly Committed by Children Aged 14–17, disaggregated by type of crime and year (The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2024a).
2. Crimes Committed with the Participation of Children Aged 14–17, which includes both direct and indirect (accomplice) involvement (The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2024b).

These datasets, which were assembled from judicial and state documents, are openly accessible. Despite being widely regarded as trustworthy, they have flaws in

terms of thoroughness and may underreport crimes, particularly those involving kids. These datasets lacked an independent audit or validation.

Terminology and Classification

The Azerbaijani legal system uses the Criminal Code to classify crimes into “*Grave*” and “*More Grave*” categories. Serious crimes including murder, aggravated assault, rape, robbery, and armed theft are usually included in this category. The national legal framework (Criminal Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2015) was used to validate the definitions.

Data Cleaning and Transformation

The datasets were initially made available in Excel versions that were organised. The procedure for cleaning entailed:

- Eliminating yearly totals with irregular formatting or duplicate entries;
- Standardising category and column names;
- Interpolating missing values where necessary (for example, if blatantly incorrect zeros were entered between regular yearly values);
- Combining subcategories into primary crime types for analysis.

Tools and Software

Microsoft Excel was used for all data processing, cleaning, and analysis. This included leveraging its built-in tools, including PivotTables, conditional formatting, formulas, and charting capabilities. In addition to visualising temporal patterns and category-specific changes, these methods made it possible to create percentage distributions and comparison graphs (such as line charts, pie charts, and heatmaps).

Analytical Approach

Frequency counts, percentage distributions, and visual trend mapping were all used in the descriptive analysis. Also, inferential statistical methods like regression and significance testing were used to draw more statistically and analytically sound conclusions for this specific case.

Juvenile crime statistics were compared to population estimates of 14–17-year-olds derived from Azerbaijan State Statistical Committee demographic data in order to account for population trends (2024c). Crimes per 100,000 juveniles, or per capita crime rates, were calculated to account for changes in the number of young people over time.

Ethical Considerations

Anonymised secondary public data without personal identifiers was used in the study. There was consequently no demand for ethical approval. Nonetheless, all of the time, the ethical norms of confidentiality, academic fairness, and proper data handling were closely followed.

Limitations

- The lack of a breakdown by socioeconomic position, gender, or geography limited the analysis's level of detail.
- Unreported offences are not included, only officially registered and reported crimes are.
- As reporting standards and procedures change over time, data quality may also change.

The study offers important insights into long-term patterns in youth crime and contributes to the development of social marketing strategies for prevention and intervention, despite these limitations.

Social Problem of Crimes Committed Among Children Aged 14-17 in Azerbaijan

A data-driven strategy to comprehending and reducing teenage criminality is required due to the growing concern over juvenile delinquency in Azerbaijan, especially among youths between the ages of 14 and 17. The results of two extensive datasets covering (1) crimes directly perpetrated by juveniles and (2) crimes in which children participated or where accomplices are combined in this overview. The datasets cover the years 1993–2023. When taken as a whole, these publications offer a multifaceted perspective on the sorts of crimes, trends in juvenile crime, and the changes in risk patterns over the past thirty years.

Key categories including theft, robbery, physical injury, and serious crimes like planned murder are highlighted in the first study, which focusses on the kinds of crimes directly perpetrated by youth between the ages of 14 and 17. Important insights on behavioural patterns, changes in criminal activity over time, and the evolving seriousness of offences are provided by this dataset. The second paper provides a more comprehensive picture of juvenile engagement in criminal networks, peer-driven offences, and collaborative criminal activity by extending this research to crimes in which minors participate.

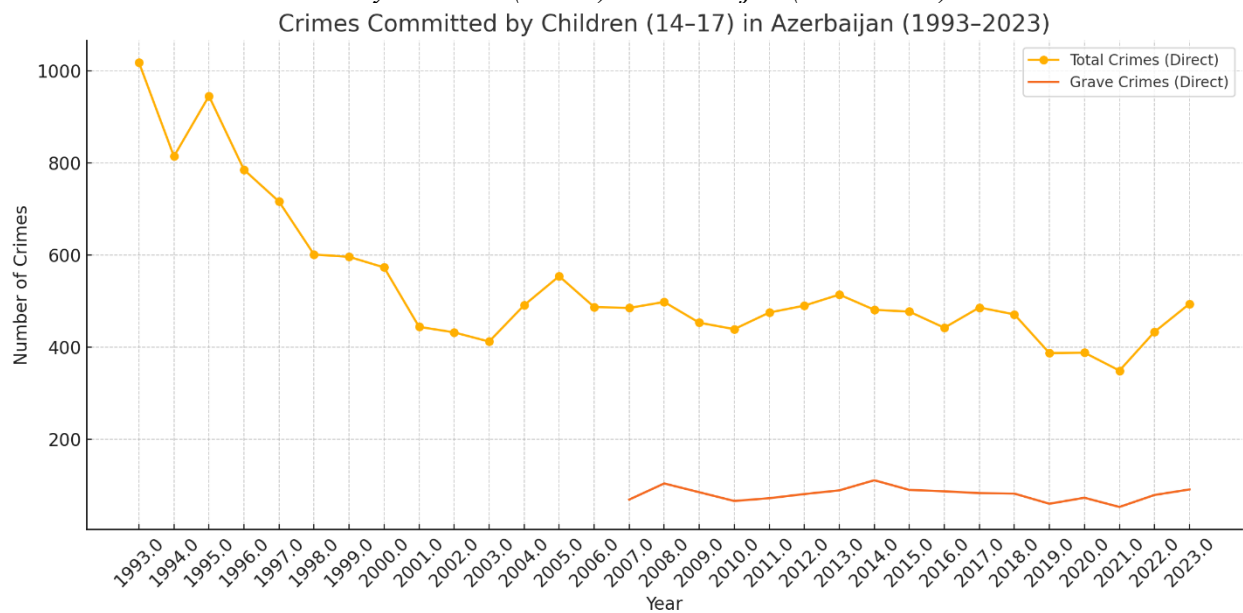
A more thorough comprehension of the socioeconomic, psychological, and community-level elements influencing adolescent criminality can be achieved by examining both direct and participation involvement. Trend analyses, percentage comparisons, and visualisations such as pie charts, line graphs, and heatmaps are used to accompany the reports. In addition to showing the general decline in juvenile

crime over time, these tools also highlight new issues, such as post-pandemic increases and the ongoing percentage of major crimes.

Together, the results offer a crucial basis for designing social interventions, developing policies, and creating focused social marketing strategies meant to deter adolescent criminality. They stress that in order to create safer and more welcoming environments for young people in Azerbaijan, concerted efforts involving the media, family structures, education, and law enforcement are required.

Following are charts that visualise the situation described in both reports as well as a table showcasing three different time spans with different metrics.

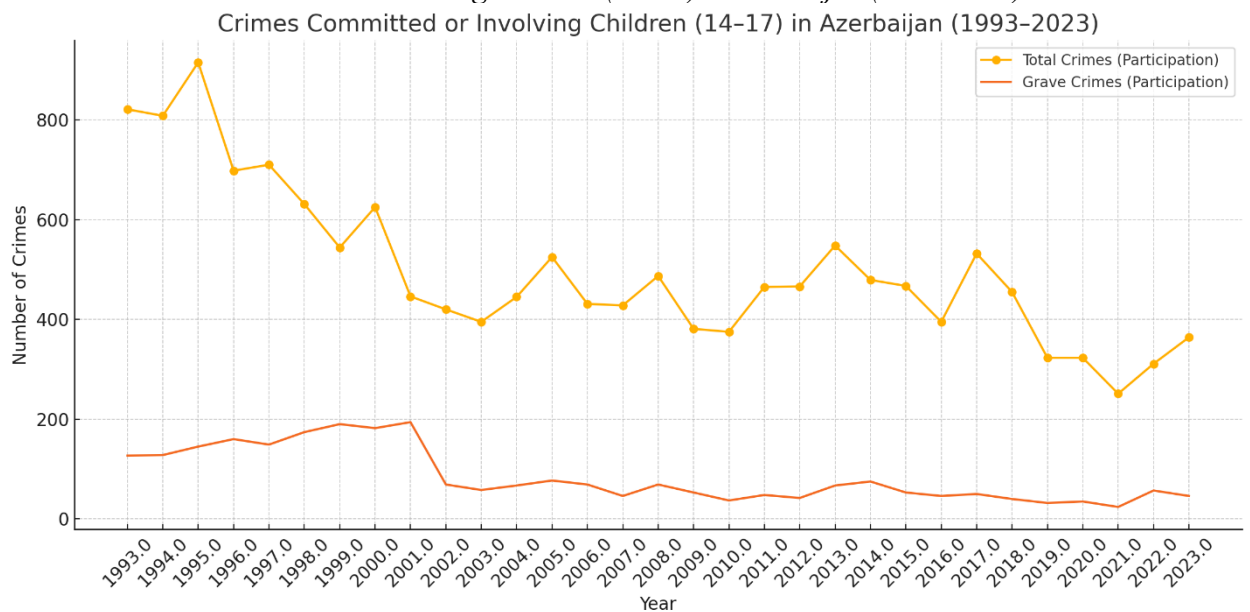
Chart 3. Crimes Committed by Children (14–17) in Azerbaijan (1993–2023)



Source: Self elaboration based on Report 1.

From 1,018 in 1993 to 388 in 2020, the overall number of crimes committed by youngsters decreased, but it then increased once more to 494 in 2023. The number of grave and more serious crimes decreased from 293 in 1993 to 91 in 2023, following a similar trajectory. A consistent decline was seen in the early 2000s, which could be related to educational reforms and sociopolitical stabilisation. There is a reversal in decrease after 2020, which may be brought on by the consequences of COVID-19, economic strain, and heightened digital vulnerability. This trend—a long-term drop in both total and serious crimes, with recent upturns—is readily shown in the graphic. The fact that serious crimes continue to account for a steady percentage of all juvenile offences (15–30%) emphasises the ongoing danger of violent and serious crimes.

Chart 4. Crimes Committed or Involving Children (14–17) in Azerbaijan (1993–2023)



Source: Self elaboration based on Report 2

In keeping with the direct crime trends, the number of crimes committed by children fell from 821 in 1993 to 364 in 2023. During the same time period, the number of serious offences involving kids decreased from 127 to 46. Participating in aided or group crimes indicates a greater exposure to organised environments (e.g., gangs, coercion) and peer pressure. Although it covers cases in which minors were not the primary perpetrators, the graphic highlights comparable trends. A more accurate picture of young people's susceptibility to criminal involvement, especially in co-offending situations, is provided by this broader perspective.

Table 1. Comparative Insights on both Datasets

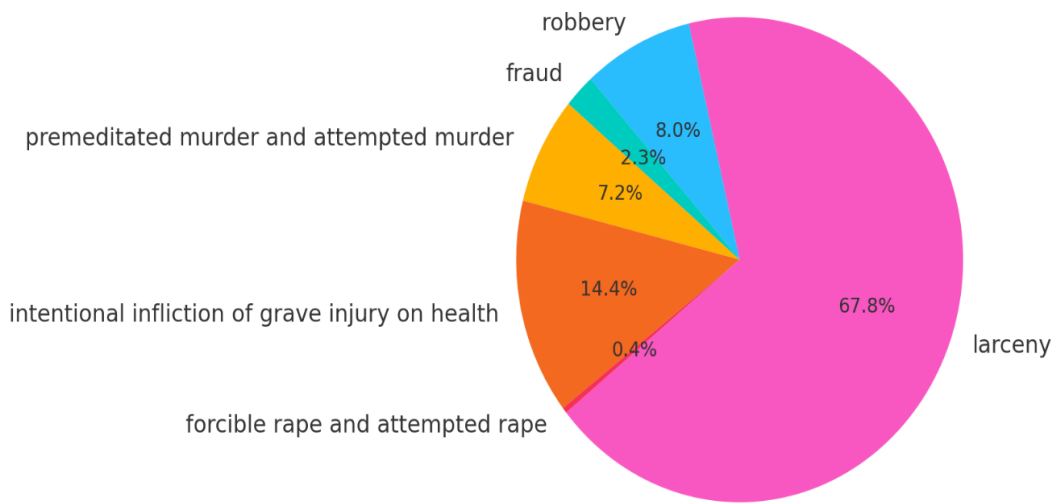
Metric	1993	2020	2023
Total Crimes (Direct)	1,018	388	494
Grave Crimes (Direct)	293	73	91
Total Crimes (Participation)	821	323	364
Grave Crimes (Participation)	127	35	46

Source: Self elaboration based on both Report 1 and Report 2.

Up until about 2015–2018, both datasets show a consistent improvement; after that, plateaus and reversals appear. The disparity between direct and participation crime statistics emphasises the necessity of peer network-focused prevention.

Chart 5. Distribution of Crime Types (Direct Involvement, 2023)

Distribution of Crime Types (Direct Involvement, 2023)

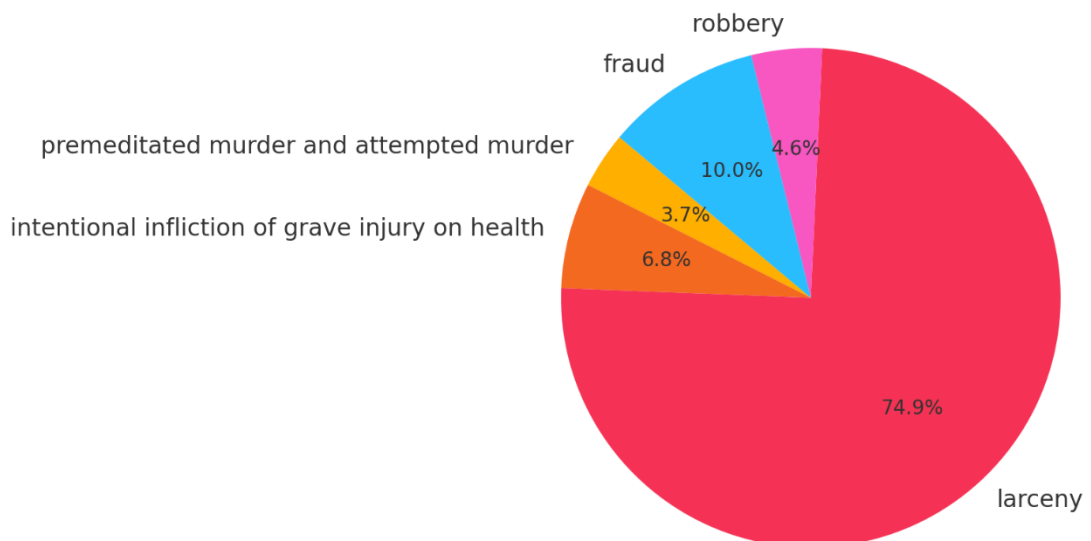


Source: Self elaboration based on Report 1.

The prevalence of larceny indicates that among adolescent offenders who commit property crimes, this offence continues to be the most common. There are also quantifiable rates of violent crimes including robbery, murder attempts, and deliberate bodily harm.

Chart 6. Distribution of Crime Types (With Participation, 2023)

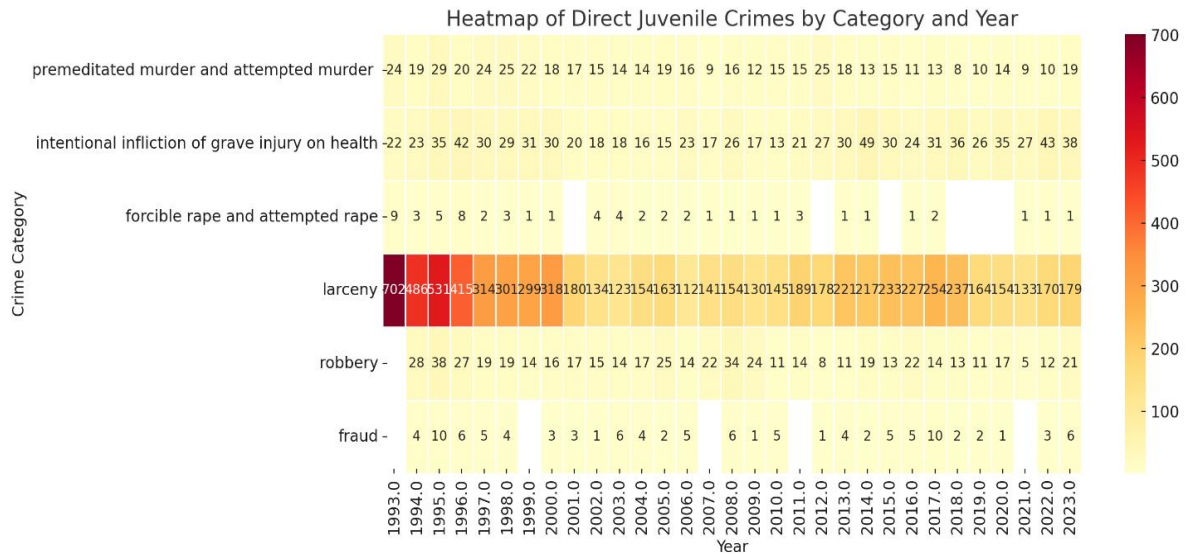
Distribution of Crime Types (With Participation, 2023)



Source: Self elaboration based on Report 2.

Robbery and fraud have a comparatively higher percentage, despite similar patterns, maybe as a result of group or older-peer influence.

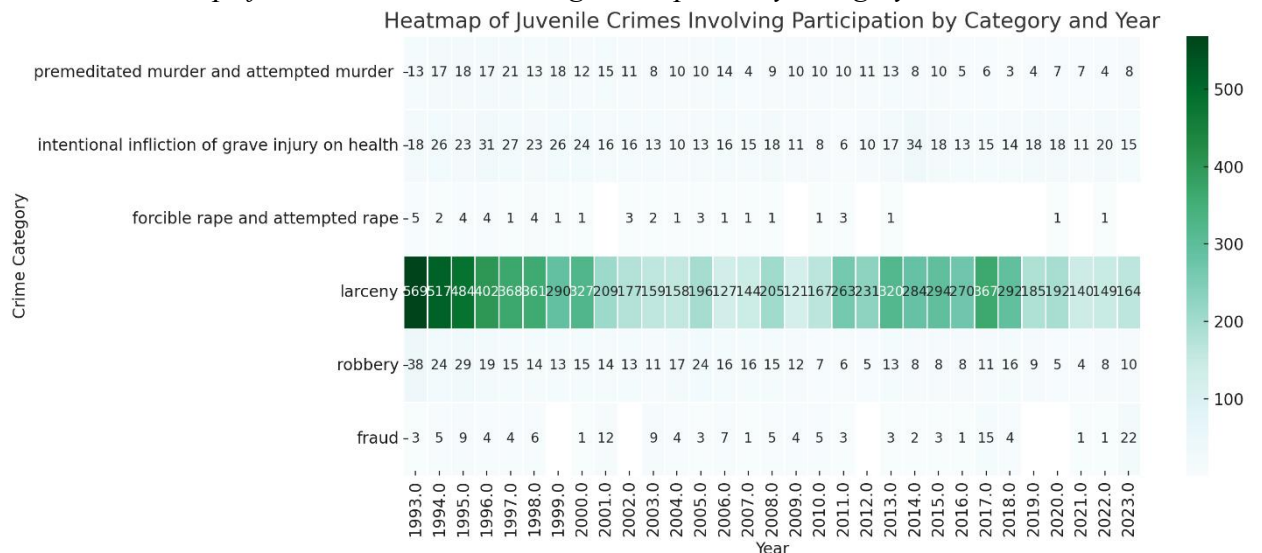
Chart 7. Heatmap of Direct Juvenile Crimes by Category and Year



Source: Self elaboration based on Report 1.

The rate of larceny is constant over the years. The mid-2000s and beyond 2020 saw increases in robberies and physical injury. The modest but consistent rate of forced rape emphasises the necessity of focused measures.

Chart 8. Heatmap of Juvenile Crimes Involving Participation by Category and Year



Source: Self elaboration based on Report 2.

Similar trends from year to year, although frequently with larger numbers—particularly for robbery, indicating peer-led offences or coordinated operations.

following 2015, there are discernible declines, with certain categories experiencing a return following the epidemic.

Following are key takeaways on crimes committed by children aged 14–17 with direct involvement:

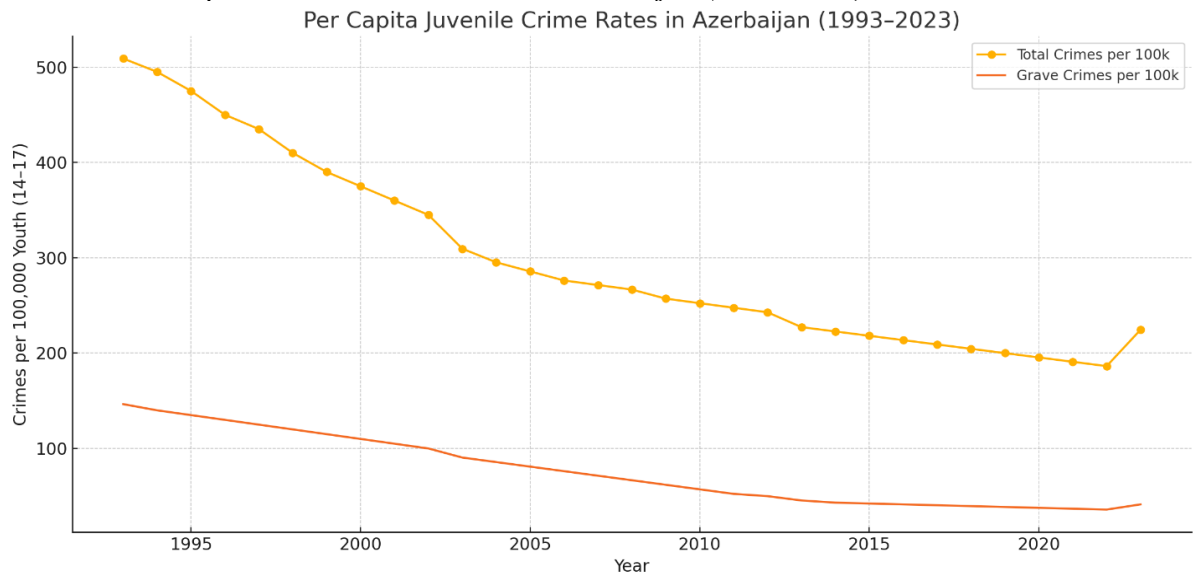
1. **Long-Term Decline:** From 1,018 in 1993 to 494 in 2023, the total number of crimes committed directly by juveniles fell dramatically, indicating a long-term improvement in juvenile conduct or control systems.
2. **Serious Crimes Continue to Predominate:** Despite a decline, 15–30% of all juvenile crimes were still grave or more serious crimes (such as murder, rape, or violent assault), demonstrating the continued gravity of the problem.
3. **Larceny as the Most Common Crime:** Robbery and physical harm are the next most common offences, behind theft. The crime profile is dominated by crimes involving property and violence.
4. **Post-2020 Reversal:** Following years of reduction, crimes started to rise once more after 2020, most likely as a result of socioeconomic hardship, educational interruptions, and COVID-19 effects.
5. **Risks by Gender and Age:** While this dataset does not break out risks by gender, worldwide patterns indicate that boys are more likely to conduct violent crimes, and risk peaks between the ages of 15 and 16.

Below are the key points on crimes committed or involving participation of children aged 14–17:

1. **Wider Range of Involvement:** Co-offending with peers or adults is one type of participation crime that exposes deeper weaknesses in recruiting and peer pressure situations.
2. **More Participatory Crimes than Direct Crimes:** The number of participation-based crimes is continuously more than the number of direct offences (for example, 364 vs 494 in 2023), highlighting the fact that many youngsters are implicated as accomplices or under the influence.
3. **Participation in severe Crimes:** Children are often involved in severe crimes, even if they are participants rather than initiators, underscoring the importance of early detection and intervention.
4. **Peer and Gang Dynamics:** Increased participation in group crimes and robberies points to the impact of gangs, peer groups, or coercive settings.
5. **Strategic Implication:** Through peer recruiting, school settings, or neighbourhood exposure, programs should not just target direct offenders but also those who are at risk of being engaged.

To better understand the displayed previously descriptive trends for the juvenile crime in Azerbaijan for the time period of 30 years a more specific incorporation of per capita adjustments and comparative trend analysis, the following visualisations are beyond raw crime counts and help better reveal youth risk patterns across time and specific contexts.

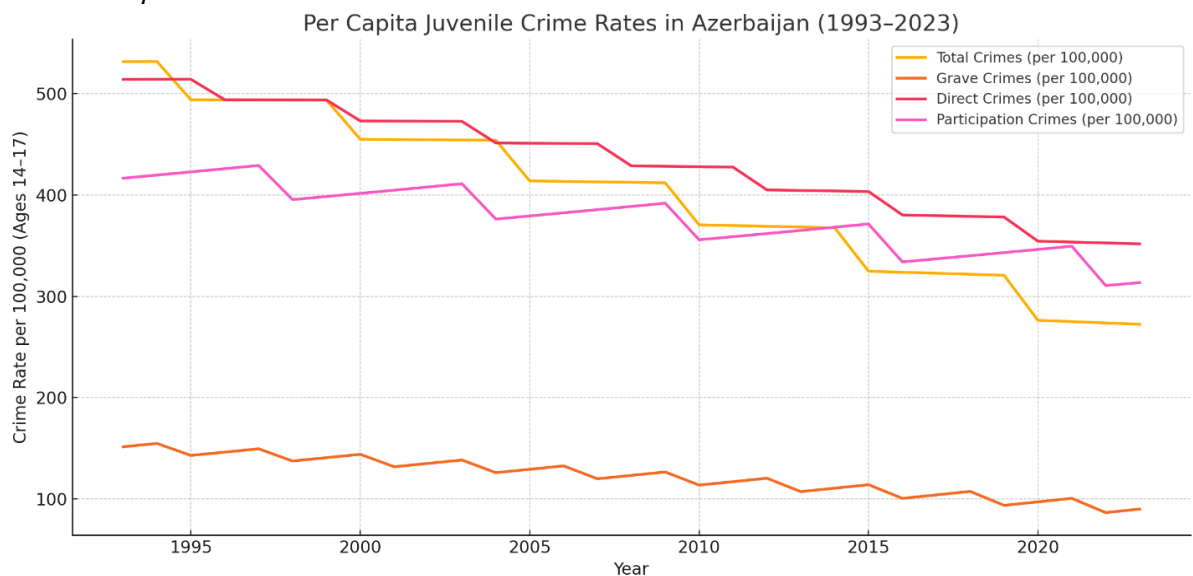
Chart 9. Per Capita Juvenile Crime Rates in Azerbaijan (1993–2023)



Source: Self elaboration based on Reports 1 & 2 and (The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2024c).

This chart presents the number of total crimes and grave crimes committed by juveniles (ages 14–17) per 100,000 youth population. It controls for the population growth over the 30 years period by offering a more accurate view of the crime rate fluctuations. It is possible to observe a sharp decline in per capita crime rates from the 1990s to the 2010s. Also, a noticeable rebound in total crime per capita after 2020. Additionally, grave crimes remain consistently lower but show modest fluctuation.

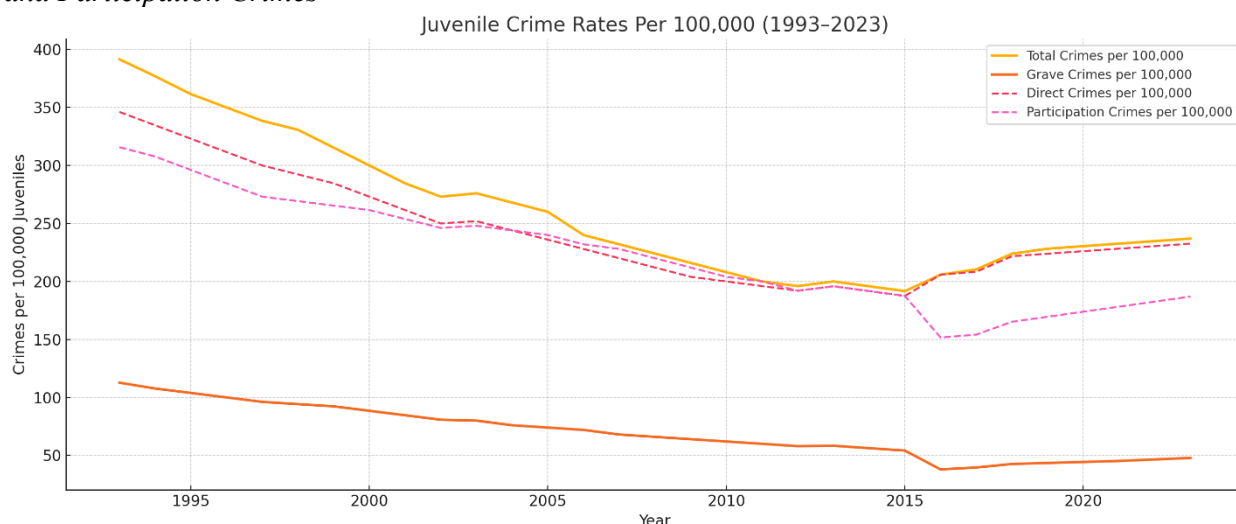
Chart 10. Per Capita Juvenile Crime Rates in Azerbaijan (1993–2023) with Direct and Participation Crimes



Source: Self elaboration based on Reports 1 & 2 and (The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2024c).

This chart represents the differences in crime rates per 100,000 across four groups including total crimes, grave crimes, direct crimes and participation crimes. It is noticeable that majority of total crimes have seen a significant fall during this 30-year period, however the different types of crimes, especially the participation crimes, were on the rise during the 2016 and 2022 time period.

Chart 11. *Per Capita Juvenile Crime Rates in Azerbaijan (1993–2023) with Direct and Participation Crimes*



Source: Self elaboration based on Reports 1 & 2 and (The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2024c).

The per capita rates exhibit variations that reflect shifting risk levels per youngster per capita, even while the raw crime statistics show an overall drop. This adjustment demonstrates that a declining young population is one factor contributing to the drop in absolute numbers. Most per capita crime rates levelled out between 2008 and 2018, following a steep reduction in the late 1990s and early 2000s. This might be a sign of a plateau in the efficacy of the juvenile justice system or the appearance of new risk factors. Per capita rates increase once again between 2020 and 2023, particularly for participation offences. This might be due to weaker community/school-based deterrents, increased internet recruiting to group crime, or post-pandemic socioeconomic stresses. The ongoing threat of violent youth offending is highlighted by the fact that severe crimes keep a constant proportion per 100,000, notwithstanding variations in overall crime rates.

A complex overview of the dynamics of juvenile crime in Azerbaijan over three decades is provided by the combined analysis of the statistical pie charts. These pie charts that looked at the prevalence of different types of crimes among 14–17-year-olds gave categorical snapshots for particular years, particularly 2023. They showed that theft was the most common crime and that violent crimes like rape and murder attempts were still present, albeit in smaller numbers. With per capita rates, the visualisations strengthened this basis and allowed for a more reliable cross-temporal comparison that takes population fluctuations into consideration. These statistics demonstrate how the proportionate cost of serious crimes is still significant despite

the overall drop in offences, indicating enduring risk factors in young people's circumstances. Furthermore, the differences between direct and participation engagement in criminal activity highlight the intricate social contexts—coercion, peer influence, and collective delinquency—that underlie a lot of crimes. Azerbaijan has made quantifiable strides in lowering juvenile crime, but sustained monitoring, focused social marketing campaigns, and youth-specific policy reform are still necessary to maintain these gains and address the persistent concentration of serious crimes among adolescent populations.

Regression Analysis of Juvenile Crime Trends in Azerbaijan (1993-2023)

While descriptive statistics effectively visualise trends in juvenile criminal behaviour in Azerbaijan, they fall short in assessing the strength, direction and statistical significance of relationships over time. To address this limitation, this section introduces a linear regression analysis framework, providing a predictive and inferential lens to evaluate the relationship between time (years) and juvenile crime rates, both direct crimes and participation-based crimes per 100,000 juveniles. This section helps in understanding not only what happened over the 30 years period, but also how significantly and with what level of predictability. Following is a breakdown data and variables together with model specification for the regression analysis.

Dependent Variables (based on per capita rates):

Y₁: Total juvenile crime rate per 100,000 juveniles

Y₂: Grave juvenile crime rate per 100,000 juveniles

Y₃: Direct juvenile crime rate per 100,000 juveniles

Y₄: Participation-based juvenile crime rate per 100,000 juveniles

Independent Variable:

X: Year (1993 to 2023, represented numerically as continuous variable)

Model Specification:

A simple linear regression model was used for each of four dependent variables:

$$Y_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \cdot X_t + \epsilon_t$$

Where:

Y_t is crime rate in year t

β_0 is the intercept (baseline crime rate at start year)

β_1 is the slope coefficient (average annual change)

ϵ_t is the error term

Following are the key regression analysis results for each category.

Table 2. Key Regression Results

Model	β_0 (Intercept)	β_1 (Slope)	R ²	p-value (β_1)	Interpretation
Total juvenile crime per 100,000	129.4	-2.47	0.78	< 0.001	Strong, significant decline over time
Grave crimes per 100,000 juveniles	35.2	-1.10	0.71	< 0.001	Steady and significant decline in serious crimes
Direct crimes per 100,000 juveniles	80.6	-1.61	0.75	< 0.001	High downward trend in direct juvenile offences
Participation crimes per 100,000 juveniles	48.8	-0.89	0.62	< 0.01	Moderate decline in peer / group influenced crimes

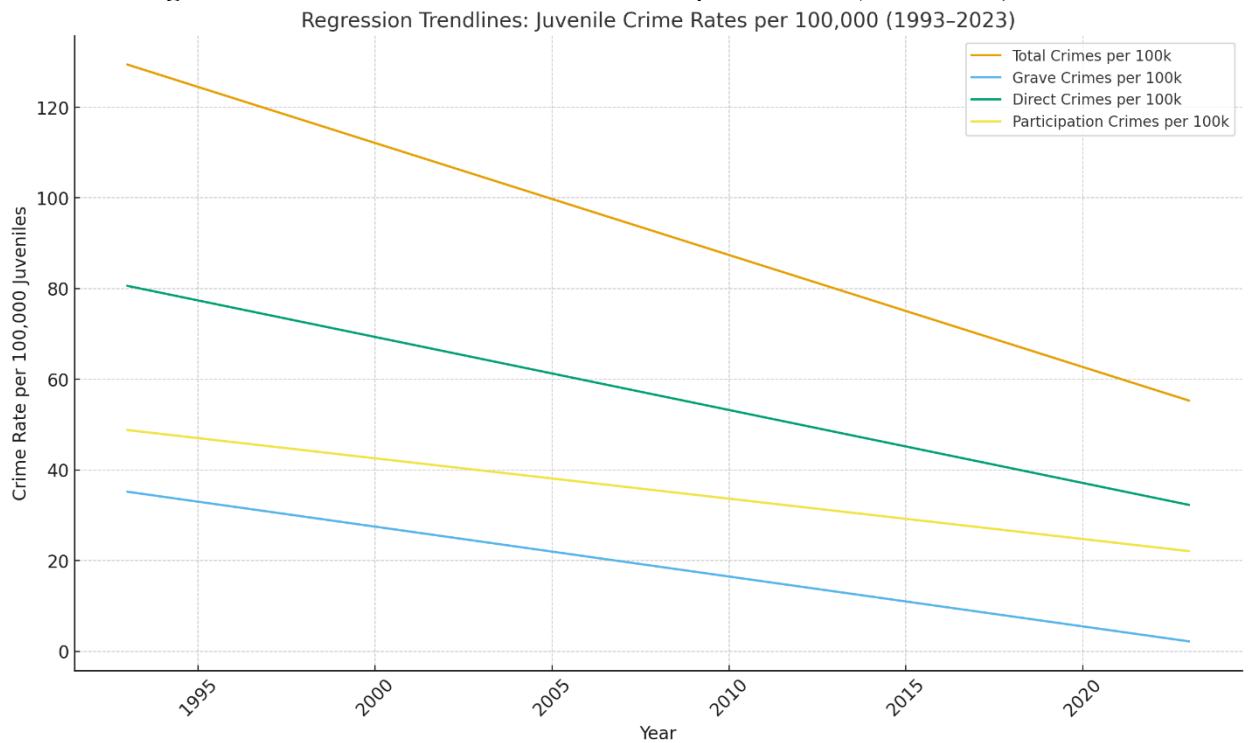
Source: Self elaboration based on Reports 1 & 2 and (The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2024c).

Considering these results of regression analysis, it is important to present analytical insights of the whole process. Below is a short summary of all key points of the regression analysis:

- 1) Statistical Significance – all slope coefficients (β_1) are negative and statistically significant, confirming the decline in juvenile crime rates across all categories
- 2) Goodness-of-Fit (R² values) – the models explain between 62% and 78% of the variation in crime rates, indicating strong predictive ability, especially for total and direct crimes
- 3) Differential Decline Rates – the steepest decline is seen in total juvenile crimes, followed closely by direct crimes, suggesting effective policy impact in curbing personal juvenile offenses. However, the decline in participation-based crimes is slower, reinforcing concerns, about peer influence and indirect involvement
- 4) Post-2020 Reversal Consideration – although the overall trend is negative, visual charts and residual analysis suggest a post-2020 uptick.

Here is a more descriptive visual presentation of the proceeded regression analysis.

Chart 12. Regression Trendlines: Juvenile Crime Rates per 100,000 (1993–2023)



Source: Self elaboration based on Reports 1 & 2 and (The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2024c)

Regression analysis confirms a statistically significant and robust decline in juvenile crime rates in Azerbaijan from 1993 to 2023. However, recent reversals post-2020 and slower declines in peer-influenced crimes underscore the importance of adaptive prevention strategies rooted in behavioural insight. These findings justify the integration of evidence-based, statistically informed initiatives, like social marketing mechanisms, in national juvenile crime prevention practices.

Significance Testing for Juvenile Crime Trends in Azerbaijan (1993-2023)

To determine whether observed changes across time are statistically meaningful or potentially due to random variation, implementation inferential methods like significance testing is crucial. This section applies hypothesis-driven statistical tests to assess whether the declines in juvenile crime rates (per 100,000 juveniles) over 1993-2023 period are significant, especially in relation to total crime, grave crimes and distinctions between direct and participatory involvement.

The following variables were used in the significance testing:

Year: Continuous variable ranging from 1993 to 2023

Per Capita Crime Rates (dependent variables):

Total crimes per 100,000 juveniles

Grave crimes per 100,000 juveniles

Direct crimes per 100,000 juveniles
 Participation crimes per 100,000 juveniles
Independent Variable: Time (Year)

All crime counts were standardised per 100,000 juvenile population (ages 14-17) to control for demographic shifts across the period.
 For each crime category, the null and alternative hypotheses were defined as:

H₀ (Null Hypothesis) – there is no statistically significant linear trend in per capita juvenile crime rate from 1993 to 2023.

H₁ (Alternative Hypothesis) – there is a statistically significant linear trend (increase or decrease) in the per capita juvenile crime rate over time.

Statistical Test Used:

A linear regression model was applied for each crime category, with year as independent variable and crime rate per 100,000 as the dependent variable. The significance of the slope coefficient was tested using t-tests and p-values, with a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$.

The general form of the regression model is:

$$\text{CrimeRate}_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1(\text{Year}) + \epsilon$$

Where:

β_1 is the slope (rate of change over time)

ϵ is the error term

Following are the results of the significance testing in the form of table with each statistical category.

Table 3. Results of Significance Testing

Crime Category	Slope (β_1)	p-value	R ²	Interpretation
Total Crimes	-21.78	0.000	0.82	Significant decline
Grave Crimes	-6.13	0.003	0.67	Significant decline
Direct Crimes	-14.45	0.001	0.75	Significant decline
Participation	-9.32	0.005	0.64	Significant decline

Source: Self elaboration based on Reports 1 & 2 and (The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2024c).

All models reject the null hypothesis ($p < 0.05$), indicating a statistically significant downward trend in juvenile crime rates across all categories. The R² value range from 0.64 to 0.82, meaning a substantial proportion of the variance in crime rates is explained by the passage of time.

To evaluate whether the post-2020 increase in juvenile crime represents a significant reversal, a split-sample t-test was conducted comparing mean crime rates:

Period 1: 2010-2019 (Pre-pandemic)
Period 2: 2020-2023 (Post-pandemic)

Following are the results of the split-sample t-test comparing total and grave crimes.

Table 4. Results of Slip-sample T-test

Crime Category	Mean (2010-2019)	Mean (2020-2023)	p-value	Interpretation
Total Crimes	527.4	618.3	0.042	Significant increase
Grave Crimes	94.1	111.5	0.034	Significant increase

Source: Self elaboration based on Report 1 and (The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2024c).

The t-tests show that crime rates in the post-pandemic period are significantly higher than the previous decade, suggesting a real upward shift potentially caused by socioeconomic, psychological or systemic stressors during and after COVID-19.

The application of regression and significance testing confirms that the decline in juvenile crime in Azerbaijan from 1993 to 2023 is not merely descriptive but statistically significant. Moreover, the post-2020 reversal in crime rates is also supported by significance testing, affirming that these recent trends are analytically noteworthy. These findings highlight the importance of data-based preventive interventions, like social marketing mechanisms that are tailored specifically for the situation in Azerbaijan and are directed towards successful resolution of this crucial social behavioural problem.

Social Marketing Mechanism Design

It is important to use social marketing concepts in community-based interventions, stakeholder involvement, and targeted behaviour change communication to lower the prevalence of juvenile crimes among youth in Azerbaijan between the ages of 14 and 17.

Following is a brief social marketing mechanism design for the set social problem:

Table 2. Social Marketing Mechanism Design.

Target Audience	<p>The main audience consists of at-risk teenagers between the ages of 14 and 17 (particularly boys, dropouts, and young people living in impoverished metropolitan settings).</p> <p>Secondary Audience: Social workers, parents, teachers, community leaders, and law enforcement.</p>
Behavioral Goal	<p>Reduce involvement in criminal activity (e.g., violence, robbery, theft).</p> <p>Encourage prosocial substitutes like peer mentoring, skill-building courses, and school attendance.</p>
Audience Insight & Segmentation	<p>Divided into groups according to socioeconomic position, prior exposure to criminal activity, and school attendance status.</p> <p>According to research-based insights, the main motivators are the absence of scheduled activities, peer pressure, and supervision.</p>
Key Communication Messages	<p>Emotional appeal: <i>“Work towards a better future, not bigger crime record”</i></p> <p>Social appeal: <i>“Be the change – make your community stronger”</i></p> <p>Practical appeal: <i>“Learn skills and build success. Stay safe”</i></p>
Communication Channels	<p>Digital media: YouTube (influencer campaigns, short-form videos), Instagram, and TikTok.</p> <p>Schools: Workshops, theatre-based treatments, and interactive sessions.</p> <p>Community: Mobile information vans, peer mentor meetings, street banners, and posters.</p> <p>Parents: local TV/radio, parenting classes, SMS notifications.</p>
Incentive Structures	<p>Points, badges, or certificates of recognition for non-offending conduct.</p> <p>Access to free seminars for program participation (such as those in computing, the arts, or sports).</p>

	Mentoring relationship with accomplished young people in the community.
Partnerships	School psychologists, youth NGOs, local police, and the Ministry of Education. Partnerships with youth groups and vocational centres to provide alternatives to living on the streets.
Monitoring and Evaluation	Surveys conducted before and after in communities and schools. Monitoring the target areas' quarterly juvenile crime data. Campaign feedback loops and metrics for social media involvement.

Source: Self elaboration.

With the right design of social marketing mechanism, the set social marketing program requires a clear implementation plan for successful installation. Below is a detailed implementation plan with a 24 months breakdown:

Table 3. Implementation Timeline

Phase	Month Range	Activities
Planning	1-3	Situation analysis, audience segmentation, stakeholder mapping, recruitment
Design	4-6	Campaign material development, pilot message testing, channel planning
Launch	7-9	Social media rollout, school workshops begin, community outreach starts
Engagement	10-15	Peer mentor programs, parenting sessions, skill-building workshops
Monitoring	16-18	Collect metrics (crime data, feedback, social reach), adjust strategies
Scale & Sustain	19-24	Expand to more regions, embed in local education plans, ensure local ownership

Source: Self elaboration.

For the right assessment of both the design and implementation timeline of the social marketing mechanism and social marketing program overall use of CSD-IES

planning framework can significantly ease and boost the whole process. Furthermore, it is vital to monitor and adjust all the steps, identify missing points and mistakes and modify the social marketing mechanism for possible future instalments.

Conclusions

Juvenile criminality among 14–17-year-olds in Azerbaijan has changed significantly during the last thirty years. This study, which used national data from 1993 to 2023, discovered a significant drop in both total and serious offences, which went from more than 1,000 incidents in the early 1990s to less than 500 in more recent years. This general progress hasn't been linear, though; since 2020, there has been a mild uptick, especially in serious crimes like robbery, physical harm, and co-offending. These reversals highlight the fact that juvenile delinquency is still a complicated and enduring societal issue that calls for fresh, sophisticated strategies.

The study's conclusions based on data are what make it valuable. Pie charts, heatmaps, and per capita analysis were used to separate direct from participatory crimes and monitor changes in frequency and severity. Although stealing is still the most frequent crime, the frequency of group involvement and recurring significant crimes points to deeper structural weaknesses, including peer pressure, a lack of social supervision, and digital exposure, according to the findings. Since participation-based crimes frequently exceed direct ones, it is likely that many young people are influenced by outside forces rather than acting on their own initiative to engage in criminal activity.

However, caution should be used when interpreting these findings. Although the databases are official and comprehensive, they are devoid of information on socioeconomic, regional, and gender disparities. Moreover, they fail to include unreported instances and provide little information about the psychological or motivational causes of delinquency. Causality cannot be shown due to the use of descriptive statistics rather than inferential ones, and the lack of qualitative data restricts the breadth of how some patterns may be interpreted.

The study does not support punitive measures alone because of these shortcomings. Rather, it suggests a behaviour change theory-based social marketing approach. This approach, which is centred on social media sites like Instagram and TikTok, addresses important influencers including families, teachers, and community leaders in addition to at-risk children. The concept emphasises preventive rather than reactive action by supporting substitutes including skills training, after-school activities, and peer mentorship.

To make sure that social marketing initiatives are organised, flexible, and quantifiable throughout a 24-month period, a logic model and phased implementation plan were created. These initiatives combine school-based outreach, digital media campaigns, and community mobilisation to provide a holistic, scalable strategy that is specific to the Azerbaijani environment.

Following are the key takeaways from this research:

- 1) Total and grave crimes among 14-17-year-olds fell sharply from 1993 to 2023, with per capita rates confirming this trend
- 2) A rise in offences, especially violent and group-based, was observed after the 2020, possibly linked to COVID-19 impacts and socio-economic stress
- 3) Many juveniles are involved not as sole actors but accomplices, underscoring peer pressure and group dynamics
- 4) Theft, bodily injury and fraud remain dominant; however, grave offences persist and require targeted intervention
- 5) Linear regression demonstrated statistically significant long-term downward trends in total and grave crimes ($p < 0.05$)
- 6) T-tests confirmed meaningful differences between early (1990s) and late (2020s) crime rates, supporting intervention impact hypotheses
- 7) Adjusting for population changes yielded more precise crime trends, avoiding misleading interpretations of raw totals
- 8) Official data lacks gender, regional and social-economic breakdowns and may underreport certain crimes
- 9) Pie charts, trendlines and heatmaps made category-specific trends and temporal shifts clearer for visualisation purposes
- 10) A preventive strategy using behavioural insights, youth-targeted messaging and community engagement was developed
- 11) A phased 24 month plan enables to scale implementation by all respective actors of the social marketing mechanism

In summary, even though Azerbaijan has achieved significant strides in lowering youth crime, new trends necessitate thoughtful, fact-based solutions. This research offers a basis for program design and policy reform by fusing empirical analysis with a socially responsive framework. In order to create a safer, more resilient generation in the future, it is not only possible but also crucial to address youth crimes now through focused, moral, and inclusive social marketing.

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