SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS AND PERSONALITY OF CHILDREN IN CONFLICT WITH LAW IN ASSAM

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

PRANAMI BARUA

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SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS AND PERSONALITY OF CHILDREN IN CONFLICT WITH LAW IN ASSAM

BY

PRANAMI BARUA

Department of Psychology

Supervisor

Prof. ZOENGPARI

Submitted

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MIZORAM UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

MIZORAM AIZAWL, 796004

CERTIFICATE

I hereby confirm that the research work titled "**Socio-Cultural Factors and Personality of Children in Conflict With Law in Assam"** presented for the fulfilment of the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Psychology at Mizoram University is the outcome of the research efforts conducted by Pranami Barua, who served as a Research Scholar at the Department of Psychology, Mizoram University. I have overseen this work as her supervisor. I attest that this research has not been previously submitted for consideration for any other academic degree or recognition from any other educational institution or university.

(Prof. ZOENGPARI)

Aizawl, June 2026 Supervisor

DECLARATION

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MARCH, 2026

I **Pranami Barua** hereby declare that the subject matter of this thesis is the record of work done by me, that the contents of this thesis did not form basis of the award of any previous degree to me or to the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University/Institute.

This is being submitted to the Mizoram University for the **Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology.**

(PRANAMI BARUA)

(Prof. ZOKAITLUANGI)	**(Prof. ZOENGPARI)**
Head	Supervisor
Department of Psychology	Department of Psychology
Mizoram University	Mizoram University

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"Light brings hope and wisdom, and gratitude allows us to see and cherish that light."

— **Anonymous**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS **PAGE NO.**

Certificate	i
Declaration	ii
Acknowledgement	iii - iv
Contents	v
List of Tables	vi-vii
List of Figures	viii
List of Appendix	ix
Chapter I - INTRODUCTION	1 - 47
Chapter II – STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	48 - 56
Chapter III - METHODS AND PROCEDURE	57 - 64
Chapter IV - RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS	65 - 135
Chapter V - SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	136 - 141
Appendices	142 - 161
References	162 - 179
Bio-Data of the Candidate	180 - 186
Particulars of the Candidate	187

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1:	Socio-cultural profile of control and study group
Table 2:	Cronbach's Alpha of Socio-Cultural Adaptation Scale-Revised
Table 2.1:	Cronbach's Alpha of Eysenck's Personality Inventory
Table 3:	Pearson's Correlation between socio-cultural adaptation and personality in study group
Table 3.1:	Pearson's Correlation between socio-cultural adaptation and personality in control group
Table 4:	Analysis of Personality Differences Between the Study Group and Control Group Using the Mann–Whitney U Test
Table 5:	Comparison, group difference and effect size in SCAS-R between study group and control group
Table 5.1:	Comparison of Socio-Cultural Adaptation (SCAS-R), Group Differences, and Effect Sizes between the Study and Control Groups Using the Mann–Whitney U Test for the Domains of Personal Interest Community Involvement and Language Proficiency
Table 6:	Prediction of involvement of Socio-cultural factors in conflict with law
Table 6.1:	Model Summary for Logistic Regression Predicting Involvement in Conflict with Law Based on Socio-Cultural Adaptation
Table 6.2:	Prediction of involvement of personality in conflict with law
Table 6.3:	Model Summary for Logistic Regression Predicting

Involvement in Conflict with Law Based on Personality

Table 7: Case Nodes Representing Participants

Table 7.1: First Cycle Coding

Table 7.2: Analytical Themes Developed via Second-Cycle Pattern Coding

Table 7.3: Cross-Case Comparison of Themes by Case Type

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Graphical representation of Socio-cultural profile of control and study group

Figure 2: Graphical representation of comparison of education level between control and study group

Figure 3: Graphical representation of comparison of religion between control and study group

Figure 4: Graphical representation of comparison of family type between control and study group

Figure 5: Graphical representation of comparison of parent's education between control and study group

Figure 6: Graphical representation of comparison of parent's occupation between control and study group

Figure 7: Graphical representation of comparison of socio-economic status between control and study group

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX I:	Informed Consent Form (Pranami Barua, 2021)
APPENDIX II:	Informed Consent Form (Assamese) (Pranami Barua, 2021)
APPENDIX III:	Socio-Demographic Data Sheet (Pranami Barua, 2021)
APPENDIX IV:	Socio-Demographic Data Sheet Assamese (Pranami Barua, 2021)
APPENDIX V:	Revised Socio-Cultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS-R)**,** Joseph Wilson (2013)
APPENDIX VI:	Revised Socio-Cultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS-R)**,** Joseph Wilson (2013), Assamese
APPENDIX VII:	Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI**)**, Eysenck and Eysenck (1964)
APPENDIX VIII:	Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI**)**, Eysenck and Eysenck (1964)Assamese
APPENDIX IX:	Semi-Structured Interview Schedule (Pranami Barua, 2021)
APPENDIX X: :	Permission Letter for Data Collection

CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

Socio-Cultural Factors

Human development unfolds within a complex matrix of cultural expectations, social structures, institutional systems, and interpersonal relationships. Individual behavior needs to be examined alongside social and cultural determinants that shape cognition, identity, emotional regulation, and adaptation. In developmental and social psychology, increasing emphasis has been placed on understanding how cultural norms, family structures, peer networks, socioeconomic conditions, and institutional arrangements influence adjustment patterns across the lifespan. Socio-cultural factors operate as both risk and protective mechanisms, influencing whether children and adolescents demonstrate adaptive functioning or maladaptive behavioral outcomes.

Socio-cultural adaptation signifies the mechanism through which individuals adjust cognitively, behaviourally and emotionally to the expectations, norms, and structures of their surrounding social environment. Adaptation is not merely conformity; rather, it involves the dynamic negotiation between individual dispositions and contextual demands. Particularly during childhood and adolescence, this negotiation becomes critical because identity formation, moral development, and personality organization are still evolving (Erikson, 1968).

In contexts characterized by socio-economic disparities, rapid urbanization, migration, or social instability, children may experience disrupted socialization processes. When adaptation mechanisms are compromised, the likelihood of behavioral difficulties, deviance, or conflict with social norms increases. Thus, socio-cultural factors are central to understanding developmental trajectories, especially in vulnerable populations.

Socio-Cultural Factors: A Conceptual Perspective

Socio-cultural determinants encompass symbolic and structured elements of society that influence individual development. These include family systems, economic resources, cultural beliefs, educational institutions, peer networks, media exposure, neighborhood characteristics, and broader societal norms. Rather than acting independently, these variables interact dynamically, shaping behavioral outcomes.

The ecological systems perspective proposed by Bronfenbrenner provides a broad framework for interpreting socio-cultural influences. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), development unfolds within multiple layered environmental systems, from close settings like family, school, and peers and extending to broader systems encompassing cultural norms, legal frameworks and economic policies. This framework highlights that child behavior emerges from interactions between personal characteristics and environmental structures. For instance, parental supervision, school engagement, and peer affiliations are embedded within larger socioeconomic and cultural contexts that influence available opportunities and expectations.

Socioeconomic status (SES) is frequently identified as a significant socio-cultural variable. Economic disadvantage often correlates with limited educational access, exposure to stressors, family strain, and neighbourhood instability (Evans, 2004). However, SES alone does not determine outcomes; the quality of social relationships and cultural capital mediates its impact. Bourdieu (1986) argued that cultural capital skills, dispositions, and social knowledge transmitted through family dynamics strongly contribute in shaping person's life trajectories. Thus, socio-cultural factors operate through both material and symbolic channels.

Family structure and parenting practices also constitute fundamental socio-cultural determinants. Baumrind's (1991) typology of parenting styles demonstrates how authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive approaches differentially influence self-regulation and behavioral adjustment. Children brought up in environments

characterized by warmth, monitoring, and consistent discipline are more likely to exhibit adaptive functioning.

During adolescence, peer influence becomes particularly significant. According to social learning theory by Albert Bandura, behaviour is learned through observation and reinforcement within social environments (1977). Exposure to deviant peer groups may normalize antisocial behavior, while positive peer networks can enhance resilience.

Cultural norms regarding gender, authority, and social hierarchy further shape behavioral expectations. Societies vary in their tolerance of aggression, conformity pressures, and individual autonomy, thereby influencing adaptation patterns. Consequently, socio-cultural factors must be understood as multi-layered and interdependent rather than isolated variables.

Understanding Socio-Cultural Adaptability

Socio-cultural adaptability denotes the process how individuals achieve functional adjustment within their social and cultural environment. It includes behavioral competence, emotional regulation, role performance, social integration, and internalization of cultural norms.

Adaptation is often conceptualized in terms of adjustment, resilience, and coping. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) described adaptation as a cognitive appraisal process wherein individuals evaluate environmental demands and mobilize coping strategies. Successful adaptation involves effective coping mechanisms that balance internal needs with external expectations.

Berry's (1997) acculturation framework, though originally applied to migration contexts, provides a broader model of adaptation strategies: integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization. These patterns illustrate how individuals negotiate identity and belonging within complex social systems. While originally applied to intercultural adaptation, the framework can be extended to

broader socio-cultural transitions, including shifts in family structures, educational systems, or peer environments.

From a developmental standpoint, adaptation reflects the interaction between temperament, personality, and environmental support. Masten (2001) described resilience as "ordinary magic," emphasizing that adaptive functioning often arises from normative developmental frameworks and process such as secure attachments, effective schools, and supportive communities. Maladaptation, conversely, may manifest as behavioral problems, social withdrawal, aggression, or rule-violating behavior. These outcomes often signal disruptions within ecological systems rather than intrinsic pathology alone.

Theoretical Frameworks Underpinning Socio-Cultural Adaptation

Ecological Framework of Human Development

Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems framework (1979) provides the conceptual foundation for understanding human development. The model suggests that development occurs through interactions within several interconnected environmental systems. These include the microsystem, which refers to immediate settings such as family and school; the mesosystem, representing the relationships among these settings; the exosystem, encompassing external environments that indirectly affect the individual, such as parental workplaces; the macrosystem, which involves broader cultural values and societal norms; and the chronosystem, reflecting the influence of time and historical transitions on development.

Social Learning Perspective

The social learning perspective by Bandura (1977) emphasizes that behavior is formed through modelling, observation and reinforcements. Behavioral adaptation is shaped by perceived rewards and punishments within social environments. Children internalize norms through imitation of significant others.

Strain and Anomie Perspectives

Merton's (1938) strain perspectives suggests that societal structures can produce pressure when culturally valued goals are difficult to achieve through legitimate means. Such structural strain can lead to alternative behavioral adaptations. Although sociological in origin, this framework underscores the role of structural inequalities in shaping behavior.

Attachment Theory

Attachment theory posits that early caregiver relationships form internal working models that influence social adaptation (Bowlby, 1969). Secure attachments foster emotional regulation and prosocial behavior.

Developmental Psychopathology Perspective

The developmental psychopathology approach emphasizes pathways, risk factors, and protective factors across time (Cicchetti & Rogosch, 2002). Adaptation is viewed as a dynamic process influenced by cumulative risks and resilience resources.

Socio-cultural factors are conceptualized as independent variables. Personality traits (emotional stability, impulsivity, self-concept) function as mediating variables. Socio-cultural adaptation (behavioral adjustment, social integration, role conformity) serves as the outcome variable.

The model assumes bidirectional influences: socio-cultural contexts shape personality development, and personality characteristics influence how children interpret and respond to environmental demands. Protective factors (supportive parenting, school engagement) buffer risk factors (poverty, exposure to violence). Maladaptive outcomes emerge when risk factors outweigh protective influences.

Socio-cultural factors form the outer ecological layer. Within this layer, personality traits mediate responses to environmental stimuli. Adaptation outcomes appear as the resultant behavioral and psychosocial functioning. Feedback loops exist wherein adaptation outcomes influence subsequent environmental responses.

Adaptation as a Dynamic Developmental Process

Adaptation is not static but evolves across developmental stages. Early childhood attachment patterns influence later peer relationships; adolescent identity formation shapes adult role performance. The chronosystem dimension emphasizes historical and socio-political shifts influencing youth experiences.

Protective processes include cognitive competence, emotional regulation skills, and supportive adult relationships. When such processes are disrupted, maladaptation may occur. Socio-cultural factors form the foundational matrix within which adaptation unfolds. Theoretical frameworks collectively demonstrate that behavior reflects dynamic interactions among individual traits and environmental structures. Socio-cultural adaptation represents the outcome of these interactions, shaped by risk and resilience processes across developmental stages.

Conceptualizing Personality in Childhood and Adolescence

Personality can be conceptualised as relatively stable patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving that distinguish one individual from another and shape their responses to various life situations (Allport, 1937). In childhood and adolescence, personality is still consolidating, shaped by neurological maturation, social interactions, and identity development. Although personality traits demonstrate increasing stability across adolescence, they remain responsive to environmental influences (Roberts & DelVecchio, 2000).

Developmental psychology emphasizes that personality evolves through reciprocal interactions between biological temperament and environmental feedback. Temperament, which biologically based tendencies in emotional reactivity and self-

regulation that become observable during early stages of life, forms the foundation upon which personality is built (Rothbart, 2011). For example, children with high emotional reactivity may develop either adaptive coping strategies or maladaptive behavioural tendencies depending on the quality of care-giving and social support.

In adolescence, identity exploration intensifies, and personality structures become more integrated. Within the psychosocial theory developed by Erik Erikson's (1968), the formation of identity and the avoidance of role confusion represent the central developmental task during this phase. Failure in establishing coherent identity may increase susceptibility to peer pressure, risk-taking, and oppositional behaviour. Thus, personality in juveniles must be understood as a dynamic and evolving system influenced by developmental transitions.

Personality and Children Encountering Conflict with Law

Understanding personality characteristics of encountering conflict with law requires a multidimensional and theoretically grounded perspective. Juvenile delinquency is not only a legal concern but also a complex psychosocial phenomenon shaped by developmental, environmental, relational, and personality-related factors. Personality represents organized patterns of cognition, emotion, motivation, and behaviour that remain relatively consistent across situations while still being responsive to contextual influences (McAdams & Pals, 2006). When children engage in behaviours that violate legal norms, it becomes essential to examine how personality traits, temperamental predispositions, coping mechanisms, and identity processes interact with environmental stressors and socialization experiences.

Children encountering conflict with law does not belong to a homogeneous group. Their behavioural expressions reflect varying pathways influenced by family dynamics, peer affiliations, socio-economic conditions, trauma exposure, school experiences, and cultural norms. Personality traits may function as risk factors, protective factors, or mediating mechanisms between environmental adversity and

behavioural outcomes. Therefore, the study of personality in this population must integrate trait-based, developmental, ecological, and psychosocial frameworks.

Personality as a psychological construct in childhood and adolescence, examines theoretical perspectives relevant to delinquent behaviour, and articulates a conceptual framework for understanding personality among minors engaged in unlawful activities.

Ecological Systems Approach and Contextual Embeddedness of Personality

The ecological systems framework proposed by Bronfenbrenner (1979) explains that personality development emerges through interaction with several interconnected socio-cultural environments. Rather than viewing delinquent behaviour as an isolated personal deficit, this perspective situates children within interconnected systems that shape behavioural trajectories. At the level of the microsystem, aspects such as family dynamics, parental guidance, emotional support, and sibling relationships directly contribute to the formation of personality traits including agreeableness, conscientiousness, and emotional stability. Harsh parenting, ineffective disciplinary practice, and exposure to domestic conflict have been associated with increased impulsivity and externalizing behaviours (Patterson, DeBaryshe, & Ramsey, 1989).

The mesosystem highlights interactions between family and school environments. Children whose parents maintain positive engagement with schools tend to demonstrate higher academic commitment and stronger internal regulation capacities. Conversely, fragmented communication between caregivers and educational institutions may weaken social control mechanisms, increasing vulnerability to peer influence. The exosystem, including parental employment instability, community violence, and institutional inequality, indirectly affects personality by shaping stress exposure and emotional climate within the household. Chronic environmental stress may heighten neuroticism and reduce adaptive coping.

At the macro-system level, cultural norms regarding masculinity, authority, aggression, and social status profoundly influence behavioural expression. In societies where dominance and risk-taking are valorized among boys, impulsive or aggressive traits may be reinforced rather than discouraged. Cultural narratives about honor, retaliation, or survival can normalize behaviours that conflict with legal norms. The chronosystem further acknowledges that socio-historical transitions such as economic instability, urbanization, technological shifts, or policy reforms alter developmental pathways over time. Thus, personality traits associated with delinquency must be interpreted within shifting socio-cultural landscapes rather than as static individual characteristics.

Trait Theoretical Perspectives

Trait theory provides largely accepted frameworks for understanding personality structures. Contemporary studies largely converge on the Five-Factor personality dimensions, which describe personality dimensions into five broad facets: extraversion, neuroticism, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness as outlined by McCrae and Costa, (2003).

Research consistently links certain trait configurations to delinquent and antisocial behaviour. Low conscientiousness, characterized by poor impulse control and limited planning, is strongly associated with rule-breaking and risk-taking. A high degree of neuroticism, characterized by emotional instability with vulnerability towards stress, might predispose individuals to reactive aggression. Low agreeableness, involving hostility and reduced empathy, is often correlated with interpersonal conflict and antisocial conduct (Jones et al., 2011).

However, trait models do not imply determinism. Traits interact with contextual factors, and their behavioural expression varies across situations. For example, sensation-seeking tendencies may lead to delinquency in unstructured environments but may be channelled into sports or creative activities in supportive

settings. Therefore, trait theory must be integrated with ecological models to fully understand personality outcomes.

Self-Control and General Perspective of Crime

A prominent framework linking personality and delinquency is the General approach of Criminology presented by Michael Gottfredson and Travis Hirschi (1990). This perspective postulates that low self-regulation, formed early in life due to incompetent parenting, is the main predictor of unlawful behaviour. Low self-control portrays impulsive, need for immediate gratification, risk-seeking behaviour, and insensitivity to others.

While this theoretical perspective has been influential, contemporary scholars argue that self-control should be understood developmentally and contextually rather than as a fixed trait. Parenting practices, attachment security, and school environments all adds to the making of self-regulatory capacities (Vazsonyi et al., 2017). Thus, low self-control may represent a developmental outcome shaped by relational and structural factors.

Developmental Taxonomy and Life-Course Theory

Moffitt's (1993) developmental classification differentiates between offenders whose criminal behavior is limited to their adolescent years and those whose offending persists throughout their life. Adolescence specific delinquency arises from peer influence and identity experimentation during adolescence, whereas life-course persistent delinquency originates in early neuropsychological deficits combined with adverse environments.

This theory underscores the interaction between personality traits (such as impulsivity and cognitive deficits) and environmental risk factors. It highlights heterogeneity among children involved in conflict with law and emphasizes that not all unlawful behaviour reflects stable antisocial personality structures. Some behaviors are transitional, whereas others reflect enduring personality configurations.

Social Learning and Cognitive Perspectives

The social learning model proposed by Albert Bandura (1977) suggests that behavior is acquired through watching, replication combined with strengthening. Personality patterns, including aggression or prosocial conduct, develop through repeated exposure to behavioural models. If children observe aggression being rewarded or normalized, they may internalize such behaviours as acceptable coping strategies.

Cognitive processes, including moral reasoning and belief systems, also influence personality expression. Stages of ethical and moral development advocate that immature honest reasoning may predispose youth to rule violations, Kohlberg (1984). Cognitive distortions such as hostile attribution bias further mediate behavioural responses.

Social Identity, Labelling, and Deviant Subcultures

Social identity concept puts forward that individuals obtain self-perception from group affiliations (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). For children marginalized by mainstream institutions, delinquent peer groups may offer belonging, recognition, and identity validation. Over time, identification with deviant subcultures can reshape personality expression, reinforcing traits such as antagonism or sensation-seeking.

Labelling theory further suggests that societal reactions to early misconduct may contribute to secondary deviance (Becker, 1963). When children are stigmatized as “troublemakers,” they may internalize these labels, incorporating them into self-identity. Such internalization can strengthen antisocial self-concepts and reduce motivation for conformity. Personality traits are thus shaped not only by internal dispositions but also by social narratives and institutional responses.

Gendered Socio-Cultural Pathways to Delinquency

Although delinquency is statistically more prevalent among boys, girls in conflict with law often present distinct socio-cultural and personality profiles. Gender socialization practices influence emotional expression, aggression styles, and coping mechanisms. Boys are frequently socialized toward externalizing responses, including physical aggression and risk-taking, whereas girls may exhibit relational aggression or internalizing symptoms (Leadbeater, Blatt, & Quinlan, 1995).

Socio-cultural expectations about femininity and masculinity shape identity formation. In contexts of trauma or exploitation, girls may develop maladaptive coping strategies rooted in relational insecurity or emotional dysregulation. Personality traits such as high neuroticism may interact with trauma exposure, increasing vulnerability to behavioural problems.

Gender-responsive frameworks emphasize that pathways to delinquency among girls often involve histories of abuse, relational instability, and emotional vulnerability (Zahn et al., 2010). Understanding personality within gendered socio-cultural contexts is therefore essential for comprehensive assessment and intervention.

Developmental Psychopathology Perspective

The developmental psychopathology approach integrates normative and atypical development, focusing on risk and protective processes (Cicchetti & Rogosch, 2002). Rather than viewing delinquent behaviour as inherent pathology, this perspective examines pathways leading to maladaptation.

Predictive variables as poverty, trauma, and family disruptions increase vulnerability, while supportive factors such as healthy interpersonal relationships, school engagement, and community resources promote resilience (Masten, 2001). Personality traits mediate the impact of risk exposure and influence adaptation trajectories.

Developmental Psychopathology and Pathways to Antisocial Behaviour

The developmental psychopathology framework emphasizes that maladaptive behaviours arise from disruptions in normative developmental processes and from cumulative risk exposure across time (Cicchetti & Rogosch, 2002). This perspective rejects simplistic cause-effect explanations and instead conceptualizes delinquency as the outcome of multifinal and equifinal processes. Multifinality suggests that similar early adversities can lead to diverse outcomes, while equifinality indicates that different pathways may culminate in similar behavioural patterns.

Within this framework, early temperament vulnerabilities such as high reactivity or low effortful control may interact with socio-cultural adversity to create escalating risk. For example, a child with difficult temperament exposed to coercive parenting may develop oppositional tendencies reinforced through negative parent-child cycles (Patterson et al., 1989). Over time, these patterns may generalize to school and peer contexts, solidifying personality configurations characterized by hostility, low empathy, and poor self-regulation.

Developmental cascades further illustrate how difficulties in one domain spill over into others. Academic failure may diminish self-efficacy, leading to association with deviant peers who provide alternative status hierarchies. These affiliations may reinforce antisocial attitudes and identity formation centred on delinquent subcultures. The interplay between internal dispositions and external reinforcement thus creates developmental continuity in antisocial behaviour.

Importantly, developmental psychopathology also underscores resilience. Protective factors such as mentoring relationships, positive peer networks, and culturally grounded support systems can interrupt maladaptive trajectories and foster adaptive personality restructuring.

Integrated Conceptual Framework

An integrative conceptual framework for understanding personality among children in conflict with law combines trait dispositions, attachment history, self-control capacity, ecological influences, and identity development. Personality characteristics persuade the way children interpret and react to environmental stress, while environmental feedback shapes trait consolidation.

This dynamic model recognizes bidirectional influence: personality affects social experiences, and social experiences modify personality structures. Maladaptive behavioural outcomes arise when risk factors overwhelm regulatory capacities and protective supports.

Implications for Research and Intervention

A comprehensive understanding of personality in this population informs assessment, prevention, and rehabilitation. Psychological evaluations should consider trait dimensions, attachment patterns, coping styles, and environmental contexts. Interventions targeting emotional regulation, self-control, and identity reconstruction may reduce recidivism. Programs grounded in cognitive-behavioural and family systems approaches have demonstrated effectiveness in modifying maladaptive personality patterns and promoting prosocial behaviour.

Personality among children involved conflict with law represents cumulative outcome of developmental, relational, cognitive, and ecological processes. Theoretical frameworks from trait psychology, attachment theory, developmental taxonomy, social learning model, and ecological systems approach collectively offer a complete explanatory model. Personality is neither fixed nor inherently deviant; it reflects adaptive responses to lived experiences. Understanding these processes are essential for designing evidence-based interventions that promote rehabilitation and social reintegration.

Risk and Protective Personality Profiles

Research suggests that certain personality configurations elevate risk for delinquent behaviour. High impulsivity, low conscientiousness, antagonism, callous-unemotional traits, and sensation-seeking are consistently linked with externalizing problems (McCrae & Costa, 2003). However, these traits do not operate independently of context. In supportive environments, high extraversion may be channelled into leadership, while in disorganized contexts, it may manifest as dominance within delinquent peer groups.

Protective personality traits include high conscientiousness, empathy, resilience, and adaptive coping skills. Secure attachment relationships foster agreeableness and emotional regulation. Cultural connectedness and pro-social identity formation may strengthen self-esteem and moral commitment. Thus, personality should be conceptualized along continua rather than dichotomies of "normal" versus "delinquent."

Theoretical Linkages between Socio-Cultural Factors and Personality

Self-Control Theory

The core of Self-Control perspective suggests that a deficit in behavioral restraint marked by a tendency toward instant rewards and impulsive actions, risk-seeking and temper volatility as a primary predictor of delinquent behaviour (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). According to this theory, ineffective parenting practices such as inconsistent discipline and poor supervision hinder the development of internal control mechanisms. Socio-cultural stressors that disrupt parental monitoring may therefore indirectly shape personality traits associated with delinquency.

Although criticized for minimizing structural influences, self-control theory highlights the developmental role of early care giving environments in shaping regulatory capacities. Socio-cultural adversity may undermine the acquisition of

conscientiousness and impulse control, particularly during sensitive developmental periods.

Theoretical Framework of Attachment

Theoretical Framework of Attachment proposes early relational understandings form internal working structures guiding emotional regulation and interpersonal behaviour (Bowlby, 1969). Insecure attachment particularly disorganized or avoidant patterns have been associated with externalizing behaviours and aggression. Children lacking secure emotional bonds may develop mistrust, hostility, and maladaptive coping strategies.

Socio-cultural disruptions such as family conflict, parental absence, or exposure to violence can impair attachment security. These relational deficits may influence personality characteristics such as low agreeableness, high neuroticism, and antagonism, thereby increasing susceptibility to delinquency.

Social Learning Concept

Social learning concept emphasizes observational learning, reinforcement, and modelling (Bandura, 1977). Adolescents internalize behavioural scripts from significant others, including family members, peers, and media representations. In socio-cultural contexts where aggressive or deviant behaviours are normalized, children may adopt similar behavioural patterns. Social learning mechanisms interact with personality traits. For instance, children high in sensation-seeking may be particularly responsive to peer reinforcement of risky behaviour. Thus, socio-cultural modelling processes operate through dispositional tendencies.

Developmental Taxonomy and Life-Course Perspectives

Moffitt's (1993) developmental categorization differentiates across individuals who engage in persistent offending throughout their lives and offenders who engage in delinquent behaviour primarily during adolescence. Life-course persistent lawbreakers typically exhibit early neuropsychological vulnerabilities

interacting with dysfunctional family conditions. Adolescence limited law breakers involve in delinquent behavior primarily due to peer pressure and mature gap pressures. This taxonomy highlights the interaction between individual inclinations and socio-cultural constructs across time. Persistent offending reflects cumulative continuity, wherein early temperament difficulties elicit negative environmental responses, reinforcing maladaptive personality development.

Social bonds such as attachment to family and commitment to education can redirect life trajectories as stated by Sampson and Laub (1993). Strengthening socio-cultural supports may therefore modify personality expression and behavioural outcomes.

Emotional Regulation and Personality Structure

Emotional dysregulation is a central mechanism linking socio-cultural adversity and delinquency. Exposure to chronic stress, trauma, or inconsistent care giving may impair the growth of adaptive emotional regulation tactic. High neuroticism combined with low conscientiousness may predispose children toward reactive aggression.

Developmental psychopathology frameworks emphasize that maladaptive outcomes emerge from deviations in normative developmental processes (Cicchetti & Rogosch, 2002). Emotion regulation difficulties, hostile attribution biases, and deficits in executive functioning can interact with environmental stressors to produce conduct problems.

Identity Formation and Moral Development

Adolescence is marked by identity exploration and moral reasoning development (Erikson, 1968). Socio-cultural marginalization may constrain opportunities for positive identity formation, leading some youth to adopt delinquent identities reinforced by peer groups.

Stages of moral and ethical development by Kohlberg suggest that moral reasoning progresses from compliance based reasoning to principled ethical reasoning. In contexts where moral norms are inconsistently modelled, progression may be disrupted. Personality traits such as openness and agreeableness may facilitate higher moral reasoning, while antagonistic traits may hinder it.

Integrative Conceptual Perspective

The relationship between socio-cultural factors and personality in children involved in conflict with law are conceptualized as dynamic, bidirectional system. Socio-cultural risks such as poverty, family conflict, peer delinquency, and educational marginalization interact with temperament vulnerabilities, influencing personality traits such as impulsivity, aggression, low conscientiousness, and emotional instability. These traits, in turn, shape behavioural choices and environmental responses, creating feedback loops that either escalate or mitigate delinquent trajectories.

Protective factors including secure attachment, positive school engagement, pro-social peer networks, and cultural support systems can strengthen adaptive personality traits such as resilience, empathy, and self-regulation. Thus, personality is neither solely biologically determined nor purely socially constructed; it is co-constructed through ongoing interactions between child and context.

Understanding children encountering in conflict with law requires an incorporated theoretical advance that bridges socio-cultural and personality frameworks. Trait predispositions, self-control capacities, attachment security, social learning processes, ecological systems, and life-course dynamics collectively contribute to behavioural outcomes. Delinquency emerges not from isolated risk factors but from the convergence of dispositional vulnerabilities and socio-cultural adversity across developmental stages.

Theoretical integration highlights the importance of multi-level interventions targeting family functioning, school engagement, peer influences, and personality

development. Future research must continue to examine how socio-cultural contexts shape personality trajectories and how protective mechanisms can foster adaptive outcomes among vulnerable youth.

Children involved in conflict with law represents vulnerable segment of population for whom behavioural outcomes cannot be understood solely as individual pathology. In India and particularly in socio-culturally diverse regions such as Assam; the phenomenon of juveniles engaging in unlawful actions reflects the complex interplay between individual psychological dispositions and layered socio-cultural influences. Behaviour, identity, and personality are embedded within family dynamics, peer group affiliations, community norms, economic structures, gender mandates, and institutional processes. As a result, a comprehensive understanding of socio-cultural factors, socio-cultural adaptation, and personality in CICL necessitates a multi-level analytic perspective grounded in developmental, socio-psychological, and ecological theories of human behaviour (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Cicchetti & Rogosch, 2002).

In India, the socio-cultural landscape is characterized by diversity in language, religion, caste, and economic access. Assam, a north-eastern state, presents additional contextual specificities, including ethnic pluralism, border migration, rural–urban disparities etc. These socio-cultural variations exert distinct influences on childhood socialization and personality formation, shaping children's adaptation processes within family and community environments. Moreover, The Indian legal framework addressing juvenile justice and child protection established in 2015, lay emphasis on restoration over punitive approaches, underscoring importance of understanding contextually rooted personality structures and socio-cultural adaptation patterns in designing effective interventions.

The relationship between socio-cultural factors, socio-cultural adaptation, and personality in children involved in conflict with law is inherently dynamic and context-dependent. In India and Assam, socio-economic disparity, family structures, peer socialisation, cultural norms, and institutional environments collectively shape personality development and adaptation processes. A comprehensive theoretical

integration reveals that delinquent behaviour is not solely a reflection of individual traits but an emergent outcome of complex interactions among ecological systems, developmental processes, and social experiences.

Understanding this interplay is critical for research, policy, and intervention. Effective strategies must address socio-cultural contexts while fostering adaptive personality capacities. Multi-level interventions ranging from family strengthening to community support and school engagement are essential for promoting positive developmental trajectories among vulnerable youth.

Context of the Study

Minors involved in unlawful activities represent a vulnerable population whose behavioral outcomes are shaped by the interaction between environmental conditions and individual psychological characteristics. Ecological perspectives emphasize that child development is embedded within multi-facet system, including family environment, education system, community involvement, and wide socio-cultural contexts (Urie Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Socio-cultural variables such as family structure, parental education, socio-economic status, and educational discontinuity significantly influence adolescent adjustment and risk behavior.

At the dispositional level, personality traits play an important role in behavioral regulation. Trait theory suggests that dimensions such as neuroticism and extroversion influence emotional stability, stress reactivity, and social competence (Hans Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975). Higher neuroticism has been associated with emotional instability and maladaptive coping, whereas extroversion is often linked with social engagement and adaptive functioning.

Within the Indian legal system context, governed by the Indian legal framework addressing juvenile justice and child protection established in 2015, understanding both structural vulnerabilities and psychological dispositions is essential for rehabilitation-oriented interventions. In Assam, socio-economic disadvantage, family disruption, and limited educational access may interact with

personality traits to influence adolescents' encountering in conflict with law. Hence, the present research integrates socio-cultural and personality perspectives to probe both Factors that increase vulnerability as well as those that provide protection among minors involved in conflict with the law, additionally a qualitative exploration of vulnerabilities among girls.

Formulation of Research Questions

1. What differences exist in socio-cultural factors (age, education, religion, family structure, parental education, parental occupation, and socio-economic status) in children involved in conflict with the law and non-delinquent children in Assam?
2. Do children involved in conflict with the law significantly differ from non-delinquent children in terms of personality traits, specifically extroversion and neuroticism?
3. Is there a significant difference in socio-cultural adaptation between children involved in conflict with the law and non-delinquent children?
4. What is the relationship between personality and socio-cultural adaptation among adolescents?
5. To what extent do socio-cultural adaptation and personality traits predict involvement in conflict with the law?
6. How do family disruption, poverty, abuse, and educational discontinuity shape gender-specific pathways into conflict with the law?

Review of Literature

A longitudinal research overview from developmental criminology has emphasised that personality traits like low self-control and impulsivity are stable precursors to juvenile offending and later criminal behaviour, drawing on developmental taxonomies such as Moffitt's life-course determinat versus adolescence specific pathways by *Moffitt, T. E. (1993).* This body of research, while not juvenile specific in location, underscores the interaction between personality

development and delinquent trajectories, providing a comparative standpoint for understanding juvenile offenders' individuality.

McKeown & Haase (2006) inferred that family processes are significant in the psychological well-being of the children along with their socioeconomic background. They are particularly noticeable because of the contentious link they try to draw between child behaviour and socioeconomic indicators. Four factors are identified based on several categories of variables and attempt to use them as guidance to model interventions. The four factors are physical well-being of mothers, parent-child relationships, subjective financial well-being, and one parent households. However, the study excludes fathers from the ambit of parents and focuses only on mothers as parents. Although the study is flawed because of its gender bias, the indicators could be extended to more meaningful categories inclusive of inter sectionality. The research methods, however, is significant for intervention studies about child psychology.

Study done by *Aysun BaranselIsir et al.,(2007)*examined several family-related factors, including family disruption, parents' educational attainment, the prevalence of imprisonment among first- and second-degree relatives, family migration from the place of birth, and the presence of multiple delinquent children within the family. The findings revealed notable differences in the family environments of convicted and non-convicted adolescents. These results highlight notable impact of family circumstances pertaining to the emergence and development of delinquent behaviour during adolescence. The study also suggested that to reduce or decrease the prevalence of delinquent behaviour among children and adolescents requires strengthening and improving the socio-cultural environment within families.

Defining "Minors involved in unlawful activities" is instrumental in understanding the caveat which is relevant to the categorization: anybody who is below the age of 18 and has come into contact with the legal justice system owing to being suspected or accused of committing a act of crime. The worldwide rehabilitation of minors' engagement in unlawful activities has focused on

integration of society along with respective families with a restorative rather than a punitive approach. The commended approaches include restorative justice, diversion as well as “alternatives to custodial sentencing”. In fact, as a part of the goals of eradication of poverty of the UN's Millennium Development Goals, the legal approach of reintegration of juveniles in conflict with law forms an important solution, the contrary of which could result in further marginalisation of the said children in the society which is again counter-productive *(Dabir, 2008)*.

A study by *Loeber and Farrington (2014)* analyzed risk and protective factors in serious juvenile offenders using longitudinal information from the Pittsburgh Youth Research. Through structured interviews with behavioral assessments, this study found that disruptive temperament, low academic achievement, and association with delinquent peers were strong predictors of persistent offending. The authors highlighted the interaction between personality predispositions and socio-cultural disadvantage in shaping criminal trajectories.

A cross-national study by *Jolliffe, D., & Farrington, D. P. (2014)* investigated compassion and offending behavior using meta-analytic techniques across multiple countries. The review found that low empathy was consistently associated with delinquent and aggressive behavior among adolescents. The study highlighted personality deficits in emotional responsiveness as a major hazardous reason for children in conflict with law, especially when reinforced by antisocial peer cultures.

*Vaughn, M. G.,(2014)*and his colleagues did a quantitative study in which they examined personality traits such as sensation seeking and impulsivity among justice-involved youth using national survey data in the U.S. Regression analyses revealed that impulsivity and risk-taking tendencies significantly predicted involvement in violent and property crimes. The findings supported the argument that personality factors interact with neighbourhood disadvantage and peer delinquency to increase offending risk.

Masten et al. (2014) in their longitudinal study examined resilience, self-regulation, and antisocial behavior among at-risk youth using records from the Project Competence research in the United States. Employing multi-informant assessments and repeated behavioral measures from childhood through adolescence, the researchers found that poor executive control and emotional dysregulation predicted delinquent behavior, particularly in contexts of chronic poverty and family stress. The study emphasized that socio-cultural adversity shapes personality development and moderates the pathway toward conflict with law.

A cross-sectional study by *Pardini and Fite (2015)* investigated reactive and proactive aggression among justice-involved adolescents using psychometric scales and behavioral interviews. The findings indicated that youth displaying high proactive aggression and narcissistic traits display a higher propensity to engage in serious and recurred offenses. This study concluded that personality constructs such as aggression style interact with peer delinquency and neighbourhood disadvantage in predicting criminal behavior.

Prospective cohort study by *Odgers et al. (2015)* explored neighbourhood deprivation and antisocial behavior in children comming from the Environmental threat, a Longitudinal Twin research in the UK. Using multilevel modelling, the study demonstrated that children with difficult temperament living in deprived neighbourhoods were significantly more likely to develop delinquent behaviors. The research reinforced that socio-cultural contexts intensify underlying personality vulnerabilities.

A research by *Van der Kolk and Pynoos (2015)* explored the narratives of female juvenile offenders in psychiatric facilities using in-depth interviews. Analysis indicated that exposure to domestic violence, sexual abuse, and neglect influenced the development of defensive personality traits such as distrust, aggression, and emotional withdrawal. Socio-cultural disadvantage amplified the risk of offending.

A literature review on *gender-responsive juvenile justice, CAYCJ Report (2015/updated)* synthesized research showing that girls' delinquent behaviour is

often influenced by trauma, victimization, and systemic bias, with qualitative studies revealing that girls' emotional and psychological responses to adversity play central roles in their involvement with the justice system. The review also stressed the need for developmentally tailored interventions that address girls' unique emotional, familial, and social contexts.

A research by *Odger, et.al. (2015)* observed the interplay of temperament and environmental stressors in female adolescents using data from a large longitudinal UK cohort. Findings revealed that girls with high negative emotionality and low self-regulation living in deprived neighbourhoods have high likelihood to engage in criminal behavior, highlighting how personality and socio-cultural adversity jointly shape delinquency trajectories.

In one of the research by *Baglivio, M. T.,* and colleagues *(2015)* analyzed early life adversities (ELAs) among juvenile offenders in Florida using structured assessments and administrative data (n > 60,000). Results showed that elevated ELA count strongly correlated in conjunction to serious, violent, and chronic offending. The study concluded that trauma exposure influences personality development, emotional regulation, and behavioral control, reinforcing the socio-cultural roots of delinquency.

Leve, L. D., & Chamberlain, P. (2015) in their multi-research review of girl delinquents established that females in the legal justice system often encompass histories of victimization, experience of domestic or community aggression, and higher psychosocial stress, which interact with personality factors such as emotional dysregulation and self-harm tendencies. The review also highlighted that girls are underserved by gender neutral programming and are more likely to have unmet mental health needs.

A descriptive analytical study by *Asscher, J. J., et.al. (2015),* explored moral judgment and empathy deficits among juvenile offenders in the Netherlands using psychometric assessments. The study found that low empathy and impaired moral reasoning were significantly related to delinquent conduct. The authors concluded

that personality characteristics such as callousness, when combined with inadequate parental guidance, increase the likelihood of juvenile offending.

Comparative study by *Cauffman, E., et.al (2015)* examined psychosocial maturity and decision-making among juvenile offenders using structured psychological scales. The research demonstrated that lower levels of responsibility, temperance, and perspective significantly predicted offending behavior. The study concluded that immature personality development within socially disadvantaged contexts increases vulnerability to criminal behavior.

A study by *Anderson and Hughes (2015)* explored identity development among incarcerated youth in the United Kingdom using narrative interviews. Thematic analysis revealed that social exclusion, unemployment in families, and stigmatization influenced self-concept and personality formation. Youth described developing defensive aggression and distrust as coping mechanisms, highlighting the dynamic interaction between socio-cultural adversity and personality in offending trajectories.

A study by *Archit Gupta et al. (2015)* investigated the social and demographic attributes associated with aggression among children encountering legal offences across five juvenile observation settlements in India, including Hyderabad, Lucknow, and Pune. Employing a case-control design, researchers administered a socio-demographic questionnaire and the modified Buss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire to 90 juveniles and matched controls. The research indicated that minors involved in legal offences were majorly coming from lower socioeconomic status, broken homes, and households with substance abuse and abuse histories, and they scored higher on aggression domains than non-offender peers, highlighting how socio-economic adversities and family instability interact with personality traits like aggression to increase delinquency risk.

A study by *Kerig and Becker (2015)* examined trauma exposure, PTSD symptoms, and personality functioning among detained youth in the United States. Using structured clinical interviews and self-report measures, the study found high

levels of trauma-related emotional dysregulation. The authors concluded that trauma-informed perspectives are essential in understanding personality development and children's conflict with the law.

Walker, Bishop, and Pullmann (2015) in their qualitative study investigated the lived first hand experiences of adolescence in legal diversion programs using comprehensive interviews. Participants reported that unstable family structures, exposure to violence, and academic failure shaped their self-concept and coping styles. The study demonstrated how socio-cultural adversity interacts with personality traits like impulsivity and distrust in shaping offending behavior.

In one of the research work by *Lynam* and colleagues *(2015)* explored personality traits associated with psychopathic characteristics among minors via the Antisocial Process Screening Device (APSD) across community along with legally involved samples. Using cross-sectional and longitudinal analyses, the researchers found that callous and emotionally detached traits with narcissistic tendencies were strongly connected with persistent offending. The study highlighted that these personality dimensions increase resistance to socialization and rehabilitation efforts.

A cross-cultural study by *Vazsonyi et al. (2015)* assessed self-control and deviant behavior among adolescents across multiple countries using survey data. Results consistently demonstrated that low self-control predicted delinquent behaviors regardless of cultural context. However, socio-cultural norms moderated the strength of this association, indicating an interaction between personality and environment.

A study by *Frick and Ray (2015)* analyzed callous-unemotional traits among justice-involved youth using psychometric scales and behavioral assessments. Findings exhibited that youth with high callous and emotionally detached features showed more severe and persistent offending patterns. The authors argued that early socio-cultural adversity, such as neglect and inconsistent parenting, contributes to the development of such personality characteristics.

Longitudinal study by *Fergusson, Boden, and Horwood (2015)* examined childhood conduct problems and later offending using records from the Christ Church Health and Development Research. Researchers employed a prospective cohort design tracking participants from birth into adulthood. Findings indicated that early temperament difficulties, low self-control, and exposure to socio-economic disadvantage significantly predicted juvenile offending. The study emphasized that personality traits such as impulsivity interact with adverse socio-cultural conditions in shaping persistent antisocial behavior.

Tremblay et al. (2015) reported that the developmental origins of physical violence from early childhood to youth using data from a Canadian birth cohort. The researchers used repeated behavioral assessments and parent/teacher reports. Findings indicated that early impulsivity, poor emotional regulation, and exposure to socio-economic adversity significantly predicted later delinquent involvement. The study emphasized that personality traits such as low self-control develop within family and neighbourhood contexts, contributing to children's conflict with the law.

A mixed-method study by *Ryan, Williams, and Courtney (2016)* explored placement instability, trauma exposure, and delinquency among youth in child welfare systems in the United States. Using administrative records and structured interviews, the study revealed that children experiencing multiple foster placements exhibited emotional dysregulation and externalizing behaviors that heightened risk for conflict with law. The research underscored how socio-cultural instability shapes maladaptive personality development.

Descriptive study by *Chung et al. (2016)* examined mental health, trauma, and personality traits among incarcerated female adolescents in the United States using structured interviews and psychometric scales. Findings revealed high prevalence of emotional dysregulation, low self-esteem, and anxiety disorders. The study concluded that personality vulnerabilities combined with socio-cultural marginalization, family instability, and trauma exposure increased risk for girls' involvement with the justice system.

Cross-national study by *Baier and Pfeiffer (2016)* examined youth violence and socio-cultural integration across European countries using large-scale survey data. The findings revealed that immigrant status, social exclusion, and weak school attachment were associated with higher delinquency. Personality factors such as low self-esteem and aggression were influenced by experiences of marginalization.

In a meta-analytic review by *Pratt and Cullen (2016)* examined self-control theory across multiple international studies. Using statistical synthesis methods, the authors confirmed that poor self-discipline constitutes as a major personality indicators of minors involved in unlawful activities. However, they also found that the strength of this relationship varies depending on contextual socio-cultural factors such as neighbourhood disorganization and parental supervision.

Moffitt, Arseneault, and Caspi (2016) in their longitudinal study examined childhood self-regulation and later antisocial behavior using data from the Dunedin cohort. Behavioral ratings and structured assessments showed that poor self-regulation in childhood predicted delinquency in adolescence and adulthood The research highlighted that socio-economic hardship amplifies personality-based risks for offending.

A systematic review by *Fazel, Doll, and Långström (2016)* analyzed mental disorders among juvenile detainees globally using meta-analytic methods. The review found disproportionately high rates of conduct disorder, depression, and substance abuse. The authors highlighted that mental health and personality-related disorders, compounded by socio-economic marginalization, contribute significantly to youth conflict with law.

Abrams, L. S., & Hyun, A. (2009/updated analysis 2016) explored narratives of adolescents in observation homes for juvenile through in-depth interviews. Thematic analysis revealed that identity formation, social marginalization, and perceived lack of opportunity shaped self-concept and delinquent pathways. Findings emphasized that socio-cultural exclusion interacts with personality development in influencing children's involvement with the law.

Cohort study done by *Murray, et.al., (2016)* investigated long-term effects of parents inlegal custody on child's personality development and later involvement in conflict with law. Adopting longitudinal information from the study in Juvenile offenders, findings revealed that children exposed to parental incarceration experienced emotional insecurity, aggression, and low self-control, which significantly increased the likelihood of later involvement with the legal system. The study highlighted socio-cultural disruption as a critical factor shaping maladaptive personality development.

Developmental study by *Dodge, K. A., et. al.,(2016)* examined unfriendly attribution bias and destructive behavior among at-risk children using longitudinal behavioral assessments. Results indicated that children who consistently interpreted social cue as hostile showed a greater tendency to participate in delinquent activities during teenage years. The study demonstrated that personality-linked cognitive distortions, when shaped within adverse family and school environments, significantly predict juvenile offending.

A comparative study by *Piquero, Jennings, and Barnes (2016)* analyzed the role of self-regulation and peer criminal behaviour using longitudinal survey records from adolescents in United States. Structural equation modelling demonstrated that low self-control significantly predicted delinquency, but its effect was amplified in neighbourhoods characterized by social disorganization. The study reinforced the socio-cultural moderation of personality factors in juvenile crime.

Hoeve et al. (2016) performed a meta-analysis on parenting styles along with juvenile delinquency across international samples. Using systematic review and statistical meta-analytic techniques, the study found that harsh discipline, poor parental monitoring, and low emotional warmth were strongly associated with delinquent behavior. The findings suggested that parenting practices influence the development of personality traits such as aggression, emotional dysregulation, and low conscientiousness, which contribute to children's involvement with the law.

Ronald et al., (2016) in their article children involved in conflict with law in India reported that Serious offences such as rape and murder may sometimes remain unpunished when offenders claim the protection of juvenile status. Addressing juvenile delinquency cannot rely solely on strict enforcement or amendments of the Juvenile Justice Act. It is equally important for parents and guardians to understand the various factors that may lead children toward criminal behaviour. In many instances, juveniles involved in offences are not inherently criminals but may be victims of adverse social circumstances. Early prevention is possible when appropriate guidance and supervision are provided both at home and in educational settings. Parents and teachers strongly contribute to the formation of children's attitudes and behaviour. Rather than stigmatizing young offenders as criminals or delinquents, greater emphasis should be placed on understanding their needs and providing opportunities for behavioural change and rehabilitation. Like many other social issues, juvenile delinquency is closely associated with broader societal shortcomings and maladjustments.

Chesney-Lind and Pasko (2016) explored the pathways to offending among female juvenile offenders in the United States through narrative interviews. Themes highlighted experiences of family conflict, victimization, and school marginalization, which contributed to personality patterns such as impulsivity, emotional dysregulation, and low self-efficacy, ultimately influencing criminal behavior.

A cross-sectional study by *Cauffman and Steinberg (2016)* investigated psychosocial maturity and risk-taking among female juvenile offenders using self-report and behavioral tasks. Results indicated that girls displayed delayed impulse control, emotional instability, and high sensitivity to peer influence. The study emphasized that socio-cultural contexts such as community violence and family dysfunction interact with personality traits in shaping delinquent behavior.

Longitudinal study by *Caspi et al. (2016)* examined childhood self-control and later antisocial outcomes. The researchers employed repeated behavioral assessments from childhood to adulthood. Findings revealed that low childhood self-control significantly predicted adolescent delinquency, substance abuse, and criminal

convictions. The study emphasized that stable personality traits such as impulsivity and poor behavioral regulation are central predictors of conflict with law, especially when compounded by socio-economic stressors.

A cross-sectional study by *Miller, Zeichner, and Wilson (2016)* examined trait anger, impulsivity, and aggression among detained youth using standardized personality scales. The findings showed that high trait anger and poor impulse control significantly predicted violent offenses. The study suggested that maladaptive personality traits mediate the relationship between environmental stress and delinquent conduct.

Prospective research by *Beaver (2016)* investigated the relationship between temperament and delinquent behaviour through a survey based method. Data collected from adolescents. Structural equation modelling revealed that negative emotionality and low effortful control predicted involvement in delinquent acts. The study concluded that personality-based temperamental risk factors operate independently but are intensified by poor parental monitoring.

A cross-sectional study by *Walters, G. D. (2016)* investigated criminal thinking patterns and personality traits among incarcerated youth in the United States. The quantitative design demonstrated that proactive criminal thinking, impulsivity, and cognitive distortions were significantly associated with delinquent behavior. The findings emphasized that maladaptive personality cognition combined with peer reinforcement environments contributes to continued conflict with the law.

In a prospective research done by *Henggeler et al. (2016),* it was assessed the effectiveness of family-based interventions in female adolescents in juvenile justice frameworks. Pre-intervention assessments indicated that participants exhibited high levels of impulsivity, aggression, and emotional instability. Post-intervention results suggested improvements in self-regulation and reductions in delinquency, demonstrating the malleability of personality traits when supported by socio-culturally informed interventions.

Odgers et al. (2017) in their developmental study investigated neighbourhood disadvantage, temperament, and antisocial behavior using longitudinal data from a UK birth cohort. Multilevel modelling revealed that children with difficult temperament residing in deprived locality were at heightened threat for criminal behaviour. The study concluded that socio-cultural disadvantage intensifies pre-existing personality vulnerabilities, increasing the likelihood of criminal involvement.

Colins et al. (2017) examined mental health disorders and personality characteristics among detained youth in Sweden using structured diagnostic interviews (n = 493). Results revealed high prevalence of ADHD, conduct disorder, and substance misuse. Emotional instability and impulsivity were strongly correlated with repeated offending. The authors concluded that socio-cultural marginalization combined with untreated psychological vulnerabilities increases risk for children accused of violating the law.

In a review by *Bender, McGarrell, & Welsh (2017)* synthesized international research on female juvenile offenders. The review highlighted that personality factors such as low self-esteem, impulsivity, aggression, and emotional dysregulation were consistently associated with offending across countries. Socio-cultural risk factors including poverty, abuse, and peer influence were found to amplify these personality vulnerabilities.

A cross-national study by *Leve and Kerr (2017)* investigated vulnerabilities and supportive factors for delinquency among girls in institutional settings using structured assessments along with interviews. The research found that personality traits like emotional volatility, low self-control, and high anxiety interacted with socio-cultural variables (peer networks, neighborhood safety) to predict offending severity.

Zahn et al. (2017) analyzed psychosocial and personality factors among female adolescents in juvenile detention centres across four U.S. states. Structured questionnaires and interviews revealed that low self-control, sensation-seeking, and

peer influence were significant predictors of offending. Findings suggested that gender-specific interventions targeting emotional regulation and social skills could reduce recidivism.

Study by *Abrams (2017)* explored the daily living experiences of male youth in the observation homes for juveniles using in-depth narrative interviews. The study found that marginalization, racial discrimination, and limited educational opportunities shaped identity development and fostered defensive personality patterns such as hostility and distrust, which reinforced delinquent behavior.

Mazerolle, Antrobus, Bennett, and Tyler (2017) analysed how family conditions and peer pressure contribute to youth offending using longitudinal survey data. The findings indicated that association with delinquent peers significantly mediated the association between personality factors (e.g., sensation-seeking) and involvement in criminal behavior. This study emphasized that socio-cultural peer environments shape the expression of personality vulnerabilities.

Tackett et al. (2017) explored the Five-Factor Personality Model in adolescents with conduct problems using standardized inventories. Findings showed that less agreeableness and diligence were significantly linked to delinquent behavior, while high neuroticism predicted emotional instability-related offenses. The research supported the applicability of Five-Factor Personality Model in understanding juvenile offending.

Neuropsychological study by *Fairchild et al. (2017)* investigated decision-making deficits and personality characteristics among adolescents with conduct disorder using cognitive tasks and personality assessments. The findings revealed impaired risk evaluation and high reward sensitivity, suggesting that sensation-seeking and poor executive control are personality-linked mechanisms underlying delinquency.

A study by *Barry, Grafeman, Adler, and Pickard (2017)* assessed narcissistic personality traits and delinquent behavior among high-risk adolescents using

psychometric personality inventories. The analysis indicated that higher levels of grandiose narcissism among adolescents were associated with increased involvement in proactive aggression and property offences. The authors emphasized that inflated self-perceptions combined with peer validation environments increase risk for law-violating behavior.

A longitudinal research by *Jennings et al. (2017)* explored the relationship amid unfavourable childhood experiences, self-regulation, and conduct problems. Findings indicated that ACEs were majorly connected with reduced personal control and increased likelihood in juvenile offending. The study reinforced the integrated model where socio-cultural adversity influences personality traits, which in turn predict conflict with law.

Quantitative study by *Barnes, Beaver, and Boutwell (2017)* explored genetic predispositions, self-control, and environmental influences on delinquency using survey data from American adolescents. Structural modelling indicated that low self-regulation continued to be identified as an important influencing factor delinquency even after accounting for socio-demographic variables. However, environmental risk factors such as poor parenting and peer delinquency significantly mediated this relationship.

The study by *Meera Gungea et al., (2017)* aimed to critically examine the influence of personality traits, as described by the OCEAN and PEN models, on juvenile delinquency and criminal behaviour, and to assess whether these traits could predict the likelihood of future reoffending. Findings indicated that personality traits, particularly the interplay among their dimensions, represent a significant aspect of individual identity that cannot be overlooked when evaluating juvenile delinquency. Therefore, it was crucial to both conceptualize and empirically investigate these traits to gain a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of their influence on delinquent behaviour among young individuals.

A study by *Shader (2018)* reviewed risk factors for juvenile delinquency in community settings using secondary data analysis of U.S. juvenile justice statistics.

The findings indicated that family conflict, poverty, substance abuse, and school failure are key socio-cultural determinants. The report emphasized that these environmental stressors interact with individual personality vulnerabilities such as impulsivity and aggression.

Lippold, Greenberg, and Feinberg (2018) in their systematic review analyzed family and community influences on adolescent antisocial behavior. Through meta-analytic techniques, the study found that parental monitoring, neighbourhood cohesion, and peer norms significantly influenced delinquent behavior. The review emphasized that personality factors as low conscientiousness along with sensation seeking behavior shaped and reinforced within socio-cultural systems.

A cross-national study by *Wikström et al. (2018)* investigated moral development, self-control, and delinquency using the Peterborough Adolescent and Young Adult Development Research (UK). Through longitudinal surveys and situational action theory analysis, findings revealed that youth with weak moral beliefs and poor self-control have high likelihood to get involved in unlawful behavior, particularly when influenced by legally charged environments. The study concluded that personality traits operate within socio-cultural contexts to influence juvenile offending.

Global review of female juvenile offending contexts by *Irwin, K., Pasko, L., & Davidson, J. (2018)* highlighted how girls' pathways into delinquency are shaped by social relationships, trauma, power dynamics, and systemic responses to gender, emphasizing that girls often experience conflicting socio-cultural expectations, relational stress, and marginalization, which interact with their personality development to influence their interactions with the law. This broader analysis underscores the importance of gender-informed approaches to research and intervention.

In a multi-site study by *Wasserman et al. (2018)* assessed psychiatric disorders and criminogenic risk factors among detained adolescents in the United States using structured clinical interviews. The results showed high rates of mood

disorders, trauma exposure, and impulsivity. The authors concluded that emotional dysregulation and environmental stressors such as community violence and family instability are central to understanding juvenile justice involvement.

Sharma and Bhadra (2018) in their descriptive study examined psychosocial correlates of juvenile delinquency in observation homes in Northern India using standardized personality inventories and socio-demographic questionnaires. Findings indicated that juveniles exhibited higher levels of aggression, emotional instability, and poor academic engagement. Socio-cultural factors such as poverty, family conflict, and school dropout were significant contributors interacting with maladaptive personality traits.

A longitudinal study by *Chung, Little, and Steinberg (2018)* followed a cohort of female adolescents in the child protection and justice system over three years. Using surveys, interviews, and administrative records, the study found that early exposure to adverse socio-cultural conditions such as poverty, familial substance abuse, and peer delinquency combined with personality traits like low conscientiousness and high neuroticism predicted repeated offending.

DeLisi et al. (2018) in their meta-analysis examined psychopathic and juvenile recidivism across multiple countries. Using quantitative synthesis of empirical studies, the authors found that psychopathic traits, particularly impulsivity and callousness, were strong predictors of reoffending. The review reinforced the significance of personality assessment in juvenile justice risk evaluations.

Klimstra et al. (2018) in their study examined identity formation and personality maturation during adolescence using longitudinal data. The researchers found that delayed identity development and unstable personality patterns were associated with higher rates of externalizing behaviors, including delinquency. The study concluded that personality immaturity during adolescence increases vulnerability to conflict with law.

*Moffit*t, *T. E. (2018*) in his longitudinal study examined developmental taxonomies of antisocial behavior. The scientific investigation employed longitudinal cohort tracking from childhood to adulthood to distinguish life event persistent and adolescence specific offenders. Findings revealed children exhibiting premature temperament problems, impulsivity, and neuropsychological deficits combined with adverse socio-cultural environments (e.g., poverty, family instability) were more likely to become chronic offenders. The research highlighted the relations between personality vulnerabilities and social circumstances in predicting persistent delinquency.

Malik, D., et al. (2018) used the *Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)* to explore underlying personality profiles of juvenile offenders in juvenile homes in Delhi. With purposive sampling and narrative analysis, it revealed that interpersonal conflict, emotional instability, and maladaptive coping themes were prominent, linking psychological personality patterns to offending behaviour and offering insights into individualized rehabilitation focusing on emotional cognition.

Fairchild et al. (2019) in their cross-sectional study investigated neuropsychological functioning and callous-unemotional traits among adolescents with conduct disorder in the United Kingdom. Using cognitive testing and psychometric personality scales, the researchers found deficits in empathy, emotional processing, and moral reasoning. These personality traits, particularly when combined with family dysfunction and social deprivation, significantly increased risk of juvenile justice involvement.

A study by *Sri Putri Permata et al., (2019)* examined socio-cultural factors and their impact on children in conflict with the law, using case studies conducted across three regencies and a municipality in Bengkulu Province, Indonesia. The findings indicated that in many villages, most residents were farmers who devoted the majority of their day to work, which reduced the time available for interacting with their children and neighbors. Consequently, social supervision weakened, contributing to an increase in juvenile involvement in criminal activities. The study

also emphasized the need to reinforce family functions while simultaneously enhancing the roles of legal, customary, and religious institutions.

A research project in the *Journal of Dharma (2020)* examined the Big Five personality domains among children encountering in conflict with law, highlighting that high neuroticism and extraversion scores and low agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness were associated with delinquent behaviour. Using psychological measurement tools and descriptive comparisons with normative data, the study argued that personality structures are central in profiling delinquent populations, useful for treatment planning and behaviour modification.

Gauri Singh and Siddharth Verma (2021) in their study focused on female juveniles involved in conflict with law in Indian scenario through legal analysis, literature synthesis of the Juvenile Justice Systems and rules. This review highlighted gender-specific intervention gaps, including lack of psychological support, inadequate programming, and stereotypes about femininity, noting that girls' socio-cultural experiences and personality development influence their offending trajectories and justice outcomes.

A theoretical review by Rajeevan, Jain & Parihar (2022) systematically analysed personality dimensions like neuroticism, narcissism, psychopathy, and Machiavellianism among delinquent prone adolescents using a literature review methodology. The authors highlighted that, certain maladaptive traits (e.g., psychopathic and narcissism) are associated with increased delinquency risk and proposed that personality profiling should be integrated into prevention strategies for at risk juveniles.

A study by *Sumithra and Komalavalli (2022)* explored personality traits among 153 juvenile delinquents in a juvenile home in Chennai, India, using the *Big Five Personality Inventory*. Employing a normative survey method, the research reported that delinquents displayed personality profiles shaped by both individual predispositions and environmental influences, indicating personality dimensions such

as conscientiousness and psychological steadiness may be important in understanding delinquency.

Agarwal & Sundaram (2022) examined systemic and societal barriers faced by juveniles in India during transition from correctional facilities. Through qualitative and contextual analysis, the researchers found that social stigma, negative labelling, and community exclusion significantly hinder reintegration, lowering opportunities for education, employment, and social ties. These socio-cultural barriers interact with individual personality traits such as self-esteem and social identity affecting re-entry outcomes.

A study by *Ishan Atrey & Balwinder Singh (2023)* conducted a scientific method investigation of juvenile delinquency in Rajasthan, India using structured questionnaires with 500 juveniles and parents. The study revealed that family conflict, poor parental monitoring, peer influence, and school failure were significantly associated with delinquent behaviour, with mental health issues as an additional moderator. These results underscore how socio-cultural contexts (family, education, peers) intersect with adolescent psychosocial and personality factors to influence delinquency.

Manohar, H., et.al. (2024) conducted aex post facto graph revaluation of 77 adolescents suggested to Swatantra Clinic at a tertiary mental health centre in India to examine patterns of vulnerability, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), socio- emotional factors, and protective influences among children in conflict with law (CICL). The review of clinical records revealed that *over 90%* of participants reported ACEs such as trauma or neglect, more than half had schooling difficulties, and nearly 69% experienced child labour, while approximately 65% had deviant peer associations. Despite these vulnerabilities, around 73% showed positive future orientation and nearly 46% reported supportive caregivers. The study emphasizes the multifaceted interplay of socio-economic stressors, school challenges, family dynamics, and peer influences in shaping behaviour, emphasizing the requirement for trans-disciplinary support structures to improve rehabilitation along with community integration outcomes among juvenile offenders in India.

Mahajan and Tigga (2024) conducted an exploratory study involving *21 juveniles* in Ahmedabad to profile socio-demographic and psychosocial characteristics tied to juvenile delinquency. Through structured interviews comprising closed and open-ended questions, the research detailed how family background, education status, types of offences, and interpersonal relationships collectively influence behavioural patterns among juveniles. Descriptive statistics highlighted that lower schooling, dysfunctional family environments, and peer influences intersect to elevate delinquency risk. The results highlight the multidimensional nature of socio-cultural factors including household stability, community pressures, and educational disengagement that teenagers experience prior to offending behaviour. The authors argue that understanding these nuanced influences is critical for tailored intervention strategies in the Indian context.

Abhishek and Balamurugan (2024) reviewed over 80 peer-reviewed articles to synthesize evidence on how social factors shape juvenile delinquency in India. Using a comprehensive literature approach, they identified that negative family dynamics such as parental neglect, inconsistent supervision, and *abandonment* strongly correlate with increased delinquent behaviour. Peer associations that reinforce deviant norms and involvement in substance use were also consistently noted as major drivers of delinquency. The review concluded that positive family environments reduce susceptibility to delinquent behaviour, while adverse social contexts poverty, lack of community support, and peer pressure significantly elevate risk, underscoring the need for policymakers to design prevention initiatives that address complex social influences.

Chakrovarty, Nath, Guha Ray, and Batabyal (2024) conducted a cross-sectional epidemiological study among *125 children in Juvenile Justice (JJ) homes in West Bengal, India*, examining the associations between socio-economic factors and personality traits with the incidence of heinous offences. Using structured interviews and the Junior Eysenck Personality (JEP) questionnaire, they found that most offenders *were male*, originated from lower educational backgrounds, and were either students or child labourers. Personality assessments indicated a higher

prevalence of *neuroticism* and *introversion*, as well as low social desirability scores among those committing heinous acts. These result simply the personality dispositions, demographic factors, and socio-economic conditions collectively add to the severity of delinquent behaviour among juveniles, highlighting important intersections for rehabilitative policy and psychological intervention.

Children's susceptibility and path to conflict with the law *(2024)* used a clinical observational design at a higher mental health institute to describe vulnerability and protective factors among 77 juveniles referred from juvenile justice systems. The findings showed about 90% experienced adverse childhood experiences and highlighted that socio-emotional vulnerabilities like trauma and low follow-up engagement compound delinquency risk, calling for multi- systemic interventions post institutional care for effective reintegration.

A study by *Agalya and Ruckmani (2024)* examined personality variables among adolescents involved in conflict with law in Tamil Nadu, India. Using an exploratory cross-sectional design, the researchers screened juveniles for intellectual disability, excluded ineligible cases, and administered the *16PF personality questionnaire* to assess personality traits' association with delinquent behavior. Analysis revealed a significant association between personality factors such as impulsivity, emotional instability, and delinquency**,** underlining how particular personality profiles are linked to higher risk for law-conflict behavior in Indian juveniles.

A study by *Charu Singh & Rajeev Singh Bhandari (2024)* investigated juvenile delinquency's supporting socio-cultural factors in India by exploring family background, educational status, and economic conditions via an empirical research design. It found that low income, nuclear family structures, and short of parent's regulation significantly contributed to delinquent behavior, emphasizing how socio-cultural family contexts and peer interactions shape juvenile offending behaviour.

A global theoretical article *by Asif Farooq Zai & Gulshan Wani (2024)* reviewed international literature on juvenile delinquency as a global societal

challenge, outlining how cultural norms, family environments, social structures, and technology interact to influence delinquent behaviour. Drawing on diverse evidence and theoretical frameworks, the study emphasised the multifaceted socio-cultural determinants of juvenile offending shared across different societies, highlighting the need for integrated socio-legal responses.

A study by *Tejashree S. Salunkhe & Manjushri S. Bagul (2024)* explored juvenile delinquency and contributing factors in Maharashtra through an empirical cross-sectional design assessing family background, wealth, and supervision. Their findings revealed that low family income, inadequate parental supervision, and unstable family structures were prominent contributors to delinquency, reflecting how socio-economic and familial contexts shape behaviour in young offenders.

A *Juvenile Delinquency and Factor Affecting* study (2024) used survey and descriptive analysis in India to assess socio-cultural influences, concluding that family background, supervision level, and educational engagement significantly shape adolescents' delinquent involvement. This research reinforces theoretical perspectives that delinquency arises from a complex web of social and personal determinants rather than singular causes, aligning with general criminological insights.

A global review of educational environment and juvenile delinquency (2024) used statistical analyses and narrative review to show that school performance, educational access, and school climate significantly shape youth delinquency patterns. The report noted that unequal education opportunities and poor school engagement were associated with impulsivity and deviant behaviours, suggesting that educational policies and supportive learning environments can moderate socio-cultural risk factors.

A methodical re-evaluation of *juvenile delinquency threat factors in India and South Asia (2024*) collated evidence that poverty, family breakdown, lack of supervision, and community disorganization significantly contribute to youth offending. Using thematic synthesis, authors identified that social alienation,

economic exclusion, and weak institutional support amplify susceptibility to crime, pointing to the need for integrated socio-cultural intervention frameworks.

A study on *socio-economic determinants of juvenile crime in Pakistan (2024)* used survey and regression analysis to reveal that low household income, limited education, and peer group influence were strongly associated with delinquency. The research argued that economic marginalization and cultural norms influence youths' attitudes towards crime, pointing to similar socio-cultural mechanisms observed across Asia that shape juvenile offending and personality outcomes.

Parvez & Gauhar (2024) examined juvenile justice concerns and constraints in India, applying a legal and empirical analysis to explore how socio-economic elements and policy frameworks influence juvenile crime patterns. The interdisciplinary approach identified that economic deprivation, lack of enforcement, and institutional limitations interplay with juveniles' personal profiles to affect delinquency trajectories, suggesting that reforms must address structural inequalities and cultural contexts to reduce youth crime.

A study in West Bengal by *Chakrovarty et al. (2024)* examined personality traits and heinous offences among 125 juveniles in juvenile justice homes using a cross-sectional descriptive design. Personality dimensions such as neuroticism and introversion correlated with more serious offending, suggesting that juveniles with specific personality profiles may be more prone to severe criminal behaviours, highlighting the need for psychological profiling in juvenile justice assessments.

R Abhishek and J Balamurugan (2024) conducted a literature review focused on the social determinants of juvenile delinquency globally and in India. Synthesizing findings from over 50 studies, the authors highlighted that dysfunctional family relationships, neglect, abusive environments, and associations with delinquent peers are strongly linked with delinquent behaviour. The review also emphasized how community conditions such as socio-economic disadvantage and lack of structured recreational opportunities elevate risk, while *supportive and nurturing home environments* reduce delinquency likelihood. By collating evidence

from multiple peer-reviewed sources, the review identifies key socio-cultural risk and protective factors that inform both theory and policy for youth justice systems.

A study by *Yichen Zhang (2025)* examined social factors contributing to juvenile delinquency using a social synthesis approach that integrated literature and analytical methods to assess family environment, socio-economic status, and education. The study concluded that negative family dynamics, poor education, and low socio-economic conditions strongly predict juvenile crime, and recommended strengthening family communication and school/community interventions to mitigate delinquency, showing how socio-cultural factors operate across varied global contexts.

A retrospective study by *Rajnish Raj et al. (2025)* examined juvenile delinquency in Kashmir, India**,** through a clinical psychosocial analysis of juveniles referred for assessment. Using retrospective data and descriptive statistics, the study showed that juveniles in conflict with law frequently exhibited anxiety, hyperactivity, peer influence, and other psychosocial risk factors, indicating how individual psychological vulnerabilities interact with social environments to shape delinquency in Indian contexts.

A systematic review by *Payal Prasanta Samanta (2025)* explored psychological risk factors of juvenile delinquency in India using a systematic literature review design that synthesised Indian studies from 2005–2025. The review identified that family dysfunction; mental health disorders (e.g., ADHD, conduct disorder), impulsivity, and trauma exposure significantly interact with socio-cultural stressors to predispose adolescents toward delinquent behaviour. Samanta emphasised that personality traits and socio-environmental pressures jointly influence trajectories into delinquency, advocating for culturally tailored interventions involving families, schools, and mental health services.

A systematic review by *P. P. Samanta (2025)* synthesised psychological risk factors for juvenile delinquency in India across empirical studies from 2005–2025. Employing systematic review methodology, Samanta found that family dysfunction,

socio-economic inequities, emotional disturbances, and impulsive traits emerged consistently as risk factors. The review suggests that personality and socio- cultural stressors jointly contribute to the onset and persistence of juvenile offending, advocating more nuanced interventions that combine family support, education, and mental health services.

A study by *R. Das (2025)* examined socio-economic impacts on juvenile delinquency using purposive sampling of 100 juvenile offenders from development centres. The exploratory analysis showed that social disadvantage and educational disruption were linked to higher delinquent involvement. Findings emphasised that male juveniles, particularly those with disrupted schooling and poor family circumstances, exhibited more serious offending patterns, reinforcing socio-economic implications in understanding youth crime.

A retrospective study by *Raj et al. (2025)* examined psychosocial profiles of juveniles in conflict with law in Kashmir using retrospective case record analysis. The study extracted data on socio-demographic characteristics, psychosocial factors, and psychological assessments such as Rorschach Inkblot and Draw-a-Picture tests. Results showed that familial neglect, hyperactivity, and anxiety frequently co-occurred among juveniles, pointing toward the interplay of individual psychopathology and socio-environmental stressors in shaping delinquent trajectories.

A study by *Roshni Laskar and Zigisha Pujari (2025)* analysed the barriers to rehabilitation and social reintegration among children engaged in unlawful activities. Using an empirical interview-based methodology across observational homes, the authors found that inadequate infrastructure; lack of trained professionals, limited vocational and psychological services, and insufficient family support and community acceptance impeded successful reintegration. Their findings suggest that socio-cultural community attitudes and family dynamics critically shape post-release outcomes for juvenile offenders and call for tailored community-based reintegration strategies.

A study by *Geetika Saxena et al. (2025)* investigated personality traits, age, and birth orderas predictive factors of deviant behavior among 150 male juvenile delinquents and 150 non-delinquent controls in India. Using purposive sampling and the *Eysenck Maudsley Personality Inventory (MPI)*, the study found that delinquents had significantly higher neuroticism and extraversion**,** and that birth order and age also influenced these traits, suggesting personality dimensions are associated with deviant behaviour and may help inform juvenile justice strategies.

A paper by *Shivani Gautam and Santosh Kumar (2025)* analyzed girls' unique challenges in the legal system observed in a global context through literature review and theoretical analysis. The authors concluded that girls typically commit fewer violent offenses than boys, but their pathways often include higher rates of trauma, family loss, physical and sexual abuse, and relationship-oriented responses to stress. They emphasize the need for gender responsive programming that reflects girls' relational and psychological needs.

Research on *gendered perspectives of juvenile crime in India (2025)* employed a comparative criminological analysis to explore differences between male and female offending patterns. The study highlighted that female youth exhibit distinct delinquent behaviours driven by relational stressors, economic disadvantage, and coping mechanisms linked to trauma and marginalization, suggesting that gender should be integrated into risk and personality assessments within juvenile justice frameworks.

Cross-national risk analysis by researchers in North Macedonia (2025) explored violent behaviour among female adolescents within a socio-cultural framework. Although not exclusively juvenile justice, it documented how parental neglect, exposure to domestic violence, lack of support, and early substance use were associated with female youth aggression and rule breaking behaviour, emphasizing the interaction between environmental stressors and personal coping mechanisms that can influence girls' delinquent pathways.

CHAPTER - II

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The conceptual foundation of minors involved in unlawful activities is grounded on understanding that children differ from grown persons in terms of cognitive maturity, emotional regulation and moral reasoning. Developmental theorists such as Erik Erikson have emphasized that adolescence is marked by identity formation and psychosocial instability, making young individuals more susceptible to risk-taking and impulsive behaviors. Neuro-scientific research further indicates that the prefrontal cortex, which governs executive functioning and impulse control, continues to develop into early adulthood, thereby affecting adolescents' decision-making capacities (Steinberg, 2009). This developmental immaturity reduces culpability and supports the argument for a separate juvenile justice framework.

Sociological and criminological perspectives also inform the understanding of children involved in conflict with law. Variables like poverty, family dysfunction, peer influence, exposure to violent behaviour, substance abuse, and deficient of educational opportunities significantly contribute to delinquent behavior. Agnew's (1992) General Strain concept puts forward that strain arising from adverse social conditions increases the likelihood of deviant behavior among youth. Thus, juvenile offending is often viewed not merely as an individual moral failure but as a consequence of broader environmental and structural influences.

Socio-cultural determinants constitute the primary environmental forces shaping adaptation. Family structure and functioning are central influences within the child's micro-system. Disrupted attachments, domestic violence, parental substance misuse, inconsistent discipline, and absence of parental supervision have been repeatedly associated with delinquent behaviour (Hoeve et al., 2016). In Assam, where migration for employment, agrarian instability and socio-political unrest has contributed to familial disruptions, children may experience weakened parental bonds and diminished emotional support. Such familial contexts not only increase

vulnerability to conflict with law but may also impair adaptive functioning during institutionalization and reintegration. For instance, a child returning to a family environment characterized by hostility or neglect may exhibit persistent maladaptive behaviours despite institutional interventions. Conversely, supportive family engagement may buffer psychological distress and promote resilience. Yet empirical research in Assam examining these adaptive differentials remains limited.

Socio-economic deprivation further complicates adaptive trajectories. Poverty intersects with limited educational access, school dropout, child labour, and restricted exposure to pro-social role models. The socio-economic profile of many juveniles in Assam reveals educational discontinuity and employment precarity within families. These structural constraints contribute to diminished self-efficacy, identity confusion, and reduced future orientation factors that shape personality development and coping mechanisms. Children experiencing chronic deprivation may internalize marginalization, leading to externalizing aggression or internalizing withdrawal as adaptive responses to structural stress. However, systematic investigation into how socio-economic status interacts with personality variables to influence adaptation among boys and girls in conflict with law in Assam remains sparse.

Gender adds another critical dimension. Although boys constitute the majority of recorded juvenile offenders, girls in conflict with law often present complex vulnerability profiles involving histories of abuse, coercion, exploitation, or survival-based offences. Feminist criminological perspectives (Chesney-Lind, 2016) argue that girls' delinquency pathways are deeply intertwined with victimization experiences. Within Assamese socio-cultural contexts, where patriarchal norms and expectations regarding female modesty and family honour remain influential, girls who come into conflict with law may face amplified stigma and social exclusion. This gendered stigma can profoundly affect personality adaptation, leading to internalized shame, diminished self-worth, anxiety, or depressive symptomatology. Boys, conversely, may experience societal expectations of toughness and dominance, reinforcing externalizing behaviours and resistance to authority within institutional

settings. The interaction between gender socialization and adaptive outcomes thus warrants rigorous empirical exploration.

Community environment constitutes another ecological layer shaping adaptation. Social disorganization theory (Shaw & McKay, 1942) posits that neighbourhood instability, poverty concentration, and weak community institutions facilitate deviant behaviour. In parts of Assam where community infrastructures are fragile and youth engagement opportunities limited, children returning from institutional care may re-enter environments that lack rehabilitative supports. Community stigma, gossip networks, and moral condemnation may isolate children, undermining reintegration efforts. In collectivist cultural settings, the label of "offender" may extend beyond the individual to affect family reputation, intensifying psychosocial strain. Becker's (1963) labelling theory suggests that such stigmatization can reinforce deviant identity, impeding positive personality restructuring.

Developmental psychology underscores that teenage years is a sensitive phase of character development, heightened emotional reactivity, and susceptibility to peer and environmental influence (Erikson, 1968; Steinberg, 2014). Personality traits such as impulsivity, emotional instability, low frustration tolerance, and sensation-seeking often normative in adolescence may become maladaptive when compounded by socio-cultural stressors. The developmental taxonomy proposed by Terrie E. Moffitt (1993) distinguishes two patterns of offending: behaviour restricted to the adolescent stage and behaviour that continues persistently over time, emphasizing the role of environmental contexts in shaping behavioural pathways.

Personality variables are also considered significant internal determinants influencing the likelihood of children encountering conflict with law. Personality encompasses relatively steady models of cognition, affect, and behavior that figure how individuals respond to environmental demands. Trait-based models such as the Five-Factor Model proposed by Paul Costa and Robert R. McCrae highlight dimensions including conscientiousness, agreeableness, and neuroticism, which are particularly relevant in understanding behavioral regulation (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

Empirical findings suggest that low conscientiousness (poor impulse control and lack of responsibility), low agreeableness (hostility and reduced empathy), and high neuroticism (emotional instability) are significantly associated with aggression, conduct problems, and antisocial tendencies among adolescents.

International child rights frameworks articulated by the United Nations and operationalised through various agencies which emphasize rehabilitation, reintegration and psychosocial restoration over punishment. In India, these principles are codified within the 2015 national legislation governing juvenile justice and child safeguard in India, which commands children sensitive justice system fixed on care, protection, treatment, and social inclusion. Despite this progressive orientation, empirical realities particularly in Assam, suggest persistent juvenile involvement in various categories of offences, highlighting a need to interrogate not only the causes of delinquency but also the processes of personality adaptation following legal conflict. Institutional climate in Observation Homes are intended to provide education, counselling, skill development, and psychosocial care. However, infrastructural constraints, limited trained personnel, overcrowding, and variability in gender-responsive programming can affect the quality of institutional experiences. A supportive institutional environment characterized by empathetic staff, structured routines, therapeutic engagement, and peer mentoring may foster adaptive personality changes such as improved self-control and pro-social orientation. Conversely, punitive climates may reinforce oppositional traits and distrust of authority. Rehabilitation programs lacking socio-cultural contextualization risk failing to address root vulnerabilities, thereby contributing to maladaptive adjustment and potential recidivism. Evidence-based policy formulation requires empirical data linking socio-cultural determinants with adaptive outcomes within Assam's distinctive socio-cultural milieu. Several significant research gaps also emerge in the present narrative on children involved in conflict with law, particularly within the Indian socio-cultural setting. Although global research has extensively examined juvenile delinquency from developmental, sociological, and criminological perspectives, much of this evidence is derived from Western contexts, limiting its generalizability to diverse cultural environments. These research deficiencies have

substantive implications. Without nuanced understanding of how socio-cultural contexts shape personality adaptation among boys and girls in conflict with law, juvenile justice interventions may remain generalized, culturally insensitive, and insufficiently gender-responsive.

Empirical studies examining institutional climate in Assam remain limited, particularly regarding its interaction with socio-cultural background and personality adaptation. The matter of minors encountering in legal offence in Assam must be understood within a multidimensional socio-cultural and developmental framework that transcends simplistic legal categorization. Minors who come into contact with the legal justice system are not only mere offenders; rather, they are developing individuals embedded within layered ecological systems that shape their personality formation, coping styles, identity development, and adaptive capacities.

Assam presents a distinctive socio-cultural context characterized by ethno-linguistic diversity, tribal and non-tribal population dynamics, rural-urban disparities, migration-related tensions, economic precarity, and periodic social unrest. Official record from the National Crime Records Bureau has consistently pointed out that Assam records significant juvenile crime rates within the north-eastern region. While fluctuations occur annually, the socio-demographic patterns of juveniles involved in crime frequently reveal low educational attainment, economic deprivation, and family instability. These macro-level patterns underscore that juvenile offending in Assam is not an isolated behavioural phenomenon but is embedded in broader socio-cultural and structural vulnerabilities. However, beyond descriptive statistics, there remains limited scholarly inquiry into how these contextual factors influence the adaptation and personality development of boys and girls once they are routed in the course of the juvenile justice structure.

In various regions of Assam, children exposed to domestic violence, community unrest, or exploitation may carry unresolved trauma into institutional settings. Cultural stigma surrounding mental health and limited access to child-centred psychiatric services exacerbate these vulnerabilities. Without trauma-

informed care, institutional rehabilitation may fail to address core psychological disruptions affecting adaptation.

Despite the evident interplay of socio-cultural variables, personality traits, and adaptive outcomes, existing research in Assam demonstrates several gaps. Most studies emphasize descriptive crime statistics or legal processes rather than psychosocial adaptation. Few adopt integrative ecological frameworks combining family, community, gender, and institutional factors. Gender-disaggregated analyses remain limited, and longitudinal research tracing adaptive trajectories over time is virtually absent. Additionally, minimal attention has been given to personality dimensions such as impulsivity, resilience, locus of control, and emotional regulation in relation to socio-cultural determinants among CICL populations in Assam. The theoretical formulations, while useful in explaining delinquency onset, do not adequately address how personality structures and adaptive capacities evolve following contact with legal systems, particularly within culturally specific environments such as Assam.

The present study, is conceptualized as a dynamic, multidimensional process encompassing psychological adjustment, behavioural regulation, social integration, and role reconstruction within institutional and community settings. For children involved in conflict with law adaptation is particularly complex since it unfolds across at least three interconnected domains: (a) adjustment within custodial or non-custodial institutional settings such as Observation Homes and Special Homes; (b) internal personality restructuring and coping realignment following exposure to stigma, trauma, or legal intervention; and (c) reintegration into family and community environments that may either support or undermine rehabilitation. Maladaptive outcomes including aggression, institutional misconduct, withdrawal, anxiety, depression, or recidivism reflect disruptions within these domains. Yet adaptation is not merely an individual psychological process; it is deeply influenced by socio-cultural structures and interpersonal environments.

Therefore, within the framework of the stated problem, personality variables are not viewed as isolated causes but as interacting factors that mediate the

relationship between socio-cultural stressors and delinquent outcomes. Understanding these variables is crucial for assessment, prevention, and intervention planning. Rehabilitation models endorsed within the 2015 national legislation governing juvenile justice and child protection in India emphasize individualized concern plans, counselling and cognitive-behavioral interventions aimed at enhancing self-control, emotional regulation, empathy, and pro-social decision-making. Hence, examining personality variables provides a critical psychological lens for addressing the underlying factors contributing to children's involvement in unlawful behavior.

The central problem addressed in the present study is the inadequate empirical comprehension of how socio-cultural variables and adaptation persuade the personality of boys and girls in conflict with law in Assam. This problem encompasses gaps in knowledge regarding the interaction of family dynamics, socio-economic status, gender norms, community environment, institutional climate, trauma exposure, and personality traits in shaping adaptive outcomes. Addressing this problem is essential for developing culturally grounded, gender-sensitive, and psychologically informed juvenile justice practices that promote effective rehabilitation and sustainable reintegration for minors involved in the legal system with law in Assam.

Objectives and Hypotheses:

Objectives:

1. To make comparison of socio-cultural factors and adaptation between boys in conflict with law and controls.
2. To compare personality traits boys in conflict with law and controls using standardized personality inventory.
3. To examine the connection between socio-cultural factors and personality among boys in conflict with law and controls.
4. To identify socio-cultural and personality predictors of involvement in conflict with law.

Hypotheses:

1. There is no significant difference in socio-cultural factors between boys in conflict with law and controls.
2. There is no significant difference in personality traits between boys in conflict with law and controls.
3. There is no significant relationship between socio-cultural factors and personality traits in study and control group.
4. Socio-cultural and personality variables do not significantly predict involvement in conflict with law.

Operational Definitions of Variables

Socio-Cultural Factors: Socio-cultural factors mean social, familial, economic, educational and social adaptation influencing the child's development, behaviour. In this study, socio-cultural factors are operationally defined as measurable variables assessed through a structured socio-demographic schedule and Revised Socio-cultural Adaptation scale consisting of:

Age: Chronological age in completed years at the time the data were collected, according to institutional documentation.

Education: Academic status of the participant categorized as currently studying or school dropout.

Religion: Religious affiliation of the participant as reported

Family Structure: Type of family as reported by the child.

Parental Education: Highest educational qualification attained by father and mother.

Parental Occupation: Nature of employment of the father and mother, classified into categories

Socio-Economic Status: Family's economic position measured using income, occupation, and educational indicators as reported in the socio-demographic schedule.

Socio-Cultural Adaptation: The participant's ability to adjust to social and cultural demands within institutional and community settings, measured using the Revised Socio-Cultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS-R) (Joseph Wilson, 2013). The scale assesses domains such as interpersonal communication, academic adjustment, personal interest and community involvement, and ecological adaptation. Higher scores indicate greater difficulty in socio-cultural adjustment.

Personality: Personality refers to relatively stable examples of thoughts, emotions, and behaviours which characterize an individual. In this study, personality is operationally defined in line with Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI) **(**Hans J. Eysenck and Sybil B. G. Eysenck, 1964), comprising: Extroversion (E):Measured through items assessing sociability, liveliness, activity level, and assertiveness. Higher scores indicate greater extroversion. Neuroticism (N): Measured through items assessing emotional instability, anxiety, moodiness, and irritability. Higher scores indicate greater emotional instability. Lie Scale (L): Measured through items assessing social desirability response tendency. Higher scores indicate greater tendency to provide socially acceptable rather than truthful responses.

Children in conflict with law: Minors involved in legal offence are individuals aged 13–18 years residing in Observation Homes in Assam, who have been officially registered under the Juvenile Justice Board for alleged involvement in legal offences, the study group in the present research comprised of boys (male adolescents).

CHAPTER - III

METHODS AND PROCEDURE

Design of the Study:

The present study adopted inferential statistics, correlational and logistic regression research design to systematically examine socio-cultural factors, adaptation patterns, and personality characteristics of boys in conflict with law (study group) in comparison to their non-delinquent counterparts (control group). This multi-layered design was selected to ensure comprehensive understanding of group differences, relational dynamics and homogeneity among the key study variables.

The study also additionally used exploratory and case-study research design to examine the vulnerabilities of girls in conflict with law. Given the relatively low but steadily emerging proportion of girls within the juvenile justice structure in India, particularly within Assam, the complexity of gendered delinquency, embedded within layered socio-cultural realities such as poverty, early marriage, trafficking vulnerability, family disruption, and gender-based discrimination, necessitated a research design capable of capturing nuanced individual narratives.

Population and Sample

Samples were collected from Observations homes and government schools present in the nearby areas of the observation home. The study consisted on 200 participants, 100 boys in conflict with law from the observation homes for boys (Study Group) from different districts of Assam – Jorhat, Silchar and Boko and 100 boys from government schools (Control Group). The study and control was matched based on age group of the boys in conflict with law. The study also consisted of 5 girls found in the girls' observation homes located in Jalukbari and Nagaon districts of Assam.

Data were collected using a purposive sampling method where the researcher visited all the districts of Assam where observation homes and schools were located with permission received from the State Child Protection Society, Assam and

Principal of the government schools. All the boys in conflict with law present in the observation homes were approached through the in-charge of the home and informed consent was taken from the participants of the study. Data of the control group were collected in the same process through the principal of the school. Additional data from the girls in conflict with law was collected through semi-structured interview in presence of the in-charge of the home. Informed consent was taken for the participation in the study.

After establishing rapport and providing clear instructions, the boys (Study and Control Group) were given the socio-demographic data sheet, Socio-cultural Adaptation Scale- Revised (SCAS-R) and Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI). Help and assistance was acquired from the in-charge of the observation homes and school principals. The questionnaires were also translated to Assamese to receive accurate information from the participants. Format if the informed consent, Socio-demographic data sheet, Socio-cultural Adaptation Scale- Revised (SCAS-R) for socio-cultural factors and Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI) for personality can be found in the appendices. On completion of data collection of the participants were thanked and brief counselling was done for boys and girls in conflict with law. The findings derived from the analyses are outlined in the later chapters.

Psychological Tools:

Revised Sociocultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS-R) (Joseph Wilson, 2013)

The Revised Sociocultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS-R) developed by Joseph Wilson (2013) is an updated and psychometrically refined edition of the previous Sociocultural Adaptation Scale introduced by Colleen Ward and Anthony Kennedy (1999). The revision aimed to enhance conceptual clarity, reduce item redundancy, improve cross-cultural applicability, and strengthen the factor structure of the instrument. The SCAS-R is grounded in the sociocultural adaptation framework, which conceptualizes adaptation as the attainment of culturally appropriate skills necessary for effective functioning in a new sociocultural environment.

The SCAS-R measures behavioral competence and everyday social functioning rather than emotional well-being. It measures the level of difficulty individuals experience in social interaction, communication norms, academic or workplace expectations, and community participation. The revised scale typically consists of 21 items (commonly used version). Responses were evaluated using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (no difficulty) to 5 (extreme difficulty), with higher scores representing greater socio-cultural challenges and poorer levels of adaptation.

Wilson (2013) proposed a clearer multidimensional structure of sociocultural adaptation, identifying domains -specifically:

- Interpersonal communication
- Academic/work performance
- Community engagement
- Ecological adaptation (e.g., dealing with environmental systems, including family, school, peer group, community, and institutional settings)
- Cultural understanding and social norms

The revision was validated using diverse international samples, including students and migrants, and exhibits strong internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha typically above .85). Factor analytic results supported a coherent structure with improved psychometric robustness compared to earlier versions. Evidence of construct validity was established through significant correlations with variables such as span of residence, cultural distance, language proficiency and social support. Importantly, the SCAS-R distinguishes sociocultural adaptation (behavioral competence) from psychological adaptation (emotional well-being), supporting the bi-dimensional model of cross-cultural adjustment.

The SCAS-R is particularly useful for examining how individuals adapt behaviorally to socio-environmental demands. Its standardized format allows quantitative assessment of adaptation difficulties and facilitates correlation with personality variables, socio-cultural determinants, and demographic factors. The

scale's strong reliability and cross-cultural applicability make it appropriate for research involving culturally diverse populations, migrants, students, or individuals experiencing significant environmental transitions.

Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI) (Hans J. Eysenck and Sybil B. G. Eysenck, 1964)

The Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI)**,** developed by Hans J. Eysenck and Sybil B. G. Eysenck (1964), is a standardized self-report tool used to measure two key personality dimensions: Extraversion–Introversion and Neuroticism–Stability. The inventory is grounded in Eysenck's biologically oriented trait theory, which conceptualizes personality as comprising relatively stable and heritable dimensions linked to underlying neuro physiological mechanisms. According to Eysenck's model, extraversion is associated with cortical arousal levels, while neuroticism is related to autonomic nervous system reactivity.

The EPI consists of 57 dichotomous items (Yes/No format), of which 24 items measure Extraversion, 24 measure Neuroticism, and 9 constitute a Lie (L) scale designed to detect social desirability and response distortion. The Extraversion scale assesses sociability, impulsivity, liveliness, and assertiveness, with higher scores indicating greater extraversion. The Neuroticism scale measures emotional instability, anxiety, moodiness, and tension, with higher scores reflecting higher levels of emotional reactivity and vulnerability to stress. The Lie scale evaluates the tendency to present oneself in a socially acceptable manner rather than responding truthfully.

Scoring involves summing affirmative responses according to the scoring key for each dimension. Higher scores on the Extraversion and Neuroticism scales indicate stronger expression of the respective traits. The instrument does not provide a total personality score; instead, it yields independent dimensional scores. The Lie scale score helps to determine the reliability and validity of the respondent's answers.

EPI has demonstrated satisfactory psychometric properties across diverse populations. Empirical studies have shown confirmed satisfactory internal consistency along with reliable test–retest results for both major dimensions. Construct validity is supported by correlations with related personality constructs and behavioral indicators consistent with Eysenck's theoretical propositions. The EPI has been widely used in clinical, educational, forensic, and research settings and has been translated and adapted across cultures.

The EPI is particularly useful for examining the role of personality dimensions in behavioral outcomes, adjustment patterns, and psychosocial functioning. Its theoretical clarity, brevity, and established reliability make it appropriate for large-scale studies, comparative research designs, and correlational analyses.

For the qualitative data/exploration semi-structured interview schedule was used. NVivo (2020) qualitative analytical software was used for processing the data.

Procedure:

The data collection procedure was meticulously planned and executed in a systematic manner by primarily obtaining official permission from Member Secretary, State Child Protection Society, Assam to access children residing in observation homes of different districts of Assam following involvement with legal offences. There are five observation homes in different districts of Assam. Observation Homes for Boys are in Boko, Jorhat and Silchar districts and Observation Homes for Girls are in Jalukbari and Nagaon districts. Data for the control group is collected alongside by visiting the government schools present in the nearby areas of the same districts and explaining the rationale of the study to the principals.

This process was carried out according to the instructions provided in the test manuals and in line with the ethical guidelines of the APA (2002). It was made sure that rapport was established with the participants before administering the

questionnaire. Clear Instructions were given to the participants in group and they were given a set containing informed consent form, Socio-demographic data sheet, Revised Sociocultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS-R) and Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI). To ensure that the participants were dedicated to share and disclose accurate information help of observation home and school authorities was sought and taken. Translation of the questionnaires in Assamese was also done for convenient understanding of the questions by the participants. The questionnaires were translated from English into Assamese following a forward backward translation procedure. Initially, the instruments were translated into Assamese by a bilingual expert proficient in both English and Assamese. Subsequently, an independent bilingual expert who was unaware of the original versions back-translated the Assamese versions into English. The original and back-translated versions were compared to identify discrepancies and ensure semantic equivalence. Necessary modifications were made based on expert review to achieve conceptual and linguistic accuracy.

As specimen copy of the questionnaires used in data collection can be found in the appendices of the research report. On Completion of data collection refreshment was provided to the participants and the authorities of the observation homes and schools as a token of appreciation. The data is carefully analysed by the researcher and the outcomes of the analysis are presented in the subsequent chapters. The systematic process of collecting and analysing data ensured the reliability and validity of the obtained results.

Pilot Study:

The pilot study was planned to assess the feasibility, reliability, and preliminary statistical relationships between socio-cultural factors and personality traits in predicting juvenile involvement in conflict with the law. Findings revealed significant differences in socio-cultural factors and personality dimensions between study and control groups, this pilot aimed to evaluate the psychometric robustness and suitability of standardized instruments for a larger-scale investigation. A quantitative research design was employed in the study. Socio-cultural adjustment

was measured using the Socio-Cultural Adaptation Scale – Revised (SCAS-R), across domains such as interpersonal communication, academic adaptation, personal interests and community involvement, ecological adaptation, and language proficiency, while personality factors - extraversion, neuroticism, and social desirability (Lie scale) were assessed through the Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI).

A purposive sample of fifty boys in conflict with law, residing in Observation Homes in Assam, participated in the study. Instrument administration, scoring procedures, and data collection logistics were systematically tested. Descriptive statistical analyses were conducted to examine score distributions. Participants exhibited moderate overall socio-cultural adaptation (M = 112.4, SD = 5.8), with domain-specific variations reflecting lower academic adaptation (M = 22.8, SD = 3.2) and personal interest/community involvement (M = 19.1, SD = 2.7), and relatively higher interpersonal communication (M = 28.4, SD = 3.1) and ecological adaptation (M = 25.6, SD = 2.9). Language proficiency demonstrated moderate performance (M = 17.2, SD = 2.4). For personality dimensions, participants showed moderate extroversion (M = 13.6, SD = 2.1), elevated neuroticism (M = 21.4, SD = 2.5), and low to moderate Lie Scale scores (M = 6.9, SD = 1.3).

Internal consistency was calculated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, revealing high reliability for the SCAS-R total scale ($\alpha = 0.87$) and satisfactory to good reliability for the EPI dimensions: extroversion ($\alpha = 0.78$), neuroticism ($\alpha = 0.81$), Lie Scale ($\alpha = 0.69$), and the overall inventory ($\alpha = 0.84$). These findings confirmed that both instruments were psychometrically sound for the target population.

Correlation analyses indicated significant positive associations between extroversion and socio-cultural adaptation, while neuroticism was inversely associated with adjustment across multiple domains, reflecting theoretical expectations regarding personality and adaptive functioning (McCrae & Costa, 1999; Berry, 2006). Logistic regression analyses demonstrated preliminary predictive relationships; where higher overall socio-cultural adaptation and extroversion were

associated with a reduced likelihood of involvement in conflict with the law, whereas elevated neuroticism increased risk, suggesting potential protective and risk factors within the population.

Ethical procedures were rigorously implemented, including obtaining approval from competent authorities, securing informed consent from participants, maintaining confidentiality, and ensuring access to psychological support where necessary. Overall, the pilot study provided critical insights into instrument feasibility, reliability, score distributions, and preliminary effect sizes, laying the methodological and statistical groundwork for a full-scale investigation into how socio-cultural factors and personality traits influence legal and behavioral outcomes among juveniles in institutional care.

CHAPTER - IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter outlines the study's findings along with their discussion, providing a systematic examination of the socio-cultural features of the participants, the reliability of the measurement instruments, and the analyses conducted to explore socio-cultural adaptation, personality traits, and their predictive role in involvement in conflict with the law. The research was conducted to explore the association between individual differences in personality and socio-cultural adjustment along with their association with behavioural outcomes, with the findings presented in a structured manner to comprehensively address the research objectives.

The sample included 200 participants, equally divided between the study group (n = 100) and the control group (n = 100), selected to represent diverse socio-cultural and familial backgrounds. Socio-cultural variables assessed included age, education, religion, family type, parental education and occupation, and socio-economic status using Chi-square test (Table 1).

Data were collected using standardized, reliable instruments. The Socio-Cultural Adaptation Scale – Revised (SCAS-R) was used to evaluate participants' adjustment across multiple domains, including interpersonal communication, academic adaptation, personal interests and community involvement, ecological adaptation, and language proficiency. Personality traits were assessed using the Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI), which evaluates Extroversion, Neuroticism, and Lie Scale scores. Internal consistency and reliability for assessing the constructs under investigation of both the tools are measured by Cronbach's Alpha (Tables 2 and 2.1).

Following data collection, statistical analyses were conducted in a stepwise manner. Correlation analyses (Tables 3 and 3.1) examined associations between personality dimensions and both overall and domain-specific socio-cultural adaptation. Independent samples t-tests, Leven's test, Mann Whitney U and effect

size calculations (Tables 4, 5 and 5.1) quantified group differences in personality traits and socio-cultural adaptation, providing insight into the magnitude and practical significance of these differences. Finally, logistic regression analyses, Cox–Snell R^2 and Nagelkerke R^2 (Tables 6, 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3) assessed the predictive influence of socio-cultural adaptation and personality traits on involvement in conflict with the law, identifying protective and risk factors.

Collectively, the findings presented in this chapter provide a comprehensive perceptive of how socio-demographic characteristics, personality traits, and socio-cultural adaptation interact to influence behavioural outcomes. The results offer empirical evidence regarding threat and defending aspects connected with involvement with law furthermore serve as a foundation for the detailed discussion.

A section of the chapter portrays the qualitative exploration of the study, focusing on case vignettes of adolescent girls who have had involvement with the justice system. or experienced victimization. The analysis aimed to explore the lived experiences of these girls, particularly the interplay of structural, familial, and gendered factors that contributed to their vulnerability and pathways into conflict with the law. The sample is necessarily small, consisting of five girls aged 14 to 17, found available during the process of data collection at the observation homes of Assam including refugee settings, rural and semi-urban communities, and families experiencing socioeconomic and emotional deprivation. The smaller sample size is justified on ethical and practical grounds, as gaining access to girls involved in criminal or trafficking cases requires stringent safeguarding, legal permissions, and coordination with institutional authorities such as Observation Homes and the State Child Protection Society.

The participants included cross-border trafficking victims (FK and BBF), an accused in a homicide case (R), and adolescents involved in delinquent behaviors such as theft (MB) and substance use (KS). Each case was documented using in-depth interviews and institutional records from Observation Homes, providing comprehensive accounts of personal history, family circumstances, socio-economic conditions, and events leading to institutionalization. The qualitative data were

organized into case vignettes, capturing chronological and contextual details, allowing for a nuanced understanding of both individual experiences and structural influences.

Data collection followed a careful and ethical process. Initial permissions were obtained from relevant state authorities, the State Child Protection Society, to ensure the participants' safety and legal compliance. Interviews and narrative accounts were conducted in a trauma-sensitive manner, with attention to minimizing distress, ensuring voluntary participation, and maintaining anonymity. Detailed notes, transcripts, and institutional reports were then coded using NVivo software, enabling systematic organization, first-cycle descriptive coding, and second-cycle pattern coding to identify themes and cross-case patterns (Tables 7–7.3). NVivo facilitated rigorous qualitative analysis, allowing the researcher to explore structural vulnerability, family breakdown, gendered victimization, pathways leading encounter in conflict with the legal system, and understand protective role of state institutions while maintaining traceability and audit-ability of coding decisions.

By employing this methodology, the study provides a comprehensive, evidence-based perceptive of the multiple and intersecting vulnerabilities faced by adolescent girls in these contexts. The cases highlight how poverty, migration, family instability, and gendered social norms contribute to both victimization and pathways into conflict with the law, emphasizing the importance of institutional intervention and care. The subsequent analysis presents thematic findings derived from NVivo coding, illustrating the structural, familial, and gendered dynamics that shape the experiences of these adolescent girls.

Quantitative Analysis

Results:

Socio-Cultural Variables

Table 1: Socio-cultural profile of control and study group

VARIABLES		Study Group (N=100)	Control Group (N=100)	χ^2	df	p
AGE GROUP	13-15	31	31	0.000	1	1.000
	16-18	69	69			
EDUCATION	Elementary Education	45	20	24.51	2	<0.001***
	Secondary Education	30	65			
	Never been to school	25	15			
RELIGION	Hindu	43	74	18.83	3	<0.001***
	Muslim	36	16			
	Christian	15	6			
	Others	6	4			
FAMILY TYPE	Nuclear	32	66	3.64	2	<0.001***
	Joint	20	23			
	Broken	48	11			
MOTHER EDUCATION	Primary	42	21	27.72	3	<0.001***
	Secondary	19	37			
	Senior Secondary & above	11	33			
	Illiterate	28	9			
FATHER	Primary	34	22	25.91	3	<0.001***

EDUCATION	Secondary	21	31			
	Senior Secondary & above	14	38			
	Illiterate	31	9			
MOTHER OCCUPATION	Self-Employed	28	20	13.98	3	0.003**
	Govt. Employed	12	27			
	Pvt. Employed	19	30			
	Unemployed	41	23			
FATHER OCCUPATION	Self-Employed	36	20	22.46	3	<0.001***
	Govt. Employed	10	37			
	Pvt. Employed	19	28			
	Unemployed	35	15			
SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS	Low Socio-Economic Status	62	47	4.87	2	0.087
	MiddleSocio-Economic Status	29	41			
	HighSocio-Economic Status	9	12			

*Significance level at p value = .05, **Significance level at p value = .01,

***Significance level at p value = .001

Figure 1: Graphical representation of Socio-cultural profile of control and study group

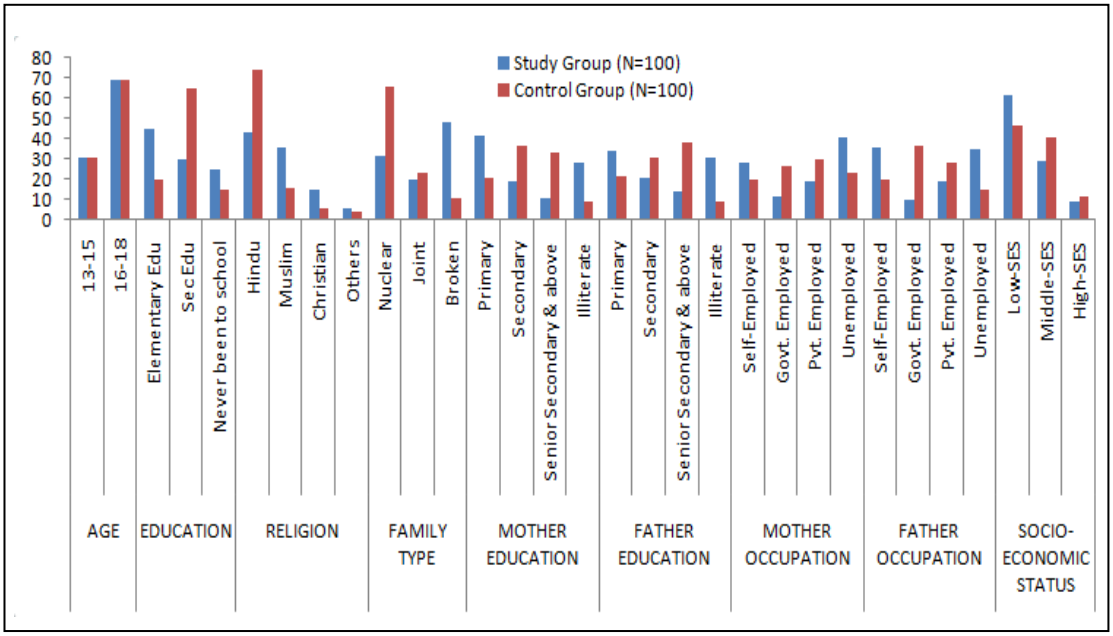
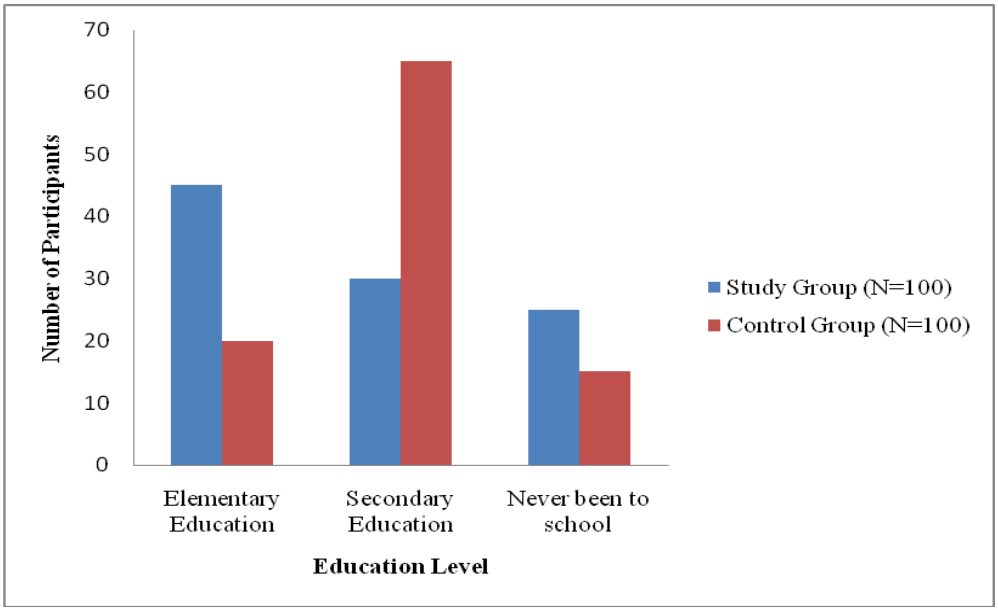


Table 1 and figure 1 presents the socio-demographic characteristics of the study group (N=100) and control group (N=100). Chi-square (χ^2) test is used to examine whether significant differences exist between the two groups.

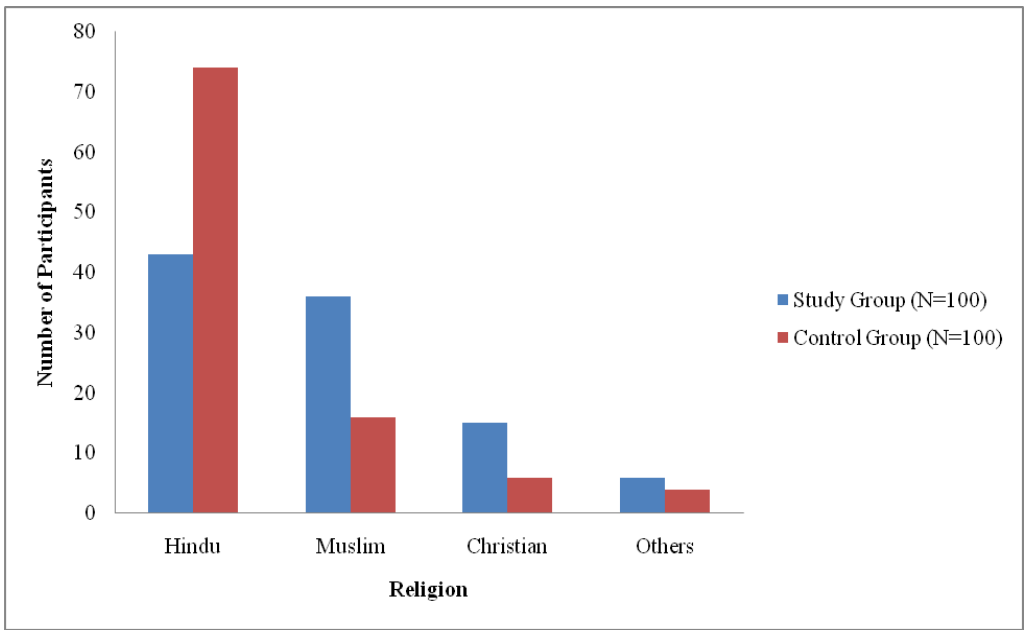
With regard to age, both groups show identical distribution, with 31% and 69% falling into the respective age categories. The chi-square value ($\chi^2 = 0.000$, df = 1) and p-value ($p = 1.000$) indicating that there is no statistically significant difference between the study and control groups with respect to age. This suggests that the two groups are well matched for age and are comparable on this variable.

Figure 2: Graphical representation of comparison of education level between control and study group



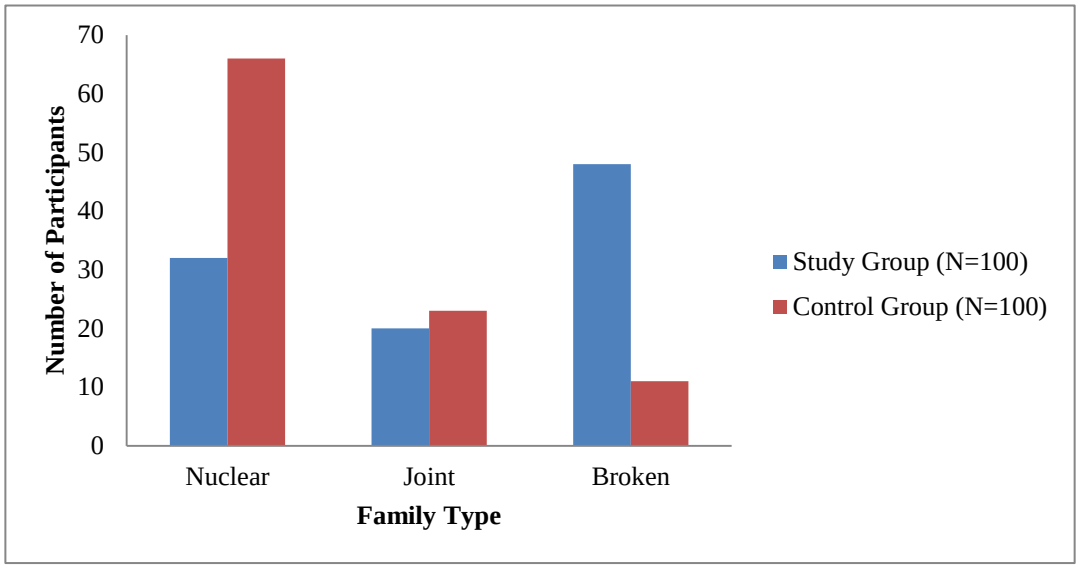
In contrast, Figure 2 education a marked and statistically significant difference between the two groups ($\chi^2 = 24.51$, df = 2, $p < 0.001$). The distribution across educational categories differs markedly, with the control group having higher proportions in certain categories compared to the study group. This indicates that educational status varies significantly between groups and may influence the outcome variables of the study.

Figure 3: Graphical representation of comparison of religion between control and study group



In Figure 3 Religion also demonstrates a statistically significant difference ($\chi^2 = 18.83$, df = 3, $p < 0.001$). The proportions across the four religious categories are unevenly distributed between the study and control groups. This implies that the groups are not homogeneous with respect to religious background, which may reflect cultural or social differences.

Figure 4: Graphical representation of comparison of family type between control and study group



In figure 4 Family type reveals a highly significant association ($\chi^2 = 31.64$, df = 2, $p < 0.001$). The distribution of participants across different family structures differs considerably between the two groups. This indicates that family environment varies between study and control participants and could potentially influence behavioral or social outcomes.

Figure 5: Graphical representation of comparison of parent's education between control and study group

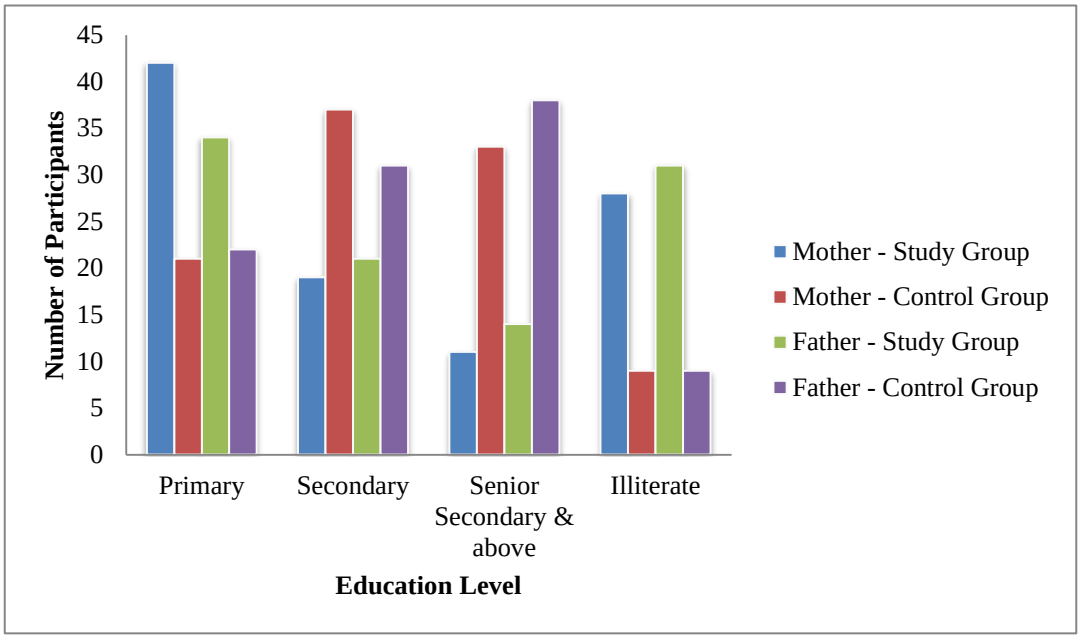


Figure 5 Mother's education is also significantly different between the groups ($\chi^2 = 27.72$, df = 3, $p < 0.001$). The control group appears to have a higher proportion of mothers in certain educational categories, suggesting disparities in maternal educational attainment between groups. Similarly, father's education shows a highly significant difference ($\chi^2 = 25.91$, df = 3, $p < 0.001$), indicating variation in paternal educational levels between the study and control groups.

Figure 6: Graphical representation of comparison of parent's occupation between control and study group

Figure 6 Regarding occupation, mother's occupation shows a statistically significant difference ($\chi^2 = 13.98$, df = 3, p = 0.003). The distribution of occupational categories differs between the groups, suggesting variation in employment patterns among mothers. Father's occupation also demonstrates a highly significant difference ($\chi^2 = 22.46$, df = 3, $p < 0.001$), further indicating occupational disparities between the two groups.

Figure 7: Graphical representation of comparison of socio-economic status between control and study group

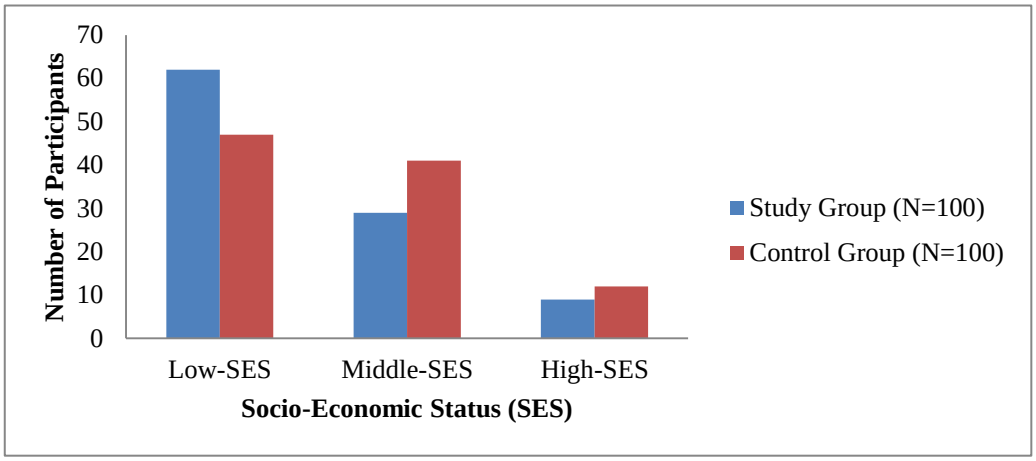


Figure 7 Socio-economic status does not show a statistically significant difference ($\chi^2 = 4.87$, df = 2, p = 0.087). Although there are slight variations in distribution, these differences are not statistically meaningful. This suggests that overall socio-economic classification is relatively comparable between the study and control groups.

The study and control groups both are comparable with regard to age and socio-economic status. However, significant differences exist in education, religion, family type, parental education, and parental occupation. These findings indicate that while some baseline characteristics are similar, several socio-demographic variables differ significantly between groups and may need to be controlled for in further analysis to avoid confounding effects.

Reliability and Internal consistency of tools

Table 2: Cronbach's Alpha of Socio-Cultural Adaptation Scale- Revised

Scale	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
Socio-Cultural Adaptation Scale-Revised	21	0.87

Table 2 presents the internal consistency reliability of the Socio-Cultural Adaptation Scale – Revised, assessed using Cronbach's alpha (α). The scale consists of 21 items, and the obtained Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.87.

A Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.87 indicates a high level of internal consistency reliability. Generally, values above 0.70 are considered acceptable, those above 0.80 indicate good reliability, and coefficients approaching 0.90 reflect very high reliability. Therefore, the obtained value of 0.87 suggests that the 21 items of the Socio-Cultural Adaptation Scale – Revised are strongly correlated and consistently measure the underlying construct of socio-cultural adaptation.

This degree of reliability demonstrates that the instrument produces steady and consistent results when administered to the study population. It also indicates that the items within the scale are well-structured and contribute meaningfully to the overall measurement of socio-cultural adaptation. Hence, the scale can be considered a reliable tool for assessing socio-cultural adaptation among the participants involved in this study.

Overall, the findings indicate that Socio-Cultural Adaptation Scale – Revised demonstrates good internal consistency and is suitable for further statistical analysis and interpretation of the results.

Table 2.1: Cronbach's Alpha of Eysenck Personality Inventory

Dimension	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
Extroversion	24	0.78
Neuroticism	24	0.81
Lie Scale	9	0.69
Overall Scale	57	0.84

Table 2.1 shows the internal consistency reliability of the Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI) for its different dimensions, assessed using Cronbach's alpha (α). The inventory includes a total of 57 items, which are divided into three subscales: Extroversion (24 items), Neuroticism (24 items), and the Lie Scale (9 items).

The Extroversion subscale, which includes 24 items, display a Cronbach's alpha of 0.78, showing good internal consistency. This implies that items are fairly uniform and reliably assess the trait of extroversion. An alpha value close to 0.80 reflects acceptable to good reliability, demonstrating that the scale reliably captures sociability, assertiveness, and related characteristics.

The Neuroticism dimension, also consisting of 24 items, showed a Cronbach's alpha of 0.81. This value suggests strong internal consistency and indicates that the items effectively measure emotional instability, anxiety, and related aspects of neuroticism. Since values above 0.80 are generally considered good, this dimension demonstrates solid reliability within the present sample.

The Lie Scale, having 9 items, showed a Cronbach's alpha of 0.69. Although this is marginally below the typical 0.70 benchmark, it is still regarded as acceptable, particularly given the limited number of items, as shorter scales often tend to have slightly lower alpha values because of reduced item inter-correlations. Therefore, the

Lie Scale demonstrates moderate reliability and remains suitable for assessing response validity and social desirability tendencies.

The overall scale, comprising all 57 items, yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.84. This indicates good overall internal consistency of the Eysenck Personality Inventory in the current study. It suggests that the instrument, as a whole, reliably measures personality traits among the participants.

The findings demonstrate that the Eysenck Personality Inventory shows satisfactory to good reliability across its dimensions, with particularly strong consistency for Neuroticism and the overall scale. The instrument can therefore be considered a reliable measure of personality traits for use in the present research.

Relationship between Socio-cultural Factors and Personality in Study Group and Control Group

Table 3: Pearson's Correlation between socio-cultural adaptation and personality in study group

Variable	Extroversion	Neuroticism	Lie Scale
Socio-cultural Adaptation – Revised Total	0.42**	-0.36**	0.18
Socio-cultural Adaptation - Interpersonal Communication	0.39**	-0.31**	0.15
Socio-cultural Adaptation - Academic	0.34**	-0.29**	0.12
Socio-cultural Adaptation - Personal Interest Community Involvement	0.37**	-0.33**	0.16
Socio-cultural Adaptation - Ecological Adaptation	0.28*	-0.25*	0.11
Socio-cultural Adaptation - Language Proficiency	0.41**	-0.30**	0.19

* Significance level at 0.05 level **Significance level at 0.01 level

Table 3 presents the correlation between socio-cultural adaptation and personality dimensions (Extroversion, Neuroticism, and Lie Scale) among participants in the study group. The relationship was analyzed through correlation coefficients, with positive coefficients reflecting a direct association and negative coefficients indicating an inverse association. The symbols * and ** represent statistical significance levels, where *$p < 0.05$ and **$p < 0.01$.

The findings indicate that the overall score on the Socio-Cultural Adaptation – Revised scale has a positive and statistically significant correlation with Extroversion ($r = 0.42$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates a moderate positive relationship, suggesting that individuals who are more extroverted tend to demonstrate better overall socio-cultural adaptation. Individuals with higher levels of extroversion,

characterized by sociability, outgoingness, and strong communication skills, are likely to adapt more easily to new social and cultural settings. In contrast, the overall socio-cultural adaptation score shows a significant negative correlation with Neuroticism ($r = -0.36$, $p < 0.01$). This moderate negative relationship suggests that those who exhibit greater emotional instability, anxiety, or mood variability tend to have lower socio-cultural adaptation. The correlation between total adaptation and the Lie Scale ($r = 0.18$) is positive but not statistically significant, indicating that social desirability does not meaningfully influence adaptation scores in this sample.

Examining the individual components of socio-cultural adaptation, the Interpersonal Communication dimension is positively and significantly associated with Extroversion ($r = 0.39$, $p < 0.01$) and negatively and significantly related to Neuroticism ($r = -0.31$, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that individuals who are outgoing and emotionally stable are more likely to communicate effectively in a new socio-cultural setting. A comparable trend is seen in Academic Adaptation, which shows a positive correlation with Extroversion ($r = 0.34$, $p < 0.01$) and a negative correlation with Neuroticism ($r = -0.29$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that personality traits also play a role in academic adjustment.

The Personal Interest and Community Involvement dimension exhibits a significant positive correlation with Extroversion ($r = 0.37$, $p < 0.01$) and a significant negative correlation with Neuroticism ($r = -0.33$, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that extroverted individuals tend to participate more actively in community activities and pursue personal interests, while those with higher levels of neuroticism may be more likely to withdraw or encounter difficulties in such engagement.

Ecological Adaptation exhibits a modest yet significant positive correlation with Extroversion ($r = 0.28$, $p < 0.05$) and a significant negative correlation with Neuroticism ($r = -0.25$, $p < 0.05$). While these correlations are relatively smaller, they still suggest that personality traits play a role in adapting to environmental and living conditions. Language Proficiency shows one of the stronger relationships, with a significant positive correlation with Extroversion ($r = 0.41$, $p < 0.01$) and a significant negative correlation with Neuroticism ($r = -0.30$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates

that individuals who are sociable and emotionally stable tend to adjust more successfully in language-related areas.

Across all domains, the Lie Scale shows small, positive, and non-significant correlations (ranging from 0.11 to 0.19), indicating that socially desirable responding does not significantly distort the relationship between personality and socio-cultural adaptation.

As a whole the results states that Extroversion is consistently and positively associated with better socio-cultural adaptation across all domains, whereas Neuroticism is consistently and negatively associated with adaptation. The Lie Scale does not show significant relationships. These findings emphasize the significant influence of personality traits, especially extroversion and emotional stability, in promoting effective socio-cultural adaptation among the participants.

Table 3.1: Pearson's Correlation between socio-cultural adaptation and personality in control group

Variable	Extroversion	Neuroticism	Lie Scale
Socio-cultural Adaptation - Revised Total	0.48**	-0.29**	0.10
Socio-cultural Adaptation - Interpersonal Communication	0.45**	-0.26*	0.08
Socio-cultural Adaptation – Academic	0.42**	-0.24*	0.09
Socio-cultural Adaptation - Personal Interest Community Involvement	0.39**	-0.21*	0.07
Socio-cultural Adaptation - Ecological Adaptation	0.31**	-0.19	0.05
Socio-cultural Adaptation - Language Proficiency	0.44**	-0.27*	0.12

* Correlation is significant at 0.05 level ** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level

Table 3.1 displays the correlations between socio-cultural adaptation and the personality dimensions Extroversion, Neuroticism, and the Lie Scale within the control group. The correlation coefficients reflect the direction and strength of these relationships, with * and ** indicating levels of statistical significance (*$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$).

The results indicate that the overall score on the Socio-Cultural Adaptation – Revised scale is positively and significantly associated with Extroversion ($r = 0.48$, $p < 0.01$). This moderate-to-strong positive correlation suggests that more extroverted individuals tend to exhibit higher levels of overall socio-cultural adaptation. Extroverted individuals are generally sociable, outgoing, and confident; traits that likely facilitate adjustment in social, academic, and environmental contexts. Conversely, the overall adaptation score is significantly negatively correlated with Neuroticism ($r = -0.29$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that individuals with greater emotional instability or anxiety are likely to have lower levels of socio-cultural adaptation. The correlation between total adaptation and the Lie Scale ($r = 0.10$) is weak and not statistically significant, suggesting that social desirability does not significantly influence adaptation scores in the control group.

Looking at specific areas, Interpersonal Communication is significantly positively correlated with Extroversion ($r = 0.45$, $p < 0.01$) and significantly negatively correlated with Neuroticism ($r = -0.26$, $p < 0.05$). This indicates that outgoing individuals communicate more effectively and adjust better socially, whereas those high in neuroticism may experience difficulties in social interactions. Likewise, Academic Adaptation demonstrates a positive correlation with Extroversion ($r = 0.42$, $p < 0.01$) and a negative correlation with Neuroticism ($r = -0.24$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that personality traits significantly influence academic adjustment.

Aspect of Personal Interest and Community Involvement also demonstrates a significant positive association with Extroversion ($r = 0.39$, $p < 0.01$) and a significant negative association with Neuroticism ($r = -0.21$, $p < 0.05$). This implies that extroverted individuals are more likely to engage in community activities

pursuing personal interests, whereas individuals high in neuroticism may be less involved. Ecological Adaptation illustrates a significant positive correlation with Extroversion ($r = 0.31$, $p < 0.01$), whereas the negative correlation with Neuroticism ($r = - 0.19$) does not reach statistical significance. This suggests that while extroversion contributes to better environmental adjustment, neuroticism may not strongly influence this specific domain in the control group.

Language Proficiency exhibits a significant positive correlation with Extroversion ($r = 0.44$, $p < 0.01$) and a negative correlation with Neuroticism ($r = -0.27$, $p < 0.05$). These findings indicate that extroverted individuals are more confident and adaptable in language-related situations, whereas emotionally unstable individuals may face more challenges.

Across all domains, the Lie Scale shows weak and non-significant correlations (ranging from 0.05 to 0.12), indicating minimal influence of socially desirable responding on the results.

The findings in the control group demonstrate that Extroversion is consistently and positively associated with socio-cultural adaptation across all domains, while Neuroticism shows a generally negative association, though slightly weaker compared to Extroversion. The Lie Scale does not significantly relate to adaptation. These findings underscore the key role of personality traits, especially extroversion and emotional stability, in promoting effective socio-cultural adjustment within the control group.

Comparison of Socio-Cultural Adaptation and Personality Traits between the Study Group and Control Group

Table 4: Analysis of personality differences between the study group and control group using the Mann–Whitney U Test

Variable Personality (EPI)	Study Group (n=100)			Control Group (n=100)			Mann-Whitney U	Z value	p
	Median	Mean Rank Score	Sum of Ranks	Median	Mean Rank Score	Sum of Ranks			
Extroversion	13.00	50.5	5050	18.00	150.5	15050	52.00	-12.84	<0.001**
Neuroticism	21.00	150.5	15050	10.00	50.5	5050	0.00	14.10	<0.001**
Lie Scale	7.00	50.0	5000	16.00	151.0	15100	3.00	-14.02	<0.001**

*Significance level at p value = .05, **Significance level at p value = .01

Table 4 shows the comparison of personality dimensions assessed with the Eysenck Personality Inventory between the study group (n = 100) and the control group (n = 100) using the Mann–Whitney U test, which serves as a non-parametric alternative to the independent samples t-test.

Extroversion**:** The median score for the study group was 13, compared to 18 for the control group. The mean rank of the study group (50.5) was much lower than that of the control group (150.5). Mann–Whitney U = 52.00, Z = –12.84, $p < 0.001$. The study group is significantly less extroverted than the control group.

Neuroticism**:** The study group's median was 21, compared to 10 for the control group. Mean ranks indicate the study group (150.5) had higher scores than the control group (50.5). Mann–Whitney U = 0.00, Z = 14.10, $p < 0.001$. This indicates that the study group exhibits significantly higher levels of Neuroticism, reflecting greater emotional instability or susceptibility.

Lie Scale**:** The study group had a median of 7, while the control group had 16. Mean ranks: study group = 50.0, control group = 151.0. Mann–Whitney U = 3.00, Z = –14.02, $p < 0.001$. The study group scored significantly lower on the Lie Scale, indicating fewer socially desirable responses or more honest self-reporting compared to controls.

Significant differences were observed across all personality dimensions between the study and control groups ($p < 0.001$). The study group demonstrates a profile of low extroversion, high neuroticism, and low lie scores, which may reflect emotional instability, social withdrawal, and more genuine self-reporting tendencies. The control group shows the opposite pattern: higher extroversion, lower neuroticism, and higher Lie Scale scores, suggesting more socially adaptive and stable personality traits.

Table 5: Comparison, group difference and effect size in SCAS-R between study group and control group

Variable SCAS-R	Study Group (n=100)		Control Group (n=100)		Levene's F	p	t value (df=198)	p	Cohen's d
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD					
Socio-cultural Adaptation - Revised Total	111.8	2.4	165.0	2.9	1.96	.163	-138.1	<0.001**	28.4
Socio-cultural Adaptation - Interpersonal Communication	28.1	1.1	42.3	1.1	0.00	.982	-133.3	<0.001**	14.1
Socio-cultural Adaptation - Academic	22.3	1.0	43.5	1.1	2.34	.128	-204.2	<0.001**	19.0
Socio-cultural Adaptation - Ecological Adaptation	25.0	0.9	42.3	1.0	2.89	.091	-185.5	<0.001**	17.3

* Significance level at p value = .05 ** Significance level at p value = .01

Table 5.1: Comparison of Socio-Cultural Adaptation (SCAS-R), Group Differences, and Effect Sizes between the study and control groups using the Mann–Whitney U Test for the domains of Personal Interest Community Involvement and Language Proficiency

Variable SCAS-R	Study Group (n=100)			Control Group (n=100)			Mann–Whitney U	Z value	p	Effect Size (r)
	Median	Mean Rank Score	Sum of Ranks	Median	Mean Rank Score	Sum of Ranks				
Socio-cultural Adaptation - Personal Interest Community Involvement	18.0	52.0	5200	28.0	149.0	14900	75.0	-12.60	<0.001**	0.89
Socio-cultural Adaptation - Language Proficiency	12.0	51.5	5150	25.0	149.5	14950	60.0	-12.95	<0.001**	0.92

* Significance level at p value = .05, ** Significance level at p value = .01

Tables 5 and 5.1 display the comparison of socio-cultural adaptation between the Study Group (n = 100) and the Control Group (n = 100). Differences between the groups were analyzed using an independent samples t-test, while Levene's Test assessed the homogeneity of variances. For the domains of Personal Interest, Community Involvement, and Language Proficiency within the Sociocultural Adaptation Scale - Revised, the Mann-Whitney U test, a non-parametric alternative to the t-test, was employed.

The overall socio-cultural adaptation score, the Study Group (M = 111.8, SD = 2.4) scored considerably lower than the Control Group (M = 165.0, SD = 2.9). Levene's test was not significant (F = 1.96, p = .163), confirming that the assumption

of equal variances was met. The independent samples t-test showed a highly significant difference, t (198) = -138.1, p < .001, indicating that the Control Group exhibits significantly greater overall socio-cultural adaptation than the Study Group.

In the Interpersonal Communication domain, the Study Group (M = 28.1, SD = 1.1) scored notably lower than the Control Group (M = 42.3, SD = 1.1). Levene's test was non-significant (F = 0.00, p = .982), indicating that the assumption of equal variances was met. The t-test revealed a highly significant difference, t(198) = -133.3, p < .001, suggesting substantially better interpersonal adaptation in the Control Group.

In terms of Academic Adaptation, the Study Group (M = 22.3, SD = 1.0) scored much lower than the Control Group (M = 43.5, SD = 1.1). Levene's test was non-significant (F = 2.34, p = .128), confirming equal variances. The t-test showed a statistically significant difference, t(198) = -204.2, p < .001, highlighting pronounced differences in academic adjustment between the two groups.

In the domain of Personal Interest and Community Involvement, the Study Group (M = 18.6, SD = 0.9) scored considerably lower than the Control Group (M = 40.5, SD = 1.1). Levene's test was significant (F = 4.72, p = .031), suggesting that the assumption of equal variances was not met. Study group had a median of 18, whereas the control group had a median of 28. The study group's mean rank was 52.0 versus 149.0 for the control group. Statistical Significance is observed using Mann–Whitney U = 75.0, Z = –12.60, p < 0.001. The study group shows significantly lower engagement in personal interests and community involvement compared to the control group. This suggests limited participation in social, recreational, or community-based activities, reflecting challenges in socio-cultural integration and interpersonal engagement.

Regarding Ecological Adaptation, the Study Group (M = 25.0, SD = 0.9) obtained lower scores compared to the Control Group (M = 42.3, SD = 1.0). Levene's test was non-significant (F = 2.89, p = .091), indicating that the assumption of equal variances was satisfied. The difference was highly significant, t (198) =-

185.5, $p < .001$. This indicates stronger environmental adjustment in the Control Group.

Finally, for Language Proficiency, the Study Group ($M = 16.5$, $SD = 0.8$) scored markedly lower than the Control Group ($M = 37.5$, $SD = 1.1$). Levene's test was significant ($F = 7.64$, $p = .006$), indicating that the assumption of equal variances was violated. The study group had a median of 12, while the control group had 25. The study group's mean rank was 51.5 versus 149.5 for the control group. Statistical Significance is found through Mann–Whitney $U = 60.0$, $Z = –12.95$, $p < 0.001$. The study group demonstrates significantly lower language proficiency than the control group. This indicates difficulties in understanding, speaking, or using the dominant language effectively, which may hinder academic performance, social communication, and cultural adaptation.

The findings reveal across all SCAS-R dimensions: the Control Group consistently scored significantly higher than the Study Group. All variance assumptions were met except for the domains of Personal Interest, Community Involvement, and Language Proficiency. Extremely large t-values indicate exceptionally strong group separation in socio-cultural adaptation across all domains.

The effect size of group differences in socio-cultural adaptation between the study and control groups using Cohen's d. Cohen's d is a standardized measure of effect size that quantifies the extent of difference between two group means relative to their combined standard deviation. It is used to assess the practical significance of differences, beyond statistical significance, providing insight into how substantial the differences are in real-world terms. Standard guidelines classify Cohen's d values of 0.20 as small, 0.50 as medium, 0.80 as large, and values above 1.0 as very large.

The total socio-cultural adaptation score shows a Cohen's d of 28.4, indicating an extraordinarily large effect size. This suggests that the difference in overall socio-cultural adaptation between the study and control groups is not only statistically significant but also extremely meaningful, with minimal overlap in scores between the two groups.

Academic Adaptation has a Cohen's d of 19.0, also representing an extremely large effect. This demonstrates that the control group significantly outperforms the study group in adjusting to academic demands and contexts.

The Personal Interest and Community Involvement domain shows a Cohen's d of 23.0, indicating a very large difference. This suggests that the control group participates much more actively in community and personal interest activities compared to the study group.

Ecological Adaptation shows a Cohen's d of 17.3, indicating a very substantial difference between the groups in adapting to environmental and living conditions.

The Cohen's d values across domains reveal that the differences in socio-cultural adaptation between the study and control groups are extraordinarily large. These findings emphasize that the observed differences are not only statistically significant but also practically and meaningfully substantial, demonstrating a pronounced advantage for the control group in all aspects of socio-cultural adaptation.

Effect size (r) represents the strength of the difference in Socio-Cultural Adaptation specifically Personal Interest, Community Involvement, and Language Proficiency between the study and control groups, providing insight beyond mere statistical significance.

The effect size for Personal Interest and Community Involvement was r = 0.89, reflecting a very large effect, which indicates a considerable difference between the two groups in their engagement and participation in socio-cultural activities. Similarly, the domain of Language Proficiency showed an effect size of r = 0.92, also representing a very large effect, indicating a strong and meaningful difference between the groups in their language adaptation abilities. These large effect sizes demonstrate that the differences observed between the study and control groups are not only statistically significant but also practically significant.

Socio-cultural factors and personality as predictors of involvement in conflict with law.

Table 6: Prediction of involvement of socio-cultural factors in conflict with law

Predictor	β	SE	Wald	Sig.	Exp (β)
Socio-cultural Adaptation - Revised Total	-0.87	0.07	154.2	0.000	0.42
Socio-cultural Adaptation - Interpersonal Communication	-0.36	0.08	20.3	0.000	0.70
Socio-cultural Adaptation - Academic	-0.42	0.07	36.0	0.000	0.66
Socio-cultural Adaptation - Personal Interest Community Involvement	-0.39	0.07	31.0	0.000	0.68
Socio-cultural Adaptation - Ecological Adaptation	-0.41	0.08	28.1	0.000	0.66
Socio-cultural Adaptation - Language Proficiency	-0.44	0.07	39.2	0.000	0.64

Table 6 displays the findings of a logistic regression analysis assessing the predictive effect of socio-cultural adaptation on involvement in conflict with the law. The table includes standardized regression coefficients (β), standard errors (SE), Wald statistics, significance levels (Sig.), and exponentiated coefficients (Exp (β)), which indicate the odds ratios.

The overall socio-cultural adaptation score shows a β of -0.87 (SE = 0.07), with a Wald statistic of 154.2 and a p-value of 0.000, indicating a highly significant outcome. The odds ratio, Exp (β) = 0.42, indicates that higher overall socio-cultural adaptation is linked to a significantly lower likelihood of involvement in conflict

with the law. Specifically, each one-unit increase in overall adaptation corresponds to a 58% reduction in the odds of legal conflict, highlighting a strong protective effect.

Looking at specific domains, Interpersonal Communication has a β of -0.36 (SE = 0.08, Wald = 20.3, $p < 0.001$) with an odds ratio of 0.70. This suggests that individuals with stronger interpersonal adaptation are 30% less likely to engage in conflict with the law, emphasizing the role of social and communication skills in reducing risk.

Academic Adaptation shows a β of -0.42 (SE = 0.07, Wald = 36.0, $p < 0.001$) with an odds ratio of 0.66, suggesting that higher academic adjustment decreases the likelihood of legal conflict by 34%. Likewise, Personal Interest and Community Involvement ($\beta = -0.39$, SE = 0.07, Wald = 31.0, $p < 0.001$; Exp (β) = 0.68) show that higher levels of community participation and personal engagement are associated with a 32% lower risk.

Ecological Adaptation has a β of -0.41 (SE = 0.08, Wald = 28.1, $p < 0.001$) with an odds ratio of 0.66, showing that better adjustment to environmental and living conditions decreases the risk of legal conflict by 34%. Finally, Language Proficiency shows a β of -0.44 (SE = 0.07, Wald = 39.2, $p < 0.001$) with an odds ratio of 0.64, suggesting that individuals with greater language skills have a 36% lower likelihood of involvement in conflict with the law.

The results indicate that higher socio-cultural adaptation both overall and across specific domains is strongly associated with a reduced likelihood of involvement in legal conflict**.** Each domain independently contributes to lowering risk, with language proficiency and overall adaptation showing the strongest protective effects. These findings underscore the critical role of socio-cultural skills, interaction, academic adjustment, community engagement, environmental adaptation, and language competence in preventing delinquent or unlawful behavior.

Table 6.1: Model summary for Logistic Regression predicting involvement in conflict with law based on socio-cultural adaptation

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Cox–Snell R^2	Nagelkerke R^2
1	207.07	0.30	0.40

Table 6.1 provides the model summary for the logistic regression analysis investigating the influence of socio-cultural adaptation on predicting involvement in conflict with the law between the study and control groups. The model produced a −2 Log Likelihood value of 207.07, reflecting an improved fit over the intercept-only model and indicating that socio-cultural adaptation variables meaningfully contribute to predicting group membership.

The Cox–Snell R^2 value of 0.30 suggests that around 30% of the variation in involvement in conflict with the law can be accounted for by socio-cultural adaptation factors, including interpersonal communication, academic or work performance, personal interests and community involvement, ecological adaptation, and language proficiency. The Nagelkerke R^2 value of 0.40, which is an adjusted measure of explained variance, suggests that the model accounts for about 40% of the variability in whether an individual belongs to the study group or the control group.

These results suggest that lower socio-cultural adaptation is closely linked to a greater likelihood of being in the study group, while higher levels of socio-cultural competence are more typical of the control group. Thus, socio-cultural factors play a significant role in differentiating juveniles in conflict with law from those in the control group.

Table 6.2: Prediction of involvement of personality in conflict with law

Predictor	β	SE	Wald	Sig.	Exp (β)
Extroversion	-0.82	0.12	46.70	0.000	0.44
Neuroticism	1.05	0.09	136.10	0.000	2.86
Lie Scale	-0.91	0.11	68.20	0.000	0.40

Table 6.2 displays the outcomes of a logistic regression analysis assessing how personality dimensions predict the likelihood of involvement in conflict with the law. The predictors included Extroversion, Neuroticism, and the Lie Scale, with results reported as standardized regression coefficients (β), standard errors (SE), Wald statistics, significance levels (Sig.), and exponentiated coefficients (Exp(β)), representing the odds ratios.

For Extroversion, the β coefficient is -0.82 (SE = 0.12), with a Wald statistic of 46.70 and $p < 0.001$, indicating a highly significant effect. The odds ratio, Exp(β) = 0.44, suggests that higher extroversion is linked to a considerably lower risk of involvement in conflict with the law, with each one-unit increase in extroversion reducing the odds of legal conflict by 56%. This suggests that extroverted individuals, who are typically sociable, confident, and outgoing, are better able to manage social situations and avoid behaviors that could lead to legal problems.

In contrast, Neuroticism has a β of 1.05 (SE = 0.09), along with a Wald statistic of 136.10 and a p-value of 0.000. The odds ratio of 2.86 indicates that higher neuroticism significantly increases the likelihood of involvement in conflict with the legal system. Each unit increase in neuroticism nearly triples the odds of legal

conflict, demonstrating that individuals with higher emotional instability, anxiety, or mood fluctuations are at much greater risk for behaviors that may result in legal trouble.

The Lie Scale has a β of -0.91 (SE = 0.11), with a Wald statistic of 68.20 and $p < 0.001$. The odds ratio, Exp (β) = 0.40, indicates that higher scores on the Lie Scale are linked to a lower risk of legal conflict. Specifically, each one-unit increase in the Lie Scale reduces the odds of involvement in legal issues by 60%, suggesting that individuals who respond in a socially desirable or controlled manner are less likely to engage in unlawful behavior.

The logistic regression findings suggest that personality traits are significant predictors of involvement in conflict with the law. Higher extroversion and higher Lie Scale scores act as protective factors substantially reducing the risk. Whereas, higher neuroticism is a strong risk factor; dramatically increasing the likelihood of legal involvement. These findings accentuate the value of stable emotional regulation, social competence, and controlled behavior in mitigating the risk of delinquency or unlawful actions.

Table 6.3: Model summary for Logistic Regression predicting involvement in conflict with law based on personality

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Cox–Snell R^2	Nagelkerke R^2
1	214.36	0.18	0.24

Table 6.3 provides a summary of the logistic regression analysis assessing the role of personality factors in predicting involvement in conflict with the law between the study and control groups. The log likelihood indicates the degree of difference between the observed outcomes and the values predicted by the model. The model produced Cox–Snell R^2 and Nagelkerke R^2 values, which indicate the explanatory power of the personality variables included in the regression analysis.

A−2 Log Likelihood value of 214.36suggests that the model provides an acceptable fit in predicting involvement in legal or criminal offenses according to personality factors**.**

The Cox–Snell R^2 value of 0.18 suggests that around 18% of the variation in involvement in conflict with the law can be accounted for by the personality dimensions assessed using the Eysenck Personality Inventory. The Nagelkerke R^2 value of 0.24, which provides an adjusted estimate of explained variance, suggests that the model accounts for approximately 24% of the variability in distinguishing between individuals being part of the study group versus the control group.

These findings suggest that personality traits such as extroversion, neuroticism, and socially desirable responding (lie scale) contribute to differentiating individuals involved in conflict with law from those in the control group. However, the moderate proportion of explained variance indicates that personality factors alone

do not fully account for involvement in conflict with law, and other socio-cultural or environmental factors may also influence such behaviour.

Qualitative Analysis: Exploration of case studies

Case Vignettes

Case 1: FK, a 15-year-old girl originally from Myanmar, belonged to a disrupted family environment and had been living in a refugee camp in Bangladesh. Her parents and four siblings were also residing in the camp, though they lived separately. During her stay there, three older men abducted her from the camp and concealed her in a truck transporting cattle. She was then trafficked to a group of men in India. Throughout the journey, FK was kept drugged and only partially conscious, leaving her unaware of where she was being taken or how long the journey lasted. When she eventually regained full awareness, she realized that she had been sold and transported to Jammu and Kashmir. For approximately seven months, she made repeated attempts to escape. After several failed efforts, she finally succeeded in fleeing and managed to board a train. Her journey eventually brought her to Guwahati, where she was taken into custody by the police. Following her statement, the authorities placed her in the Observation Home for Girls at Jalukbari, which operates under the State Child Protection Society of the Government of Assam and under the provisions of the Foreigners Act. She is presently residing there in a safe environment while arrangements are being made for her reunification with her family.

Case 2: BBF, a 14-year-old girl from the border region between Bangladesh and the Indian state of Assam, belonged to a large family consisting of her parents and six siblings. Being the fifth child in the family, she had discontinued her schooling at an early stage. A middle-aged man who had shown interest in her persuaded her to accompany him on a picnic trip to Assam. Believing it to be a recreational outing, BBF agreed to go with him. The journey appeared normal until they crossed the border and arrived in Guwahati. Her suspicion arose when the man informed her that they needed to travel by train to his cousin’s house in Hojai due to

an urgent situation. After reaching Hojai at dusk, BBF was suddenly blindfolded, her both upper and lower limbs were restrained, and she was confined in a shady dark room. She remained there for a number of days, during which a watchman occasionally brought her foodstuff and escorted her to the toilet. Throughout this time, she made multiple attempts to escape but was unsuccessful. On one occasion, while being taken to the toilet, BBF seized an opportunity, struck the guard, and managed to flee. She later encountered an elderly man who listened to her account and assisted her by taking her to the nearest police station. Following her statement, the police transferred BBF to the Observation Home for Girls in Nagaon under the supervision of the State Child Protection Society, Government of Assam. Authorities at the institution subsequently contacted her family in Bangladesh and initiated the necessary procedures to facilitate her lawful repatriation.

Case 3: R is a 17-year-old girl from a rural village in Upper Assam. She was raised in a joint family that included her parents, two younger brothers, her uncle and aunt, as well as her grandparents. Her father, who discontinued his education at an early stage, works as a daily wage labourer in agriculture, while her mother, who never received formal schooling, manages the household. The family experienced persistent financial hardship and depended largely on seasonal agricultural work for their livelihood. R continued her education up to Class IX but was forced to discontinue her studies when her family unit could no longer pay for the associated expenditures. After leaving school, she assisted her mother with domestic responsibilities and occasionally accompanied her father to work in the fields. Tensions were common within the household, particularly between her parents and her uncle's family, mainly due to difference of opinions over land ownership. During these conflicts, R's aunt frequently criticized her mother and accused her of disturbing the unity of the joint family. One evening, R's aunt was discovered unconscious in the kitchen of their shared residence, having suffered a severe head injury that later proved fatal. Suspicion quickly arose among relatives, and in the tense circumstances, both R and her mother were accused of involvement. Certain family members alleged that following a dispute, R and her mother had struck the aunt with a wooden pestle, while others claimed they had seen R entering the kitchen

shortly before the incident occurred. The police were notified within a few hours, and a First Information Report (FIR) was registered naming R and her mother as suspects. As R was a minor, she was produced before the Juvenile Justice Board within 24 hours. Subsequently, the police placed her in the Observation Home for Girls in Nagaon, which operates under the State Child Protection Society, Government of Assam.

Case 4: MB, a 16-year-old girl from Jorhat district in Assam, experienced a challenging childhood while growing up in a semi-urban nuclear family. Her father was largely absent and did not contribute financially to the household, leaving her mother to work as a domestic helper to support MB and her two younger siblings. Although she attended school up to Class VIII, financial difficulties eventually forced her to discontinue her education. After leaving school, MB had considerable unoccupied time and gradually began spending time with older youths in the local marketplace who was involved in minor unlawful activities. Under their influence, she attempted to steal an expensive smart phone from an electronics shop but was caught by the shop owners during the attempt. In accordance with procedures applicable to minors, she was presented before the Juvenile Justice Board and later placed in the Observation Home for Girls in Nagaon, which operates under the Government of Assam.

Case 5: KS, a 15-year-old girl from a small town in Assam, experienced a challenging childhood marked by family instability. Her parents separated when she was ten years old after a prolonged period of marital conflict and domestic violence. Following the separation, KS lived with her mother in a rented one-room accommodation, while her father remarried and maintained only limited contact with her. As a result, family ties weakened, and KS often felt emotionally neglected, particularly because many extended relatives supported her father. Her mother worked long hours as a sales assistant in a garment shop to sustain the household, which meant that KS was often left without consistent supervision. Although she was enrolled in a government school, she displayed little interest in her studies. Experiencing loneliness and seeking companionship, KS gradually began spending

more time outside the home and formed friendships with older adolescents in her neighbourhood, some of whom were experimenting with alcohol and inhalants. Initially reluctant, KS eventually began using inhalants and cannabis as a means of coping with her personal difficulties. Gradually, her substance use became more regular, and she occasionally took small sums of money from her mother to buy these substances. On one occasion, KS and a group of her peers were caught by the police while using inhalants in a deserted building. She was then taken into custody and presented before the Juvenile Justice Board on the following day. The case was recorded under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 due to substance use, and KS was placed in the Observation Home for Girls at Jalukbari under the supervision of the State Child Protection Society, Government of Assam.

The case vignettes were analyzed using NVivo. NVivo is a specialized software program designed for qualitative data analysis, particularly for interpreting non-numerical information. It enables researchers to systematically organize, code, and examine various forms of qualitative data, including interview transcripts, focus group discussions, open-ended survey responses, documents such as PDFs, articles and reports, as well as audio and video recordings and social media content.

Results:

Table 7: Case Nodes Representing Participants

Case	Age	Nature of Case
FK	15	Cross-border trafficking victim
BBF	14	Luring & illegal confinement
R	17	Accused in homicide
MB	16	Petty theft
KS	15	Substance use

Table 7.1: First Cycle Coding

Case	Codes	Descriptive Codes
FK	“drugged”, “sold”, “7 months”, “escaped”	Trafficking, Captivity, Rescue
BBF	“picnic”, “blindfolded”, “tied”, “ran away”	Deception, Confinement, Escape
R	“land dispute”, “blamed”, “accused”	Family Conflict, Criminalization
MB	“easy money”, “friends”, “caught stealing”	Peer Influence, Theft
KS	“forget my problems”, “inhalants”, “dependency”	Emotional Neglect, Substance Abuse

Table 7.2: Analytical Themes Developed via Second-Cycle Pattern Coding

Major Themes	Related Codes	Cases
Structural Vulnerability	Poverty, Migration, Refugee status, School dropout	FK, BBF, MB, KS
Family Breakdown	Separation, Conflict, Neglect, Absence of father	R, MB, KS
Gendered Victimization	Trafficking, Luring, False accusation	FK, BBF, R
Pathways to Conflict with Law	Peer influence, Emotional distress, Surviva	MB, KS, R
State as Protector	Police rescue, JJB, Observation Home	All cases

Table 7.3: Cross-Case Comparison of Themes by Case Type

Theme ↓ / Case →	Victim (FK, BBF)	Accused (R)	Delinquency (MB, KS)
Poverty	✓	✓	✓
Family Breakdown	✓	✓	✓
Intentional Crime	X	X	Partial
Victimization	✓✓	✓	✓
Institutional Protection	✓✓	✓	✓
✓✓ = Strong presence			

Findings: Narrative analysis, supported by NVivo, was employed to examine the findings presented above.

Theme 1: Structural Vulnerability as the Root Cause

NVivo analysis revealed that all five cases were embedded in structural vulnerability, including poverty, migration, refugee status, and school dropout. These conditions significantly reduced protective supervision and increased exposure to exploitation and conflict with law.

The analysis suggests that institutionalization occurred not due to individual deviance, but due to systemic deprivation.

Theme 2: Breakdown of Family as a Protective Unit

Across cases, families failed to function as protective environments. Parental separation, domestic conflict, neglect, and absence of caregivers emerged as recurring patterns.

- In trafficking cases (FK, BBF), family separation and weak supervision enabled exploitation.

- In delinquency cases (MB, KS), emotional neglect and lack of guidance facilitated risky peer associations.
- In R's case, family conflict escalated into criminal accusation.

Theme 3: Gendered Nature of Risk and Blame

Girls were found to be disproportionately targeted, blamed, or criminalized**.**

- FK and BBF were deceived and exploited due to age and gender.
- R was accused of homicide largely based on suspicion and gendered assumptions.
- KS's substance use was framed as delinquency rather than distress.

NVivo coding highlights gender as a cross-cutting vulnerability**.**

Theme 4: Pathways into Conflict with Law Are Non-Linear

The cases demonstrate multiple pathways into institutional care:

- Victim → rescued → institutionalized (FK, BBF)
- Family conflict → accusation → custody (R)
- Poverty + peers → theft (MB)
- Emotional distress → substance use → NDPS case (KS)

None of the cases reflect deliberate criminal intent in isolation.

Theme 5: Observation Homes as Protective Spaces

Across all cases, Observation Homes functioned primarily as sites of care, safety, and rehabilitation, not punishment. NVivo analysis shows consistent linkage between:

- Police intervention
- Juvenile Justice Board oversight
- State Child Protection Society support

Discussion

Socio-Cultural Variables

The socio-cultural profile of the study group and control provides critical context for interpreting findings of the research and understanding the social and structural factors that influence behavior. Age equivalence between the groups suggests developmental comparability, which is important given that cognitive, emotional, and social competencies evolve progressively throughout adolescence and young adulthood. Developmental theories, particularly those emphasizing stage-specific psychosocial development, highlight that age-appropriate experiences shape moral reasoning, self-regulation, and social interaction patterns, indicating that any observed differences in outcomes are less likely to be attributed to age disparities (Erikson, 1968).

The notable educational differences between the study and control groups highlight influence of educational attainment as both an immediate and long-term factor shaping individual behavior. Education is a foundational element in social cognitive theory and human capital theory, as it provides cognitive skills, critical thinking, and social competencies that facilitate problem-solving and adaptation to complex social environments (Bandura, 1986; Becker, 1993). Participants with lower educational attainment may face limitations in these domains, increasing vulnerability to social and behavioral challenges.

Religion, as a socio-cultural variable, also differed meaningfully between the groups. Social identity theory provides a useful framework to interpret these differences, suggesting that religious affiliation contributes to the development of group identity, social norms, and behavioral expectations (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Variability in religious composition may reflect differences in normative frameworks and socialization practices, which could influence moral reasoning, interpersonal interactions, and adaptive behaviors.

Family-related variables, including family type and parental education and occupation, were also notably different across groups. Family systems theory puts forward that the structure and functioning of the family unit are fundamental to emotional security, socialization, and the transmission of values and norms (Bowen, 1978). Variations in family type may affect supervision, attachment, and exposure to protective or risk environments. Parental education and occupation represent both human and social capital, shaping parenting practices, expectations, and access to resources (Coleman, 1988). Higher parental education is often associated with more supportive and cognitively stimulating home environments, while occupational differences influence economic stability, social networks, and opportunities for youth development.

Interestingly, socio-economic status did not differ significantly between groups, which suggest that the differences in educational attainment, family structure, and parental occupation are influenced more by social and cultural factors than by economic deprivation alone. This aligns with ecological systems perspective, which highlights the interaction of multiple levels of influence, including family, community, and societal structures, in shaping development and behavioral outcomes (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Taken together, these findings indicate that while age and socio-economic status provide comparable baselines, several proximal (family environment, parental guidance) and distal (education, religion, occupational patterns) socio-demographic factors differ between the study and control groups. Conceptually, these differences highlight the need to consider both structural and cultural determinants when examining behavioral outcomes, as they may act as risk or protective factors within specific ecological and social contexts. Controlling for these socio-demographic variables in subsequent analyses is essential to isolate the effects of psychological, behavioral, or intervention-related variables and to reduce potential confounding effects.

Reliability and Internal Consistency of Measurement Tools

The reliability of an instrument is a crucial indicator of its psychometric soundness and its ability to consistently measure the constructs of interest. In this current research, the Socio-Cultural Adaptation Scale – Revised gives an idea about strong internal consistency, suggesting that its 21 items reliably and coherently measure the construct of socio-cultural adaptation. From a theoretical perspective, socio-cultural adaptation is conceptualized as the capacity of individuals to navigate, negotiate, and integrate into new or unfamiliar cultural environments, encompassing behavioral, cognitive, and emotional components (Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001). High internal consistency suggests that the scale items effectively reflect these multiple dimensions and function coherently as a unified measure of adaptation. Conceptually, this reliability supports the notion that socio-cultural adaptation is a latent construct that can be operationalized through interrelated behavioral and perceptual indicators. The demonstrated reliability implies that the scale is capable of producing stable results across similar populations, enhancing confidence in subsequent inferential analyses.

Similarly, the Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI) exhibited satisfactory to good internal consistency across its dimensions of extroversion, neuroticism, and the lie scale, as well as for the overall inventory. Personality traits, as conceptualized within the trait theory framework, are stable pattern of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that describe individual differences (Costa & McCrae, 1992). The good reliability of the extroversion and neuroticism dimensions indicates that the items within each domain reliably capture the underlying trait constructs, consistent with the theoretical assumption that personality traits are coherent, measurable patterns rather than disparate behaviors.

The slightly lower reliability observed for the lie scale can be interpreted within a conceptual context. The lie scale is designed to measure social desirability tendencies or the extent to which respondents may provide socially acceptable rather than truthful answers. Given that this dimension captures a more nuanced and context-dependent aspect of personality, lower internal consistency is not

unexpected, particularly in shorter scales with fewer items (DeVellis, 2017). Nevertheless, its moderate reliability confirms that it can provide meaningful insight into response validity and the impact of socially desirable responding on self-reported personality.

From a methodological standpoint, these results support with classical test theory, which accentuates to facilitate a reliable instrument minimizes measurement error and enhances the accuracy of observed scores as reflections of true scores (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The high internal consistency of the Socio-Cultural Adaptation Scale – Revised and the EPI supports their use in quantitative analyses, ensuring that relationships between socio-cultural adaptation, personality traits, and behavioral outcomes are interpretable and meaningful. Conceptually, it also underscores that the constructs of socio-cultural adaptation and personality are structured, coherent, and measurable within the population studied, allowing for robust testing of theoretical hypotheses regarding the interplay of individual characteristics and social functioning.

It is confirmed that the measurement instruments employed in this study are psychometrically robust. The Socio-Cultural Adaptation Scale – Revised demonstrates strong reliability, supporting its theoretical conceptualization as a multi-dimensional construct encompassing adaptive behaviors and perceptions in social contexts. The Eysenck Personality Inventory provides reliable measurement of core personality traits, with the exception of the lie scale, which requires careful interpretation due to its smaller item count and context-dependent nature. Altogether, these tools provide a firm grounding for examining the relationships among socio-cultural adaptation, personality, and behavioral outcomes in the study population.

Relationship between Socio-cultural Factors and Personality in Study Group and Control Group

The results from both study and control groups consistently indicate that personality factors, particularly extroversion and neuroticism, play a pivotal role in socio-cultural adaptation. Across both groups, extroversion is positively linked to

overall socio-cultural adjustment as well as to specific domains such as interpersonal communication, academic performance, personal interests and community involvement, ecological adaptation, and language proficiency. This supports trait-theoretical perspectives, which posit that extroverted individuals are more sociable, assertive, and proactive, facilitating effective engagement in diverse social, educational, and environmental contexts (Eysenck, 1967; Costa & McCrae, 1992). Extroverted individuals are likely to initiate social interactions, seek support when faced with challenges, and actively explore their surroundings, all of which are central to the process of socio-cultural adjustment (Ward et al., 2001). The findings also align with social learning theory, which emphasizes that engagement, observation, and interaction are key to skill acquisition, including language competence and community integration (Bandura, 1977).

Conversely, neuroticism demonstrates a negative association with socio-cultural adaptation in both groups, though the strength of the relationship varies. Individuals with elevated neuroticism, marked by emotional instability, anxiety, and mood swings, have a higher probability to face challenges in adapting to societal, academic, and ecological demands. These observation supports vulnerability models of personality, which suggest that emotional instability limits the ability to cope with novel or stressful environments, reducing adaptive outcomes (Eysenck, 1967; Costa & McCrae, 1992). The study group, potentially render to additional psychosocial pressures, might be extra susceptible to the adverse impact of neuroticism on adaptation, highlighting the combined effect of personality traits and environmental vulnerability.

Analyses of specific domains further clarify these trends, showing that extroversion consistently promotes, while neuroticism hinders, interpersonal communication, academic engagement, and personal interests and community involvement in both groups. These patterns underscore the theoretical perspective that personality traits shape how individuals navigate social networks, engage with learning environments, and participate in community life (Lewin, 1936). Ecological adaptation appears more sensitive to extroversion than neuroticism, suggesting that

proactive engagement and exploration drive environmental adjustment, whereas emotional instability has less direct influence. Language proficiency, a critical marker of socio-cultural integration, is strongly associated with extroversion, highlighting that confident and outgoing individuals are better able to acquire communicative competence and participate in culturally mediated social interactions.

The Lie Scale, reflecting social desirability, demonstrates minimal and non-significant correlations with socio-cultural adaptation in both groups. This indicates that the relationships observed are not substantially influenced by biased responding, lending validity to the results (Paulhus &Vazire, 2007). The negligible role of socially desirable responding also supports the theoretical assumption that dispositional traits, rather than impression management, fundamentally shape adaptation outcomes.

Conceptually, these findings reinforce the interactionist framework, wherein personality traits interact with environmental and contextual factors to influence adjustment outcomes (Lewin, 1936). Extroversion functions as a facilitating trait, enabling individuals to navigate social and cultural demands effectively, whereas neuroticism functions as a constraining trait, limiting adaptive potential. The results also corroborate Berry's acculturation and adaptation framework, which emphasizes that individual attributes, such as personality, interact with socio-cultural environments to determine successful adjustment (Berry, 1997). The parallel patterns observed across study and control groups suggest that the influence of personality on socio-cultural adaptation is robust, transcending contextual differences, although contextual vulnerability may modulate the magnitude of these effects.

The integrated analysis demonstrates that extroversion consistently promotes socio-cultural adaptation across multiple domains, while neuroticism imposes barriers, with these effects evident in both the study and control groups. The Lie Scale does not significantly distort the findings. These results bring to light the magnitude of considering personality as a role of a central determinant of adaptation, and suggest that interventions aimed at enhancing socio-cultural adjustment may benefit from strategies that leverage extroverted tendencies and support emotionally

vulnerable individuals. The consistency of these patterns across groups also underscores the generalizability of personality-adaptation relationships, providing a robust conceptual and data-driven basis for further research in diverse socio-cultural contexts.

Comparison of Socio-Cultural Adaptation and Personality Traits between the Study and Control Groups

The findings reveal meaningful differences between the study and control groups across all three personality dimensions assessed: Extroversion, Neuroticism, and the Lie Scale. These differences indicate that the two groups exhibit distinct personality characteristics that may influence their behavioural responses, emotional functioning, and patterns of social interaction.

The findings show that the study group exhibits lesser extroversion levels than the control group. Within the personality framework proposed by Hans Jürgen Eysenck, Extroversion reflects a personality dimension characterized by sociability, assertiveness, high energy, and a drive for engagement or excitement through interpersonal interaction (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975). Individuals scoring high on extroversion typically display enthusiasm for social engagement, active participation in group activities, and a higher level of interpersonal confidence.

Lower levels of extroversion among the study group may reflect reduced social participation, limited interpersonal engagement, and a tendency toward social withdrawal. Research in personality psychology suggests that individuals with lower extroversion often demonstrate reduced social initiative and may encounter challenges in forming supportive peer relationships (Wilt & Revelle, 2017). In developmental contexts, limited social engagement can restrict opportunities for acquiring social competence, communication skills, and emotional support from peers and caregivers.

Recent research further indicates that extroversion plays a protective role in psychosocial development, as individuals with higher extroversion tend to

demonstrate stronger social networks, better coping strategies, and enhanced mental well-being (Bleidorn, 2019). Conversely, lower extroversion may contribute to social isolation and reduced access to positive reinforcement from social interactions. Such factors may influence behavioural adjustment and the development of adaptive coping strategies in individuals exposed to stressful or challenging life circumstances.

In contrast, the study group exhibits markedly greater levels of neuroticism than the control group. Neuroticism is a personality trait characterized by emotional instability, anxiety, irritability, mood swings, and increased susceptibility to stress (Eysenck, 1967). Persons with elevated neuroticism have a greater tendency toward experiencing pessimistic feelings and often recognize regular circumstances as more threatening or overwhelming.

Elevated neuroticism among the study group suggests a heightened susceptibility to psychological distress, emotional reactivity, and difficulties in emotional regulation. Personality research consistently demonstrates that people with elevated neuroticism are more prone to experiencing anxiety, depressive symptoms, and stress-related difficulties (Lahey, 2009; Widiger & Oltmanns, 2017). Such emotional instability may influence behavioural patterns by increasing impulsivity, frustration, and maladaptive coping responses when confronted with environmental challenges.

Recent empirical studies further indicate that neuroticism is strongly associated with exposure to environmental stressors, including socioeconomic adversity, family instability, and limited social support (Bleidorn et al., 2019; Soto, 2019). Individuals experiencing such conditions may develop heightened emotional sensitivity and vulnerability to negative effect. Consequently, higher neuroticism within the study group may reflect the cumulative psychological impact of adverse life experiences or stress-laden social environments.

From a psychosocial perspective, elevated neuroticism can also impair social relationships and adaptive functioning. Individuals who frequently experience

anxiety or emotional instability may struggle to maintain stable interpersonal relationships, regulate frustration, or cope effectively with stressful situations. These psychological tendencies can influence behavioural outcomes and overall psychosocial adjustment.

The third dimension examined in the analysis is the Lie Scale, which assesses the extent to which respondents provide socially desirable responses rather than accurate self-descriptions. The Lie Scale does not necessarily measure deliberate deception; rather, it reflects the tendency to conform to socially acceptable norms or present oneself in a favourable manner (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975).

The findings indicate that the study group scored lower on the Lie Scale compared with the control group. Lower scores may suggest that individuals in the study group were less inclined to engage in socially desirable responding and more likely to provide candid responses to the personality inventory. In contrast, higher scores among the control group may reflect stronger adherence to social norms and impression management tendencies.

Social desirability bias is a well-documented phenomenon in psychological research, particularly when participants respond to self-report instruments measuring personality or behaviour. Individuals embedded in socially structured environments may feel pressure to present themselves in a socially desirable manner, leading to inflated scores on socially desirable traits (Paulhus & Vazire, 2007).

Lower Lie Scale scores within the study group may therefore indicate greater openness or reduced concern with maintaining a socially favourable self-presentation. This finding may also reflect differences in socialization experiences, institutional contexts, or perceived expectations during the assessment process. From a methodological perspective, such candid responding can enhance the authenticity of personality assessments and provide deeper insight into the psychological characteristics of the study population.

Taken together, the findings presented in Table 4 reveal a distinct personality configuration within the study group characterized by lower extroversion, higher neuroticism, and lower social desirability orientation. This combination of traits suggests a pattern of emotional vulnerability, reduced social engagement, and relatively candid self-reporting tendencies when compared with the control group.

Personality trait plays a crucial role in determining behavioural responses, emotional regulation, and ways of social interaction. According to personality theory, individuals exhibiting high neuroticism combined with low extroversion possibly be extra prone to emotional anguish and may encounter greater challenges in adapting to stressful or socially demanding environments (Widiger & Oltmanns, 2017). These traits may influence coping strategies, interpersonal relationships, and overall psychosocial functioning.

Understanding these personality differences is particularly important when examining populations exposed to social adversity or institutional contexts. The observed personality profile highlights the importance of psychological support, emotional regulation training, and social skill development interventions aimed at improving adaptive functioning and resilience. Interventions focusing on strengthening coping mechanisms, fostering supportive peer relationships, and enhancing emotional awareness may contribute to improved psychosocial outcomes for individuals within the study group.

Overall, the results underscore the significance of personality structure in understanding behavioural and emotional patterns within the population under study. By integrating personality assessment with broader psychosocial examination, researchers can obtain a deeper insight into the factors influencing individual adjustment and developmental trajectories.

The findings related to socio-cultural adaptation reveal consistent discrepancies between the study group and the control group across multiple domains, including interpersonal communication, academic adaptation, ecological adjustment, community participation, and language proficiency. These findings can

be more comprehensively understood through several theoretical perspectives, including Acculturation Theory, Social Integration Theory, and Strain-based explanations of social adaptation. Together, these perspectives give a wider conceptual structure for interpreting how environmental, social, and psychological factors influence individuals' capacity to adjust within a social system.

Socio-cultural adaptation is closely aligned with the concept of acculturation, which refers to the procedure through which individuals learn to function effectively within a particular social or cultural environment. Based on John W. Berry's acculturation model, adaptation encompasses both psychological and socio-cultural aspects, with the socio-cultural component focusing on the behavioral skills needed to navigate daily social interactions and meet institutional expectations.

Individuals who experience limited socio-cultural adaptation often face difficulties in acquiring the behavioural skills necessary for successful participation in their social environment. These skills include effective communication, understanding social norms, navigating institutional structures, and participating in community activities. When individuals are unable to acquire these competencies, they may experience marginalization or limited integration within the broader social system.

The observed disparities in socio-cultural adaptation between the groups therefore suggest divergences in the degree to which individuals have been able to internalize and practice the behavioural norms required for effective social functioning. Research in cross-cultural psychology indicates that socio-cultural adaptation is strongly influenced by environmental exposure, opportunities for social learning, and access to supportive networks that facilitate cultural and social integration (Ward & Geeraert, 2016). Individuals with greater exposure to stable environments and supportive social structures tend to develop stronger adaptive competencies, whereas those experiencing disrupted environments may struggle to develop the skills necessary for effective adjustment.

Another theoretical lens through which these findings can be interpreted is social integration theory that stresses the significance of participation in social institutions and community networks for successful adaptation. Sociological perspectives argue that individuals who are actively integrated into educational institutions, community organizations, and peer networks have high likelihood to cultivate a sense of inclusion and social competence.

Concept of social integration is closely associated with the work of Émile Durkheim, who argued that participation in social institutions strengthens collective bonds and promotes social stability. When individuals are disconnected from these institutional structures, they may experience social isolation and reduced opportunities for learning socially appropriate behaviours.

The lower levels of community participation and personal interest engagement observed within the study group may therefore reflect limited opportunities for social integration. Participation in community activities provides opportunities for individuals to develop interpersonal skills, social networks, and a sense of collective identity. These experiences contribute to the development of social networks, which are essential for supporting adaptation in complex social environments.

In contrast, individuals who demonstrate stronger community participation and social engagement are more likely to acquire the behavioural competencies necessary for navigating social relationships and institutional expectations. Such experiences contribute to the growth of interpersonal conviction, collaborative skills, and a sense of belongingness within broader community.

The domain of ecological adaptation highlights the importance of environmental context in shaping adaptive behaviour. Ecological perspectives emphasize that individuals' behavioural responses are influenced by the interaction between personal characteristics and environmental conditions. The ecological systems model proposed by Bronfenbrenner's framework serves as an insightful tool

for analyzing how different layers of the environment impact individual growth and development.

The theory proposes that individuals are situated within interrelated systems ranging from immediate environments such as family structure as well as educational institutions to broader social structures and cultural frameworks. The ability to adapt successfully within these systems depends on the stability and supportiveness of these environments. Individuals who experience stable and supportive microsystems are more likely to develop adaptive competencies, whereas those exposed to disrupted or unstable environments may experience difficulties in navigating everyday institutional and social contexts.

Lower ecological adaptation may therefore reflect limited familiarity with institutional structures or reduced opportunities to learn how to manage environmental demands effectively. Such challenges can affect individuals' ability to navigate educational systems, community environments, and social institutions, thereby influencing broader patterns of socio-cultural adjustment.

Language proficiency plays a critical role in facilitating socio-cultural adaptation because language functions as the primary medium through which individuals interrelate with others and interpret societal norms. Communication competence allows individuals to express ideas clearly, interpret social cues, and engage in meaningful interpersonal exchanges.

Scholars in intercultural psychology emphasize that language competence is one of the strongest predictors of successful socio-cultural adaptation (Ward & Kennedy, 1999). Individuals with stronger language skills are better equipped to participate in educational settings, form social relationships, and navigate institutional environments. Conversely, limited language proficiency may create barriers to communication, reduce participation in social activities, and hinder academic engagement.

Language barriers may also contribute to feelings of social exclusion and reduced self-confidence in social interactions. Over time, such barriers can reinforce patterns of withdrawal from social environments, further limiting opportunities for developing adaptive communication skills.

The disparities observed in socio-cultural adaptation may also be interpreted through the lens of strain-based perspectives. According to Robert Agnew's General Strain Theory, individuals exposed to adverse life conditions, social stressors, or blocked opportunities may experience emotional strain that affects behavioural and psychological outcomes.

Strain theory suggests that individuals who face barriers to achieving socially valued goals may experience frustration, anxiety, or alienation. These emotional responses can influence behavioural patterns and reduce individuals' ability to engage constructively with social institutions. When individuals lack access to supportive coping resources, the strain associated with environmental challenges may hinder the development of adaptive competencies.

From this perspective, the lower socio-cultural adaptation seen in the study group may reflect the cumulative impact of structural and environmental stressors that limit opportunities for social participation, educational engagement, and skill development. These stressors may create barriers to social integration and reduce individuals' capacity to navigate institutional environments effectively.

Taken together, the theoretical frameworks discussed above suggest that socio-cultural adaptation is a multidimensional process shaped by environmental exposure, social integration, communication competence, and psychological resilience. The differences observed between the study and control groups highlight importance in supportive environments that promote opportunities for social participation, skill development, and institutional engagement.

Strengthening socio-cultural adaptation requires interventions that focus on multiple domains simultaneously. Programs designed to enhance communication

skills, academic engagement, language competence, and community participation may help individuals develop the behavioural competencies necessary for successful social integration. Additionally, supportive mentoring relationships and stable institutional environments can be instrumental in promoting healthy adaptation.

Overall, findings emphasize that socio-cultural adaptation is not solely an individual characteristic but rather the outcome of dynamic interplay between individuals and the social settings around them. Understanding these interconnections gives a deeper understanding of the obstacles faced by individuals in the study group and underscores the importance of comprehensive psychosocial support systems aimed at promoting adaptive functioning and social inclusion.

The present study examined differences in personality traits and socio-cultural adaptation comparing the experimental group with the control group using Eysenck Personality Inventory and the Sociocultural Adaptation Scale – Revised. The findings indicate consistent and substantial differences between the two groups across both psychological and socio-cultural domains. When interpreted collectively, these results provide important insight into the interaction between personality characteristics and adaptive functioning within social environments.

Personality traits represent relatively stable patterns of emotional, cognitive, and behavioural tendencies that influence how individuals understands and respond to their environment. According to Hans Jürgen Eysenck's personality theory, the dimensions of extroversion and neuroticism play a key function in influencing individuals' behavioural responses and emotional regulation (Eysenck, 1967). Extraversion denotes outgoing behavior, assertiveness, and a tendency toward social interaction, in contrast to neuroticism, which signifies emotional instability, worry, and increased responsiveness to stress.

The findings suggest that individuals in the study group exhibit personality characteristics associated with lower social engagement and greater emotional vulnerability. These traits may influence the manner in which individuals interact with social environments and respond to situational challenges. Individuals with

lower extroversion may be less inclined to seek social interaction or participate actively in group activities, while those with higher neuroticism may experience heightened emotional reactivity and difficulty coping with stress. Together, these personality characteristics may contribute to reduced social participation and limited engagement with social institutions.

The differences observed in socio-cultural adaptation further reinforce this interpretation. Socio-cultural adaptation reflects the behavioural competencies required to function effectively within a particular social environment. These competencies include communication skills, participation in community activities, academic engagement, environmental navigation, and language proficiency. Berry's acculturation theory posits that successful adaptation to a different culture entails mastering key behavioral competencies that enable individuals to manage everyday interactions and institutional expectations within their social context (Berry, 1997).

The findings indicate that the study group demonstrates comparatively lower levels of adaptation across several domains, including interpersonal communication, academic adjustment, ecological adaptation, community involvement, and language competence. These patterns suggest that individuals in the study group may encounter greater challenges in navigating social environments and institutional structures. Difficulties in communication and language proficiency may hinder effective interaction with peers and authority figures, while limited participation in community activities may reduce opportunities for social learning and relationship building.

Relation linking personality traits and socio-cultural adjustment is well documented in psychological literature. Research indicates that individuals with elevated level of extroversion lean towards adjusting more effectively to social environments because they actively seek interaction and develop broader social networks (Ward & Geeraert, 2016). In contrast, individuals with higher neuroticism may experience greater difficulty adapting to new or demanding environments due to increased emotional stress and sensitivity to negative experiences.

From an ecological perspective, adaptation is also shaped by environmental conditions and social support systems. The ecological systems framework proposed by Urie Bronfenbrenner emphasizes that individuals develop within interconnected social systems, including family, educational institutions, and community environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The availability of supportive relationships and stable environments plays a critical role in promoting adaptive competencies. Individuals who lack access to supportive microsystems may face challenges in acquiring the skills necessary for effective social participation.

The findings may also be read through the lens of General Strain Theoretical perspective, proposed by Robert Agnew. This theory suggests that exposure to adverse life circumstances or blocked opportunities can generate emotional strain, which may influence behavioural outcomes and adaptive functioning (Agnew, 1992). Individuals experiencing persistent stress or limited access to supportive resources may develop emotional vulnerabilities that affect both personality development and socio-cultural adjustment.

When considered together, the personality and socio-cultural adaptation findings suggest that the study group may experience multiple layers of disadvantage affecting their psychological and social functioning. Personality traits characterized by emotional vulnerability may interact with environmental challenges, limiting opportunities for positive social engagement and skill development. These factors may contribute to difficulties in navigating educational institutions, community settings, and interpersonal relationships.

The integration of personality and socio-cultural adaptation findings highlights the significance of addressing both psychological and environmental factors when designing interventions aimed at promoting adaptive functioning. While personality traits may influence individuals' predispositions toward social interaction and emotional regulation, environmental support structures can play a crucial position in fostering resilience and adaptive skill development.

Several implications for social policy, educational practice, and institutional support systems are also suggested. The results highlight the importance of providing structured psychosocial support programs aimed at strengthening emotional regulation, communication skills, and social competence. Such programs may help individuals develop coping strategies that mitigate the effects of emotional vulnerability and promote more effective social interaction. Educational institutions should implement targeted academic support initiatives that assist individuals in adjusting to structured learning environments. Academic mentoring, counselling services, and skill-development workshops can help individuals build confidence and improve their ability to navigate academic expectations. Community-based programs that encourage participation in recreational, cultural, and civic activities can promote social integration and enhance opportunities for interpersonal interaction. Engaging in community activities enhances social connections while also fostering self-confidence and a feeling of belonging. Additionally, programs that provide language support can be crucial in boosting communication skills and promoting involvement in both educational and social settings. Language proficiency is closely linked to socio-cultural adaptation, and improving communication skills can significantly enhance individuals' ability to engage with peers, educators, and community members.

In light of the outcomes of this research, multiple suggestions can be proposed to support individuals who experience challenges in socio-cultural adaptation. Psychosocial intervention programs should focus on strengthening emotional resilience and stress regulation competencies. Counselling services along with emotional support initiatives can assist individuals in developing more adaptive coping mechanisms and enhancing emotional resilience. Structured social skills training programs may help individuals enhance their interpersonal communication abilities and build confidence in social interactions. These programs should emphasize collaborative activities, group discussions, and experiential learning approaches that encourage active participation. Educational institutions should create inclusive environments that support students with diverse social and cultural backgrounds. Mentoring programs, peer support networks, and orientation initiatives

can facilitate smoother transitions into academic settings and reduce feelings of social isolation. Community engagement initiatives should be developed to encourage participation in social, cultural, and recreational activities. Such programs provide valuable opportunities for individuals to develop interpersonal relationships, acquire new skills, and strengthen their connection with the broader community. Longitudinal study ought to be carried out for better understanding the enduring connection amid individual personality traits and socio-cultural adjustment. Understanding how these factors interact over time may provide deeper insight into the developmental processes that shape adaptive functioning.

Socio-cultural factors and personality as predictors of involvement in conflict with law

Findings provide compelling evidence regarding the predictive role of socio-cultural adjustment in alleviating threat of involvement in conflict with the legal system. The results suggest that higher levels of socio-cultural adaptation, both overall and across its constituent domains, act as significant protective factors against antisocial or delinquent behavior. These findings can be understood through theoretical and conceptual lenses in developmental psychology, criminology, and cross-cultural adaptation research, offering insights into the mechanisms by which social, cognitive, and environmental competencies influence legal and behavioral outcomes.

From a conceptual perspective, socio-cultural adaptation encompasses the ability to navigate social norms, interact effectively with others, function within academic and occupational contexts, engage with the community, and adapt to environmental and linguistic challenges (Ward & Kennedy, 1999). The present findings suggest that deficiencies in these capacities may increase vulnerability to conflict with societal rules and legal frameworks. Specifically, overall socio-cultural adaptation emerges as a robust predictor, underscoring the integrative effect of multiple adaptive skills in promoting lawful behavior. This aligns with the ecological perspective on development, which emphasizes that individual behavior is characterised by the dynamic interaction between personal competencies and

environmental demands as stated by Bronfenbrenner (1979). An individual who successfully internalize social norms, communicate effectively, and adapt to their environments has more likelihood to be involved in pro-social behavior and avoid legal infractions.

The domain of interpersonal communication demonstrates a substantial protective effect, reflecting the importance of social competence in reducing conflict-prone behavior. Theoretical models of social learning and differential association suggest that effective communication skills enable individuals to form positive social networks, resolve conflicts constructively, and internalize pro-social norms, thereby lowering the likelihood of engagement in unlawful activities (Bandura, 1977; Sutherland, 1947). Deficits in interpersonal skills, on the other hand, may limit access to supportive social resources and heighten susceptibility to negative peer influences, increasing the possibility of coming into contact with the legal system.

Academic adaptation as well emerges as a major predictor, highlighting the role of cognitive, motivational, and organizational skills in behavioral regulation. From a developmental standpoint, engagement with structured educational settings provides opportunities for the cultivation of self-discipline, goal-directed behavior, and social conformity, which function as deterrents against deviant behavior (Moffitt, 1993). Poor academic adjustment may contribute to disengagement, frustration, and association with delinquent peer groups, reinforcing pathways toward legal conflicts.

The domain of personal interest and community involvement illustrates the protective role of engagement in socially constructive activities. Bronfenbrenner's The Ecological Systems framework emphasizes the significance of mesosystem interactions such as participation in community, cultural, and recreational activities in fostering pro-social development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Individuals actively involved in community and personal interest pursuits are more likely to internalize societal norms, develop empathy, and cultivate a sense of social responsibility, which collectively reduce the likelihood of law-breaking behavior.

Ecological adaptation, reflecting the capacity to navigate environmental challenges and daily living demands, is another domain that significantly reduces risk. This finding aligns with stress and coping frameworks in cross-cultural psychology, which propose that the ability to effectively manage environmental stressors promotes adaptive functioning and reduces the probability of maladaptive responses, including criminal behavior (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Individuals' adept at coping with environmental demands are less likely to experience frustration, marginalization, or alienation that could precipitate engagement in unlawful activities.

Language proficiency demonstrates one of the strongest protective effects, highlighting the centrality of communication competence in socio-cultural integration. Language serves not only as a mode of communication but as a cognitive and social tool also that enables participation in normative social, academic, and occupational domains as stated by Gonzalez (2011). Those with high linguistic competence exhibit improved capability to understand and adhere to societal rules, engage constructively with peers and authorities, and access supportive social resources, thereby lowering the probability of legal conflict.

Conceptually, these findings resonate with the social control and strain theories of criminology, which posit that weak social bonds, inadequate coping skills, and inability to achieve culturally valued goals increase susceptibility to deviance (Hirschi, 1969; Merton, 1938). High levels of socio-cultural adaptation strengthen social bonds, enhance self-regulatory capacities, and enable goal attainment in socially acceptable ways, collectively serving as protective mechanisms against involvement in the law.

The results underscore the critical role of socio-cultural competencies encompassing interpersonal communication, academic adjustment, community engagement, environmental adaptation, and language proficiency in predicting lawful behavior. Each domain independently contributes to reducing the risk of legal conflict, highlighting the multidimensional nature of adaptation and its relevance to preventive and rehabilitative interventions. The findings imply that interventions

intend to enhance socio-cultural skills may effectively reduce delinquency by fostering personal, social, and environmental competencies essential for constructive engagement with society.

The outcomes of predictors demonstrate compelling support for the predictive role of personality dimensions in involvement in conflict with the law, highlighting how individual dispositional traits can either buffer against or increase the likelihood of delinquent behavior. These results can be interpreted through theoretical and conceptual frameworks from personality psychology, criminology, and social-cognitive theory, emphasizing the mechanisms through which personality traits shape behavior in social and legal contexts.

The negative predictive effect of extroversion indicates that higher levels of this trait serve as a protective factor against legal conflict. Extroverted individuals are typically sociable, confident, assertive, and skilled in interpersonal interactions (Costa & McCrae, 1992). These traits facilitate the formation of positive social networks, constructive engagement with peers and authority figures, and effective conflict resolution, all of which reduce the likelihood of behaviors that violate societal norms or legal codes. The findings supported by social learning theoretical perspective, which posits that pro-social modelling and reinforcement in social contexts promote adaptive behaviors (Bandura, 1977). Extroverted individuals, through active social engagement, are likely to encounter more positive role models and develop effective coping strategies, thereby mitigating risk for unlawful behavior.

In contrast, neuroticism emerges as a strong risk factor for involvement in legal conflict, signifying that individuals with higher intensity of emotional unpredictability, anxious tendencies and frequent mood shifts are more prone to engage in behaviors that may lead to legal repercussions. Theoretical perspectives on personality and crime, including Eysenck's biosocial theory of criminality, suggest that individuals with high neuroticism may undergo heightened arousal, impulsivity, and poor emotional regulation, which can predispose them to aggression, impulsive decision-making, and antisocial behavior (Eysenck, 1996). From a psychosocial

standpoint, individuals high in neuroticism may also perceive social stressors as more threatening, lack effective coping mechanisms, and exhibit maladaptive reactions to environmental demands, which can cumulatively increase the probability of legal involvement.

The Lie Scale, representing tendencies toward socially desirable responding and controlled behavior, is negatively associated with conflict with the law, functioning as a protective trait. Conceptually, individuals scoring higher on this scale demonstrate self-monitoring, adherence to social norms, and a preference for behavior that aligns with societal expectations. This finding resonates with self-regulation and social control theories, which suggest that internalized social constraints, including the capacity for behavioral monitoring and restraint; reduce the likelihood of engaging in delinquent acts (Hirschi, 1969). In practice, higher Lie Scale scores may reflect conscientiousness in managing impulses, maintaining social acceptability, and avoiding risky or unlawful behaviors.

Collectively, these results support a multidimensional conceptualization of personality as a key determinant of lawful or delinquent behavior. Extroversion and controlled behavioral tendencies facilitate adaptive social functioning and serve as buffers against legal conflict, whereas neuroticism undermines emotional stability, problem-solving capacity, and social adjustment, thereby increasing vulnerability to unlawful conduct. These findings align with the broader framework of the person-environment interaction, which posits that individual traits interact with environmental stressors and social norms to shape behavior outcomes (Caspi & Roberts, 2001). In this context, the protective traits enhance resilience to social and environmental pressures that might otherwise lead to engagement in unlawful behavior.

In practical terms, this research underscores importance of incorporating personality assessment in preventive and rehabilitative interventions. Interventions designed to enhance emotional regulation, coping skills, social competence, and self-monitoring may reduce risk among individuals predisposed to high neuroticism or low extroversion. Furthermore, fostering behaviors consistent with socially desirable

norms may promote compliance with laws and reduce engagement in criminal or delinquent acts.

Empirical support is observed for the theoretical assertion that personality traits are critical determinants of behavioral outcomes related to legal and social conformity. Extroversion and controlled behavioral tendencies act as protective factors, while neuroticism functions as a significant risk factor, emphasizing the need for multidimensional approaches in understanding and mitigating conflict with the law.

From a conceptual perspective, socio-cultural adaptation represents individuals' ability to effectively function within social environments by acquiring the behavioural competencies necessary for interpersonal interaction, institutional participation, and environmental navigation. According to cross-cultural adaptation theory, individuals who possess strong socio-cultural competencies are better equipped to manage everyday social interactions, interpret social norms, and engage constructively with institutions such as schools, workplaces, and community organizations (Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001). Conversely, individuals with limited socio-cultural adaptation may experience difficulty in interpreting social expectations, communicating effectively, and participating in structured social environments.

The findings of the logistic regression analysis therefore suggest that socio-cultural adaptation constitutes a significant predictor of involvement in conflict with law. Individuals who demonstrate lower levels of socio-cultural competence appear more likely to belong to the group characterized by legal conflict, whereas individuals with stronger adaptive skills are more likely to demonstrate patterns consistent with the control group. These results highlight the importance of socio-cultural competencies in influencing behavioural outcomes and social integration.

The connection between socio-cultural adaptation and behavioural outcomes can be further understood through sociological and criminological perspectives. One relevant framework is General Strain Theory, given by Robert Agnew, which says

that individuals who experience social stressors or blocked opportunities may develop negative emotional responses that increase the likelihood of maladaptive behaviours (Agnew, 1992). Limited socio-cultural adaptation may contribute to such strain by restricting individuals' ability to achieve socially valued goals through conventional means. When individuals lack the communication skills, academic competencies, or social networks necessary for successful participation in society, they may encounter frustration and marginalization that increase vulnerability to deviant outcomes.

In addition, the results may also be read through the lens of social integration theory. Classical sociological perspectives, particularly those associated with Émile Durkheim, emphasize that strong connections to social institutions and community networks play a vital role in maintaining social order. Individuals who are integrated into social establishments such as schools, families, and community institutions tend to adopt societal norms and cultivate a deeper sense of social responsibility. Conversely, those who experience weak integration may lack the social bonds necessary to regulate behaviour and maintain conformity to societal expectations (Durkheim, 1897/1951).

Socio-cultural adaptation is closely linked to this concept of social integration because it reflects the skills required to participate effectively in institutional and community contexts. Individuals who demonstrate strong communication abilities, academic competence, and engagement in community activities are more likely to develop supportive social networks and positive institutional relationships. These connections can act as preventive influences that diminish the risk of involvement in antisocial or delinquent behaviour.

The ecological perception of human development proposed by Urie Bronfenbrenner also provides valuable insight into the relationship between socio-cultural adaptation and behavioural outcomes. Bronfenbrenner emphasizes that human behavior emerges from the relationships between individuals and the multiple layers of their environment, including family, educational institutions, and community structures (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Socio-cultural adaptation reflects the

ability to navigate these interconnected systems effectively. Individuals who develop adaptive competencies within these environments are more likely to experience positive developmental outcomes, whereas those who encounter difficulties in navigating these systems may experience increased vulnerability to social and behavioural challenges.

The findings of the current analysis therefore advocate that socio-cultural adaptation operates as a significant protective factor against involvement in conflict with law. Individuals who possess strong adaptive competencies are better able to engage with social institutions, build supportive relationships, and respond constructively to environmental challenges. Conversely, individuals who struggle with communication, language proficiency, academic engagement, and community participation may encounter barriers that limit their opportunities for positive social integration.

These results have vital implications for preventive and supportive measures. Efforts to improve socio-cultural abilities can contribute a crucial role in reducing the risk of involvement in conflict with law. Interventions that focus on communication skills, academic engagement, language development, and community participation can help individuals develop the behavioural competencies necessary for successful social integration. By enhancing individuals' capacity to navigate social environments effectively, such initiatives may reduce the likelihood of behavioural outcomes associated with social marginalization and institutional disengagement.

The logistic regression analysis demonstrates that socio-cultural adaptation represents a significant predictor of involvement in conflict with law. The findings highlight the importance of behavioural competencies associated with communication, academic functioning, environmental navigation, and community engagement in shaping individuals' capacity for social integration. Understanding the role of socio-cultural adaptation in behavioural outcomes provides valuable insight into the broader social and psychological factors that influence pathways into and away from legal conflict.

The logistic regression analysis conducted to examine whether personality factors significantly contribute to predicting involvement in clash with the legal system. The summarized model shows that the regression analysis demonstrates an adequate level of fit, suggesting that the personality variables included in the analysis meaningfully contribute to distinguishing individuals involved in conflict with the law from those in the control group. In logistic regression, the log likelihood statistic represents the degree of discrepancy between observed outcomes and as projected by the model and reduced values denote a better correspondence between the predicted probabilities and the observed data (Field, 2018; Hosmer, Lemeshow, & Sturdivant, 2013). The obtained model statistics therefore indicate that the set of personality variables contributes to explaining group membership.

The pseudo-coefficient of determination values further suggests that personality characteristics explain a modest but meaningful proportion of the variance in involvement in conflict with the law. Although pseudo-R^2 values in logistic regression are classically lower than the R^2 values observed in linear regression, they still provide an estimate of the explanatory power of the model (Menard, 2010). The findings imply that personality traits measured through the Eysenck Personality Inventoryserve as a factor in differentiating individuals who take on unlawful or delinquent behavior from the ones who do not. Eysenck's biological theory of personality recommends that personality characteristicslike extraversion and neuroticism are related amid differences within cortical arousal and emotional reactivity, which may influence behavioural regulation and susceptibility to risk-taking or antisocial behaviour (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975). Individuals high in extraversion may display higher sensation-seeking tendencies, while those high in neuroticism may demonstrate greater emotional instability, both of which have been linked to behavioural difficulties and maladaptive coping patterns.

The role of personality in predicting delinquent or law-violating behaviour has been widely documented in criminological and psychological literature. Research suggests that individuals exhibiting higher impulsivity, emotional instability, and lower behavioural inhibition may be more vulnerable to engaging in deviant or risk-

oriented behaviours (DeLisi & Vaughn, 2014; Miller & Lynam, 2001). The present findings therefore align with theoretical perspectives that consider personality traits as individual-level risk factors contributing to antisocial or delinquent outcomes.

However, the explanatory strength of the model also indicates that personality traits alone cannot fully account for involvement in conflict with the legal system. Juvenile delinquency and similar behavioural outcomes are widely understood as multifactorial phenomena influenced through the intricate interaction of psychological, community and ecological determinants. Aspects such as family environment, socio-economic conditions, peer influence, exposure to violence, and broader socio-cultural stressors have been identified as significant contributors to juvenile offending and behavioural maladjustment (Agnew, 2006; Farrington, 2011). Therefore, while personality characteristics may increase vulnerability or predisposition toward certain behaviours, they operate within a broader ecological context that shapes behavioural outcomes.

In this regard, the findings support integrative perspectives within developmental criminology in addition to personality psychology that emphasizes interaction between individual dispositions and environmental influences. Personality traits may function as underlying predispositions that interact with contextual stressors, social learning processes, and opportunity structures, ultimately influencing the susceptibility to encountering legal or judicial issues. Consequently, interventions aimed at reducing juvenile delinquency should not focus solely on personality factors but should also address broader psychosocial and environmental determinants that contribute to behavioural risk.

Exploration of case studies

The qualitative analysis of the case vignettes, supported by NVivo coding and narrative inquiry, provides rich insights into the structural, familial, and social determinants underlying the involvement of adolescent girls with conflict situations, trafficking, delinquency and institutionalization. These findings underscore the interplay between systemic vulnerabilities, gendered experiences, and the protective

role of state mechanisms, offering a nuanced understanding that complements quantitative analyses.

Structural Vulnerability as a Root Cause

Across all cases, structural vulnerability emerged as a fundamental determinant shaping the participants' trajectories. Conditions such as poverty, displacement, refugee status, migration, and interrupted educational pathways created environments of heightened risk and limited social protection. Structural vulnerability theory posits that social, economic, and institutional inequalities produce environments where marginalized individuals are more susceptible to exploitation and adverse outcomes (Farmer, 2004). In cases like FK and BBF, economic deprivation and refugee status facilitated coercion and trafficking, reflecting how systemic inequities render young girls particularly vulnerable to cross-border exploitation. Similarly, in delinquency cases (MB and KS), poverty constrained access to educational and recreational resources, increasing reliance on peer networks that exposed them to substance use and petty crime. The analysis suggests that these systemic conditions were more determinative of institutional involvement than any innate deviance, emphasizing that structural forces shape opportunities, constraints, and risk exposure.

Breakdown of Family as a Protective Unit

Family dysfunction was a recurrent theme, highlighting the failure of the family as a primary protective agent. Theoretical perspectives from attachment theory and social control theory illuminate this finding. Attachment theory posits that secure emotional bonds and consistent care giving facilitate healthy socio-emotional development and resilience against risk behaviors (Bowlby, 1988). Cases such as R, MB, and KS illustrate how disrupted attachment, parental absence, neglect, and domestic conflict undermined the development of adaptive coping strategies. Social control theoretical perspective proposed by Hirschi (1969) further supports the notion that weakened familial bonds reduce adherence to societal norms, increasing the likelihood of engagement with delinquent behaviors. In trafficking cases, familial

absence and separation directly enabled exploitation, while in delinquency cases, emotional neglect and weak supervision allowed peer influences and substance use to flourish. Thus, family breakdown functioned as a critical mediating factor between structural vulnerability and individual exposure to risk.

Gendered Nature of Risk and Blame

A salient finding across all vignettes is the gendered dimension of vulnerability. Female adolescents were disproportionately targeted for trafficking, deception, and moral or legal blame, highlighting the intersection of gender and structural disadvantage. Feminist criminology and victimology frameworks suggest that girls and young women often experience social control differently, facing heightened scrutiny and moralization of behavior (Chesney-Lind, 2016). FK and BBF's experiences demonstrate the intersection of age, gender, and social marginalization, wherein deception and coercion were effective precisely because of societal gender hierarchies. R's case shows gendered criminalization, where suspicion and familial conflict converged with societal assumptions about female responsibility. Similarly, KS's substance use was framed as delinquent behavior rather than a response to trauma or neglect. These patterns reinforce the theoretical argument that gender is a cross-cutting vulnerability influencing both exposure to risk and subsequent institutional treatment.

Non-linear Pathways into Conflict with Law

The analysis elucidates that pathways into the juvenile justice system are complex and non-linear, shaped by multiple interacting factors rather than isolated acts of criminal intent. The findings resonate with life-course criminology and developmental psychopathology, which emphasize cumulative risk, transactional processes, and context-dependent outcomes (Moffitt, 1993). Victimization followed by rescue (FK, BBF), family conflict resulting in criminal accusation (R), poverty-mediated peer influence (MB), and emotional distress leading to substance use (KS) each represent distinct but interrelated trajectories. These pathways highlight that institutional involvement is not simply a reflection of moral failings or innate

criminality but emerges from dynamic interactions between individual vulnerabilities, family systems, social environments, and structural inequalities.

Observation Homes as Protective Institutions

The findings underscore the responsibility of Observation homes for minors, the Juvenile Justice Board, and the state-level child protection society as protective and rehabilitative institutions rather than punitive mechanisms. Consistent across all cases, these institutions provided immediate safety, facilitated family contact, and offered a framework for care, supervision, and reintegration. This aligns with social ecological models of child protection, which emphasize multi-level interventions that combine legal, social, and familial support to address both immediate risk and long-term development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The combination of police intervention, judicial oversight, and institutional support allowed for stabilization, recovery from trauma, and reduction of future risk, demonstrating the importance of state mechanisms in mitigating the consequences of structural and social vulnerabilities.

The qualitative case analysis highlights that adolescent girls' involvement in situations of trafficking, delinquency, or conflict with law is deeply embedded within structural, familial, and gendered contexts. Poverty, migration, school dropout, and family breakdown create environments of heightened risk, while gendered social norms exacerbate vulnerability and criminalization. Pathways to institutionalization are non-linear, reflecting complex interactions among structural deprivation, social influence, emotional distress, and victimization. Observation Homes and state-supported protective systems function as critical safety nets, emphasizing care and rehabilitation over punishment. These findings reinforce theoretical perspectives from structural vulnerability, feminist criminology, attachment theory, social control theory, and developmental criminology, demonstrating the multi-dimensional determinants of juvenile involvement with law and the importance of protective interventions for socially marginalized girls.

CHAPTER - V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Summary

Children in involved in conflict with the law are a multidimensional developmental phenomenon influenced by psychological, socio-cultural, familial, and structural determinants. Adolescence is characterized by identity exploration, emotional fluctuation, and increased peer orientation. When, dispositional vulnerabilities intersect with environmental adversity, the probability of maladaptive behavioral outcomes increases. This study aimed to examine how socio-cultural adaptation and personality traits predict adolescents' likelihood of engaging in behavior that brings them into conflict with the law.

This chapter gives an extensive synthesis of the study's hypotheses, statistical analyses, qualitative findings, conclusions, implications, constraints and avenues for future research. Particular focus is given on detailed statistical interpretation, effect size evaluation, and theoretical integration to meet strict postgraduate thesis standards.

The main purpose of this research was to examine if socio-cultural adaptations along with personality factors significantly predict involvement in conflict with the law among adolescent boys. A secondary aim was to compare boys in conflict with law and a matched control group across socio-demographic, socio-cultural, and personality variables. An additional qualitative aim was to explore structural and familial vulnerabilities among institutionalized girls and to identify recurring experiential themes.

The study was planned to observe the contribution of socio-cultural, factors adaptation with personality in predicting involvement in conflict with the legal system among adolescents, with an exploratory focused qualitative analysis of vulnerabilities among girls in conflict with the law. The study adopted a research design integrating quantitative approaches to provide a multidimensional understanding of both dispositional and structural determinants of juvenile legal

involvement. The quantitative sample comprised 200 adolescent boys, divided equally into a study group (boys in conflict with the law) and a control group. Socio-cultural adjustment assessed using the Socio-Cultural Adaptation Scale – Revised (Ward & Kennedy, 1999), and personality factors were assessed by the Eysenck Personality Inventory developed by Eysenck and Eysenck (1975). Both instruments demonstrated satisfactory reliability coefficients, indicating adequate internal consistency for research purposes. Statistical analysis incorporated chi-square tests, independent samples t-tests, correlation analyses, effect size estimation, and logistic regression analysis. The qualitative component consisted of five in-depth case studies analyzed thematically to identify recurring patterns of vulnerability.

The study was framed around four null hypotheses. The first hypothesis suggested that boys in conflict with the law and the control group would not differ significantly in terms of socio-cultural factors. The second hypothesis conceived that there would be no significant differences in personality traits between these two groups. The third hypothesis proposed the absence of a significant relationship between personality traits and socio-cultural adaptation. Finally, the fourth hypothesis assumed that socio-cultural adaptation and personality traits would not serve as significant predictors of involvement in conflict with the law.

The findings revealed that although the study and control groups were comparable in age group and socio-economic status, significant differences were observed in education, family type, parental education, parental occupation, and religious background. Boys in conflict with the law demonstrated significantly higher neuroticism and significantly lower extroversion compared to controls. Unequal variances is observed for certain dimensions, the equal sample sizes support the robustness of the results. Overall, the pattern of findings points toward a personality profile marked by emotional vulnerability and social withdrawal within the Study Group, which may have important psychological and behavioral implications. Socio-cultural adaptation scores were significantly lower among the study group across all domains. Correlational analysis showed that extroversion was positively related with socio-cultural adaptation, whereas neuroticism was negatively associated. Assumption of homogeneity of variance was fulfilled for most dimensions of the

Socio-Cultural Adaptation, as the p-values were non-significant. However, significant results for personal interest and community involvement and language proficiency indicate unequal variances in these domains, suggesting greater variability within groups in context-sensitive aspects of adaptation. These differences in dispersion likely reflect unequal exposure to social participation and linguistic environments. Overall, the findings indicate largely comparable variance across groups, with some heterogeneity in socially and linguistically driven dimensions. Logistic regression analysis, Cox–Snell R^2 and Nagelkerke R^2 confirmed that socio-cultural adaptation and personality traits significantly predicted having encounters with the law.

Additionally, in exploratory qualitative examination family breakdown emerged as a central vulnerability factor. Participants frequently reported absence of stable care-giving figures and emotional neglect. Economic deprivation contributed to school dropout and early labor engagement, increasing exposure to risky environments. Importantly, institutionalization often occurred for protective reasons rather than deliberate criminal behavior. The qualitative findings provided contextual depth to quantitative results. Thematic analysis revealed cumulative structural disadvantages among institutionalized girls. Poverty, parental separation, migration stress, domestic conflict, and exposure to exploitation were recurring patterns.

Conclusion

Hypothesis 1: Difference in Socio-Cultural Factors

Hypothesis 1 was not accepted, indicating that socio-cultural background significantly differentiates boys in conflict with the law from non-delinquent peers. Educational attainment and family characteristics appear particularly influential. These findings are consistent with ecological systems theoretical perspectives, which highlight the interaction between individuals and environmental systems in shaping developmental outcomes (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Hypothesis 2: Difference in Personality Traits

Hypothesis 2 was not accepted, confirming that personality traits significantly distinguish the two groups. Higher neuroticism and lower extroversion among boys in conflict with the law suggest emotional instability and reduced adaptive engagement. These findings align with trait theory, which conceptualizes neuroticism as vulnerability to stress and maladaptive coping (Eysenck, 1967), and extroversion as social competence and positive affectivity (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

Hypothesis 3: Relationship between Personality and Socio-Cultural Adaptation

Hypothesis 3 was not accepted, demonstrating that personality traits are significantly related to socio-cultural adaptation. Adolescents with higher extroversion exhibited better interpersonal and environmental adaptation, while those with higher neuroticism showed poorer adaptation. This supports socio-cultural adaptation models emphasizing behavioral competence in navigating social demands (Ward & Kennedy, 1999).

Hypothesis 4: Predictive Role of Socio-Cultural and Personality Variables

Hypothesis 4 not accepted, confirming that socio-cultural adaptation and personality traits significantly predict involvement in conflict with the law. Neuroticism appears as a risk factor, whereas extroversion and adaptive competence functioned as protective factors. These findings are consistent with vulnerability–stress frameworks, which posit that individual predispositions interact with environmental stressors to influence behavioral outcomes (Ingram & Luxton, 2005).

Cumulative Vulnerabilities among Girls

The exploratory qualitative analysis reveals that girls who come into contact with the law often face multiple socio-economic and psychological vulnerabilities. Their participation in legal conflicts is shaped by structural and relational challenges rather than being the result of isolated acts of misconduct.

Emergence of Thematic Patterns

Qualitative analysis confirms that family disruption, abuse, educational discontinuity, and poverty consistently emerge as cross-case themes. Institutionalization often functioned as protective custody rather than purely punitive placement.

The study concludes that involvement in conflict with the law is not solely a product of individual deviance but arises from the dynamic interaction between personality vulnerabilities and socio-cultural contexts. Emotional instability increases susceptibility under stress, whereas extroversion and adaptive competence enhance resilience. For girls, structural inequality and family instability are central explanatory factors. The findings support an ecological-interactionist model integrating personality theory and environmental influences.

Implications

The findings bear significant theoretical, practical, and policy implications. Theoretically, the study advances an interactionist framework integrating personality theory, ecological systems theory, and socio-cultural adaptation models. It demonstrates that dispositional traits such as neuroticism and extroversion operate within structural and relational contexts to shape behavioral outcomes.

Practically, the results suggest the need for early screening of emotional instability and social adaptation deficits among adolescents. Juvenile justice systems should incorporate personality assessment and socio-cultural skill-building interventions. Social-emotional learning programs in schools may strengthen coping skills, communication abilities, and resilience, thereby reducing risk. Trauma-informed and gender-sensitive approaches are particularly essential for girls, given the strong presence of structural vulnerability and gendered victimization in their life trajectories.

At the policy level, interventions should extend beyond individual rehabilitation to address family instability, educational discontinuity, and socio-economic disadvantage. Strengthening parental education programs, community

engagement initiatives, and cross-border child protection systems may reduce systemic vulnerabilities contributing to legal conflict.

Limitations

Although the study provides important insights, it has some restrictions. First, the cross-sectional design restricts the ability to deduce causality; employing longitudinal methods would more effectively illuminate developmental pathways. Second, dependence on self-report measures may bring in response bias, although acceptable reliability indices mitigate this concern. Third, the extremely large effect sizes observed warrant cautious interpretation and replication in broader samples. Fourth, the qualitative sample was small and context-specific, limiting generalizability. Finally, cultural specificity may restrict the external validity of the findings across different socio-cultural settings.

Future Directions

Future investigations are recommended to adopt prospective, multi-method designs in order to establish causal pathways between personality traits, socio-cultural adaptation, and delinquency. Expanding qualitative samples would enhance thematic depth and cross-contextual comparison. Incorporating multi-informant assessments, including parental and teacher reports, would strengthen measurement validity. Cross-cultural studies may further illuminate how socio-cultural environments moderate personality effects.

Intervention-based research evaluating structured socio-cultural competence training and emotional regulation programs is strongly recommended. Policy efforts should prioritize preventive frameworks focusing on early identification of vulnerability, family strengthening, educational engagement, and structural reform aimed at reducing poverty and gender-based risks.

In conclusion, the study underscores the importance of moving from punitive models of juvenile justice toward preventive, rehabilitative, and ecologically informed approaches that integrate psychological resilience with structural support mechanisms.

APPENDIX I

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

(Pranami Barua, 2021)

I, …… hereby give my consent for participating in the study conducted by Ms. Pranami Barua of the Department of Psychology, Mizoram University titled **'Socio-Cultural Factors and Personality of Children in Conflict with Law in Assam'**. I have been explained about the study purpose, procedure and confidentiality. The researcher has assured me that the data will be used only for the expansion of literature in the field of Psychology and in helping me improve my quality of life and well-being.

Signature of the Participant Signature of the Researcher

Place:

Date:

APPENDIX II

INFORMED CONSENT FORM (ASSAMESE)

(Pranami Barua, 2021)

তথ্য সন্মত সন্মতি পত্র

মই, ...মিজোৰাম বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ৰ ক্লিনিকেল চাইকোলজি বিভাগৰ শ্রীপ্রণামী বৰুৱাৰ দ্বাৰা পৰিচালিত 'অসমৰ আইনৰ সৈতে সংঘর্ষত লিপ্ত শিশুসকলৰ ব্যক্তিত্ব আৰু সামাজিক সাংস্কৃতিক উপাদান' শীর্ষক গৱেষণাৰ অধ্যয়নত অংশ গ্রহণ কৰাৰ বাবে মোৰ সন্মতি প্রদান কৰিছো। মোক অধ্যয়নৰ উদ্দেশ্য, প্রক্রিয়া আৰু গোপনীয়তাৰ বিষয়ে বুজাই দিয়া হৈছে। গৱেষক গৰাকীয়ে মোক আশ্বাস দিছে যে সংগৃহীত তথ্যসমূহ কেৱল মনোবিজ্ঞান ক্ষেত্রখনত গৱেষণা, জ্ঞান সম্প্রসাৰণৰ বাবে আৰু মোৰ জীৱন-ধাৰণৰ মানদণ্ড তথা সুস্বাস্থ্য, সুখ-সমৃদ্ধিৰ উন্নতি কৰণৰ বাবে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হ'ব।

অংশগ্রহণকাৰীৰ স্বাক্ষৰঃ-

গৱেষকৰ স্বাক্ষৰঃ-

স্থানঃ-

তাৰিখ ঃ-

APPENDIX III

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA SHEET

(Pranami Barua, 2021)

- **Name:**
- **Age:**
- **Education:**
- **Religion:**
- **Language:**
- **Family type:**
- **Parent's Education:**

  Mother -

  Father -
- **Parent's Occupation :**

  Mother -

  Father -
- **Socioeconomic Status/Income:**
- **Reason being placed at the Observation Home:**

APPENDIX IV

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA SHEET

ASSAMESE (Pranami Barua, 2021)

সামাজিক জনগাঠনিক তথ্য পত্র

নাম ঃ-

বয়স ঃ-

শিক্ষাঃ-

ধর্মঃ-

ভাষাঃ-

পৰিয়ালৰ প্ৰকাৰ ঃ-

পিতৃ -মাতৃৰ শিক্ষাগত অৰ্হতা ঃ-

মাতৃ ঃ-

পিতৃ ঃ-

পিতৃ-মাতৃৰ বৃত্তিঃ-

মাতৃ ঃ-

পিতৃ ঃ-

সামাজিক সাংস্কৃতিক অৱস্থাঃ-

পর্য্যবেক্ষণ গৃহত ৰখাৰ কাৰণঃ-

APPENDIX V

Revised Socio-Cultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS-R), Joseph Wilson (2013)

SCAS-R
Revised Sociocultural Adaptation Scale

Living in a different culture often involves learning new skills and behaviours. Thinking about life in [*country*], please rate your competence at each the following behaviours (1 = Not at all competent; 5 = Extremely competent).

		1 Not at all competent				5 Extremely competent
1.	Building and maintaining relationships.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Managing my academic/work responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Interacting at social events.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Maintaining my hobbies and interests.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Adapting to the noise level in my neighbourhood.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Accurately interpreting and responding to other people's gestures and facial expressions.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Working effectively with other students/work colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Obtaining community services I require.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Adapting to the population density.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Understanding and speaking [*host language*].	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Varying the rate of my speaking in a culturally appropriate manner.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	Gaining feedback from other students/work colleagues to help improve my performance.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	Accurately interpreting and responding to other people's emotions.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	Attending or participating in community activities.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	Finding my way around.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	Interacting with members of the opposite sex.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	Expressing my ideas to other students/work colleagues in a culturally appropriate manner.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	Dealing with the bureaucracy.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	Adapting to the pace of life.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	Reading and writing [*host language*].	1	2	3	4	5
21.	Changing my behaviour to suit social norms, rules, attitudes, beliefs, and customs.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX VI

Revised Socio-Cultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS-R), Joseph Wilson (2013)

ASSAMESE

সংশোধিত সামাজিক সাংস্কৃতিক অনুকূলকৰণৰ পৰিমাপক (SCAS-R)

ভিন্ন সংস্কৃতিত বসবাস কৰোতে প্ৰায়েই নতুন দক্ষতা আৰু আচৰণ শিকিবলগীয়া হয়। মোৰ জীৱনৰ বিষয়ে ভাবি অনুগ্ৰহ কৰি তলত দিয়া আচৰণ সমূহৰ প্ৰতিটোতে আপোনাৰ দক্ষতা মূল্যায়ন কৰক।

	১	২	৩	৪	৫
	একেবাৰে দক্ষ নহয়				অত্যন্ত দক্ষ
১) সম্পৰ্ক গঢ়ি তোলা আৰু বজাই ৰখা					
২) মোৰ শিক্ষাগত/কৰ্ম দায়িত্বসমূহ পৰিচালনা কৰা					
৩) সামাজিক অনুষ্ঠান সমূহত মত-বিনিময় কৰা					
৪) মোৰ চখ আৰু আগ্ৰহ সমূহ বজাই ৰখা					
৫) মোৰ ওচৰ-চুবুৰীয়াৰ কোলাহলৰ লগত খাপ খুৱাই লোৱা					
৬) অন্য ব্যক্তি ৰ অংগী-ভংগী আৰু মুখৰ ভাব সঠিকভাৱে বুজি পোৱা আৰু সেই অনুসৰি উপযুক্ত সঁহাৰি জনোৱা।					
৭) অন্যান্য ছাত্ৰ-ছাত্ৰী বা সহকৰ্মী সকলৰ লগত সুচাৰুৰূপে কাম কৰা					
৮) সমাজৰ পৰা মোৰ প্ৰয়োজনীয় সেৱা-সুবিধা সমূহ লাভ কৰা					
৯) জনবসতিৰ ঘনত্বৰ সৈতে খাপ খুৱাই লোৱা					
১০) আতিথ্য দেশৰ ভাষা বুজি পোৱা আৰু কোৱা					
১১) সাংস্কৃতিক ভাৱে উপযুক্ত ধৰণে মোৰ কথা কোৱাৰ গতি সলনি কৰা					
১২) মোৰ কৰ্মদক্ষতা উন্নত কৰাৰ বাবে অন্য ছাত্ৰ-ছাত্ৰী/সহকৰ্মীৰ পৰা মতামত লোৱা					
১৩) আনৰ আৱেগ-অনুভূতি সঠিকভাৱে বুজি উচিত সঁহাৰি জনোৱা					
১৪) সামাজিক কাম-কাজ বা অনুষ্ঠানত উপস্থিত থকা আৰু অংশগ্ৰহণ কৰা					
১৫) নিজৰ পথ বিচাৰি উলিওৱা					

	১	২	৩	৪	৫
	একেবাৰে দক্ষ নহয়				অত্যন্ত দক্ষ
১৬) বিপৰীত লিংগৰ ব্যক্তিৰ সৈতে যোগাযোগ কৰা					
১৭) সাংস্কৃতিক ৰীতি-নীতি মানি সহকর্মী বা ছাত্র-ছাত্রীৰ আগত নিজৰ ধাৰণাসমূহ প্রকাশ কৰা					
১৮) প্রশাসনিক প্রক্রিয়াসমূহৰ সৈতে মোকাবিলা কৰা					
১৯) জীৱনৰ গতিৰ লগত খাপ খোৱাই লোৱা					
২০) আতিথ্য দেশৰ ভাষা পঢ়া আৰু লিখা					
২১) সামাজিক নিয়ম, বিধি-ব্যৱস্থা, মনোভাৱ, বিশ্বাস আৰু প্রথা অনুসৰি নিজৰ আচৰণ সলনি কৰা					

APPENDIX VII

Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI), Eysenck and Eysenck (1964)

EYSENCK PERSONALITY INVENTORY

by

H.J. Eysenck and Sybil B.G. Eysenck

Name _____Age _____Sex _____

Class_____Game_____HighAchievement _____

B : E : L :

INSTRUCTIONS:

Here are some questions regarding the way you behave, feel and act. After each question is a space for answering YES or NO. Try to decide whether YES or NO represent your usual way of acting or feeling. Then put a circle around YES or NO. Work quickly and don't spend too much time over any question, we want your first reaction, not a long drawn out through process. The whole questionnaire should not take more than a few minutes. Be sure not to omit any question.

Work quickly and remember to answer every question. There are no right or wrong answers and this is not a test of intelligence or ability, but simply a measure of the way you behave.

S.No.	Question	Answer
1.	Do you often long for excitement?	Yes / No
2.	Do you often need understanding friends to cheer you up?	Yes / No
3.	Are you usually carefree?	Yes / No
4.	Do you find it very hard to take no for an answer?	Yes / No
5.	Do you stop and think over before doing anything?	Yes / No
6.	If you say you will do something do you always keep your promise no matter how inconvenient it might be to do so?	Yes / No
7.	Does your mood often go up and down?	Yes / No
8.	Do you generally do and say things quickly without stopping to think?	Yes / No
9.	Do you ever feel just miserable for no good reason?	Yes / No
10.	Would you do almost anything for a dare?	Yes / No
11.	Do you suddenly feel why when you want to talk to an attractive stranger?	Yes / No
12.	Once in a while do you lose your temper and get angry?	Yes / No
13.	Do you often do things on the spur of the moment?	Yes / No
14.	Do you often worry about things you should not have done or said?	Yes / No
15.	Generally, do you prefer reading to meeting people?	Yes / No
16.	Are you feeling rather easily hurt?	Yes / No
17.	Do you like going out a lot?	Yes / No
18.	Do you occasionally have thoughts and ideas that you would not like other people to know about?	Yes / No
19.	Are you sometimes bubbling over with energy and sometimes very sluggish?	Yes / No
20.	Do you prefer to have few but special friends?	Yes / No
21.	Do you daydream a lot?	Yes / No
22.	When people shout at you, do you shout back?	Yes / No
23.	Are you often troubled about feeling of guilt?	Yes / No
24.	Are all your habits good and desirable ones?	Yes / No
25.	Can you usually let yourself go and enjoy yourself a lot at a gay party?	Yes / No
26.	Would you call yourself tense or 'high strung'?	Yes / No
27.	Do other people think of you as being very lively?	Yes / No
28.	After you have done something important, do you often come away feeling you could have done better?	Yes / No
29.	Are you mostly quiet when you are with other people?	Yes / No
30.	Do you sometimes gossip?	Yes / No
31.	Do ideas run through your head so that you cannot sleep?	Yes / No
32.	If there is something you want to know about would you rather look it up in a book than talk to some one about it?	Yes / No
33.	Do you get palpitation or thumping in your heart?	Yes / No
34.	Do you like the kind of work that you need to pay close attention to?	Yes / No

35.	Do you get attacks of shaking or trembling?	Yes / No
36.	Would you always declare everything at the customs?	Yes / No
37.	Do you hate being with a crowd who play jokes on one another?	Yes / No
38.	Are you an irritable person?	Yes / No
39.	Do you like doing things in which you have to act quickly?	Yes / No
40.	Do you worry about awful things that might happen?	Yes / No
41.	Are you slow and unhurried in the way you move?	Yes / No
42.	Have you ever been late for an appointment or work?	Yes / No
43.	Do you have many nightmares?	Yes / No
44.	Do you like talking to people so much that you never miss a chance of talking to a stranger?	Yes / No
45.	Are you troubled by aches and pains?	Yes / No
46.	Would you be very unhappy if you could not see lots of people most of the time?	Yes / No
47.	Would you call yourself a nervous person?	Yes / No
48.	Of all the people you know are there some who you definitely do not like?	Yes / No
49.	Would you say that you were fairly self-confidence?	Yes / No
50.	Are you easily hurt when people find fault with you or your work?	Yes / No
51.	Do you find it hard to really enjoy yourself at a lively party?	Yes / No
52.	Are you troubled with feeling of inferiority?	Yes / No
53.	Can you easily get some life into a rather dull party?	Yes / No
54.	Do you sometimes talk about things you know nothing about?	Yes / No
55.	Do you worry about your health?	Yes / No
56.	Do you like playing pranks on others?	Yes / No
57.	Do you suffer from sleeplessness?	Yes / No

APPENDIX VIII

Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI), Eysenck and Eysenck (1964)

ASSAMESE

EYSENCK PERSONALITY INVENTORY
By
HL EYSENCK AND SYBIL B.G. EYSENCK

নাম ঃ ..... বয়স ঃ .....

লিংগ ঃ ..... শ্রেনী ঃ .....

নির্দেশসমূহ—

আপুনি যি ধৰণে আচৰণ কৰে, অনুভৱ কৰে আৰু কাম কৰে তাৰ ওপৰত ইয়াতে কিছুমান প্রশ্ন আছে। প্রত্যেকটো প্রশ্নৰ বিপৰীতে হয়/নহয় উত্তৰ দিবলৈ ঠাই আছে। আপুনি সাধাৰণতে ভবা বা কাম কৰা ধৰণে প্রশ্নসমূহ হয় বা নহয় ঠিৰাং কৰি উত্তৰ দিবলৈ চেষ্টা কৰিব। তাৰ পিছত হয়/নহয় ৰ বিপৰীতে গোলকৈ চিন দিব। বেছি সময় নোলোৱাকৈ খৰকৈ কামটো কৰিব। আমি আপোনাৰ প্রথম প্রতিক্রিয়াটোৱে বিচাৰো। বহুত সময় লৈ উত্তৰ নিদিব। কোনো এটা প্রশ্ন বাদ নিদিয়াকৈ গোটেই প্রশ্নবোৰৰ উত্তৰ দিবলৈ কেইমিনিটমান সময়তকৈ বেছি সময় লোৱা উচিত নহয়।

কামটো খৰকৈ কৰিব আৰু প্রতিটো প্রশ্নৰ উত্তৰ দিবলৈ মনত ৰাখিব। এই প্রশ্নবোৰৰ কোনো শুদ্ধ বা অশুদ্ধ উত্তৰ নাই আৰু এইবোৰ আপোনাৰ বুদ্ধি বা পাৰদর্শিতা জোখাৰো পৰীক্ষা নহয়, কিন্তু ই আপুনি কি ধৰণে আচৰণ কৰে তাক জোখাৰ এটা সৰল উপায়।

ক্রমিক নং	প্রশ্ন	উত্তৰ	
১	আপুনি প্রায়েই স্ফুর্তি কৰিব বিচাৰে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
২	আপুনি প্রয়েই মন ভাল লগাবলৈ আপোনাক বুজি পোৱা বন্ধু-বান্ধৱী বিচাৰে নেকি	হয়	নহয়
৩	সাধাৰণতে আপুনি বেপৰোৱা/বিন্দাচ্ বিধৰ নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৪	কোনো কথাৰ নকাৰাত্মক উত্তৰ পালে আপুনি বহুত কষ্ট পায় নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৫	যিকোনো কাম কৰাৰ আগতে আপুনি বহুত চালি-জাৰি চাই কামটো নকৰে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৬	আপুনি যদি কোনো এটা কাম কৰিব বুলি কথা দিয়ে, তেতিয়া পৰিস্থিতি যিমানেই অসুবিধাৰ নহওঁক কিয়, আপুনি আপোনাৰ কথা ৰাখি কামটো কৰেনে?	হয়	নহয়
৭	আপোনাৰ মনৰ অৱস্থা প্রায়েই ভাল আৰু বেয়া হৈ থাকে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৮	আপুনি সাধাৰণতে যিকোনো কথা বা কাম চিন্তা নকৰাকৈ কৈ বা কৰি পেলায় নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৯	আপোনাৰ সদায় কোনো কাৰণ নোহোৱাকৈ মন বেয়া লাগি থাকে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
১০	সাহস দেখুৱাবলৈ আপুনি যিকোনো কাম কৰিব নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
১১	আপুনি যেতিয়া কোনো আকর্ষণীয় অচিনাকি ব্যক্তিৰ লগত কথা পাতিব বিচাৰে, তেতিয়া হঠাতে দ্বিধা বোধ হয় নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
১২	আপুনি কেতিয়াবা নিজৰ সংযম হেৰাই পেলাই আৰু খং উঠে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
১৩	আপুনি প্রায়েই উত্তেজিত হৈ মূহুর্ততে কাম কৰি পেলায় নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
১৪	আপুনি অনুচিত কথা বা কাম কৈ বা কৰি প্রায়েই চিন্তা কৰি থাকে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
১৫	আপুনি সাধাৰণতে মানুহক লগ ধৰাতকৈ পঢ়িবলৈ ভাল পায় নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
১৬	আপুনি সৰু সৰু কথাতে বা সহজতে দুখ/আঘাট অনুভৱ কৰে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
১৭	আপুনি বাহিৰত ফুৰিব গৈ বহুত ভাল পায় নেকি?	হয়	নহয়

১৮	আপোনাৰ মনলৈ প্ৰায়েই অইন মানুহক জনাব নিবিচৰা কিছুমান ভাব বা ধাৰণা আহে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
১৯	আপোনাৰ কেতিয়াবা বহুত স্ফুৰ্তি কৰিব আৰু কেতিয়াবা একো কৰিবৰ মন নাযায় নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
২০	আপুনি সংখ্যাত কম কিন্তু বিশেষ কেইজনমান বন্ধু থকাটোহে বেছি বিচাৰে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
২১	আপুনি দিবাস্বপ্ন বহুত দেখে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
২২	কোনো ব্যক্তিয়ে যেতিয়া চিঞৰি আপোনাক কিবা কয়, আপুনিও ওলোটাই চিঞৰি উত্তৰ দিয়ে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
২৩	দোষী ভাৱৰ অনুভৱে আপোনাক প্ৰায়েই সমস্যাত পেলায় নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
২৪	আপোনাৰ সকলো স্বভাৱ ভাল আৰু অইনে বিচৰা ধৰণৰ নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
২৫	স্ফুৰ্তি আৰু আনন্দৰ পার্টি এটাত আপুনি আত্মহাৰা হৈ স্ফুৰ্তি কৰিব পাৰে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
২৬	আপুনি নিজকে বহুত চিন্তান্বিত আৰু গভীৰ বুলি অনুভৱ কৰে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
২৭	অইন ব্যক্তিয়ে আপোনাক বহুত প্ৰাণৱন্ত বুলি ভাবে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
২৮	আপুনি কিবা দৰকাৰী বিশেষ কাম কৰি উঠাৰ পিছত প্ৰায়েই কামটো আৰু বেছি ভালকৈ কৰিব পাৰিলোহেঁতেন বুলি ভাবে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
২৯	আপুনি অইন মানুহৰ লগত থাকিলে বেছিভাগ সময় মনে মনে থাকে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৩০	আপুনি কেতিয়াবা পৰচৰ্চা কৰে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৩১	আপোনাৰ মূৰত ক্ৰিয়া কৰি থকা কিছুমান ভাব চিন্তাৰ ফলত আপুনি শুৱ নোৱাৰে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৩২	আপুনি যদি কিবা জানিব বিচাৰে সেই বিষয়টো কাৰোবাৰ লগত কথা পতাতকৈ কিতাপত বিচাৰিব নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৩৩	আপোনাৰ কেতিয়াবা বুকু ঢপঢপায় নেকি?	হয়	নহয়

৩৪	আপুনি খুব মনোযোগ দিয়া কাম কৰি ভাল পায় নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৩৫	আপুনি কম্পন বা জোকাৱণিৰ স্বীকাৰ হয় নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৩৬	আপুনি বয়-বস্তুৰ বিষয়ে সকলো কথা সদায় কাষ্টমচক অৱগত কৰে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৩৭	ইজনে সিজনৰ লগত ঠাট্টা কৰা/জোকোৱা খেল খেলা গোটৰ লগত থাকিবলৈ আপুনি বেয়া পায় নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৩৮	আপুনি এজন সহজে বিৰক্ত হোৱা ব্যক্তি নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৩৯	ততালিকে কৰিব লগা কামবোৰ কৰি আপুনি ভাল পায় নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৪০	আপুনি কিবা বেয়া ঘটনা হ'ব পাৰে বুলি ভাবি চিন্তা কৰি থাকে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৪১	আপোনাৰ কাম কাজ আৰু চলা-ফুৰাবোৰ ধীৰ-স্থিৰ নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৪২	আপুনি কেতিয়াবা কামত উপস্থিত হওঁতে বা কাৰোবাক লগ ধৰাৰ ক্ষেত্রত পলম কৰে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৪৩	আপুনি ৰাতি বহুত ভয় লগা সপোন দেখে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৪৪	আপুনি ইমানেই কথকী হয় নেকি যে অচিনাকি ব্যক্তিৰ লগতো কথা নপতাকৈ নাথাকে?	হয়	নহয়
৪৫	আপুনি শাৰীৰিক বিষ যন্ত্রণাত ভূগে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৪৬	আপোনাৰ প্রায়েই জনাশুনা বহুতকে নেদেখিলে মন বেয়া লাগে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৪৭	আপুনি নিজকে সহজে ভয় খোৱা ব্যক্তি বুলি ভাবে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৪৮	আপুনি যিমান মানুহক জানে তাৰ ভিতৰত কিছুমানক একেবাৰেই বেয়া পায় নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৪৯	আপুনি নিজকে যথেষ্ট আত্মবিশ্বাসী বুলি ভাবে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৫০	অইন লোকে যেতিয়া আপোনাৰ সৈতে বা আপোনাৰ কামত কিবা দোষ দেখা পায়, আপুনি মনত দুখ পায় নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৫১	জাকজমকীয়া হৈ চৈ পার্টিত আপুনি স্ফুর্তি কৰিবলৈ অসুবিধা পায় নেকি?	হয়	নহয়

৫২	হীনমন্যতাৰ অনুভৱে আপোনাক অসুবিধাত পেলায় নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৫৩	আপুনি নিৰস পার্টি এটাত প্ৰাণ আনি দিব পাৰে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৫৪	আপুনি একো নজনা বস্তুৰ বিষয়ে কেতিয়াবা কথা পাতে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৫৫	আপুনি আপোনাৰ স্বাস্থ্য সম্বন্ধে চিন্তা কৰে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৫৬	আপুনি অইনৰ লগত দুষ্টামি/ধেমালি কৰি ভাল পায় নেকি?	হয়	নহয়
৫৭	আপুনি নিদ্রাহীনতাত ভুগে নেকি?	হয়	নহয়

APPENDIX IX

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

(Pranami Barua, 2021)

Target Group: Girls in Conflict with Law
Method: Semi-Structured Interview
Duration: 45–60 minutes
Approach: Open-ended, non-judgmental, trauma-informed

Section I: Introduction and Rapport Building

1. Can you tell me a little about yourself?
2. Where are you from?
3. Can you describe your family?
4. Who are you closest to in your family? Why?

Probes:

- Family type (nuclear/joint/single parent/separated)
- Number of siblings
- Parental occupation and education
- Economic condition

Section II: Childhood and Family Environment

1. How would you describe your childhood?
2. What was the atmosphere like at home?
3. Were there frequent conflicts or disagreements in the family?
4. Did you feel safe and supported at home?

Probes:

- Domestic violence
- Parental separation
- Neglect
- Emotional bonding
- Supervision

Section III: Education and Daily Life before the Incident

1. Tell me about your school life.
2. Why did you continue or discontinue your education?
3. What did you usually do in your free time?
4. Who were your close friends?

Probes:

- Academic performance
- School dropout reasons
- Peer relationships
- Leisure activities

Section IV: Circumstances Leading to the Present Situation

1. Can you describe what happened that led to your coming here?
2. What were you thinking and feeling at that time?
3. Were there any pressures or influences that affected your decisions?
4. Looking back, what do you think contributed to the situation?

Probes:

- Peer pressure
- Economic hardship
- Family conflict
- Coercion or deception

- Substance use
- Emotional distress

Section V: Emotional and Psychological Experiences

1. How did you feel during that time?
2. What emotions do you experience now?
3. How do you usually deal with stress or problems?
4. Have you felt fear, anger, guilt, loneliness, or helplessness?

Probes:

- Coping strategies
- Trauma reactions
- Self-esteem
- Support systems

Section VII: Experience in Observation Home

1. How has your experience been in this Observation Home?
2. Do you feel safe here?
3. What kind of support or services have you received (education, counselling, training)?
4. How do you spend your time here?

Probes:

- Relationship with staff
- Peer relationships inside the Home
- Adjustment challenges
- Positive changes

Section VIII: Self-Perception and Identity

1. How do you see yourself now?
2. Has this experience changed you in any way?
3. What are your strengths?
4. What are your fears?

Section IX: Protective and Risk Factors

1. Who has supported you the most during this time?
2. What do you think could have prevented this situation?
3. What advice would you give to other girls facing similar problems?

APPENDIX X

PERMISSION LETTER FOR DATA COLLECTION

STATE CHILD PROTECTION SOCIETY, ASSAM
(A Government of Assam Organisation)
46, Survey Bus Stop, Beltola, Guwahati- 28
Ph:- 0361 (2229275/ 2265385), Fax:- 0361-2229275, Email:
scpstraining.iccassam1@gmail.com website: www.scpsassam.org

No. SCPS(G)217/2015/ 141 Dated Guwahati the 4th July, 2022

From: Shri Partha P. Majumdar, IAS,
Member Secretary,
State Child Protection Society, Assam

To: The Superintendent,
1. Observation Home for boys, Boko
2. Observation Home for Girls, Jalukbari
3. Observation Home for Girls, Nagaon
4. Observation Home for Boys, Jorhat
5. Observation Home for Boys, Silchar

Sub: Permission to visit Observation Homes for data Collection

Sir/ Madam,

With reference to the subject cited above, I would like to inform you that Ms Pranami Barua, a PhD scholar in the Department of Psychology, Mizoram University is doing a research and her topic is "Socio-cultural Factors and Personality of Children in Conflict with Law in Assam".

In this regard, she may be allowed to visit your observation home for data collection and request you to extend your support and guidance.

Member Secretary
State Child Protection Society, Assam

Memo No. SCPS(G)217/2015/141-A Dated Guwahati the 4th July, 2022
Copy to:
1. Ms Pranami Barua, for information with a request to abide by the rules and regulations of the Homes during the visit to the Observation Homes and submit a copy of the study report to the undersigned.

Member Secretary
State Child Protection Society, Assam

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BRIEF BIO-DATA OF THE CANDIDATE

1. **Name** : **PRANAMI BARUA**
2. **Father's Name** : Late. Pratul Chandra Barua
3. **Mother's Name** : Mridula Barua
4. **Address** : H.No.20, PNGB Road, Santipur Hill Side, Guwahati- 781009, Assam
5. **Email** : pranami.barua@gmail.com
6. **Education Details**

Degree	Institution	Year
Ph.D Course Work – Research and Publication Ethics	Mizoram University	2021
M.Phil in Medical & Social Psychology	Lokopriya Gopinath Bordoloi Regional Institute of Mental Health, Tezpur, Assam, Gauhati University	2014
M.Sc. Psychology (Clinical)	Christ College, Bangalore University	2009
B.A. (Hons.) Psychology	Zakir Husain College, University of Delhi	2007

RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS (Relevant to Ph.D. Work)

- Barua, P., & Zoengpari. (2025). *Girls in conflict with law: Review of vulnerabilities. International Journal of Psychology Research, 7*(2), 138–144.
- Barua, P., & Zoengpari. (2025). *Family type and parent's education: Relationship with boys in conflict with law in Assam. International Journal of Indian Psychology, 13*(4), 2905–2914.

RESEARCH PAPER PRESENTED (Relevant to Ph.D. Work)

- Presented paper titled "*Socio-Cultural Factors and Girls in Conflict with Law: Case Study***"** at One day conference of Clinical Psychology An Integrative Approach: New Trends in Clinical Psychology, organised by Department of Clinical Psychology (GMCH) in Collaboration with Department of Psychiatry (GMCH) and National Mental Health Program, NHM, Assam on 9th November, 2024.
- Presented paper titled *"Socio-Cultural Factors as Contributor towards Children in Conflict with Law"* at 3rd International Conference on Positive Psychology, organised by National Positive Psychology Association (NPPA), on 28th-19th March 2025. Receive best paper presentation award.

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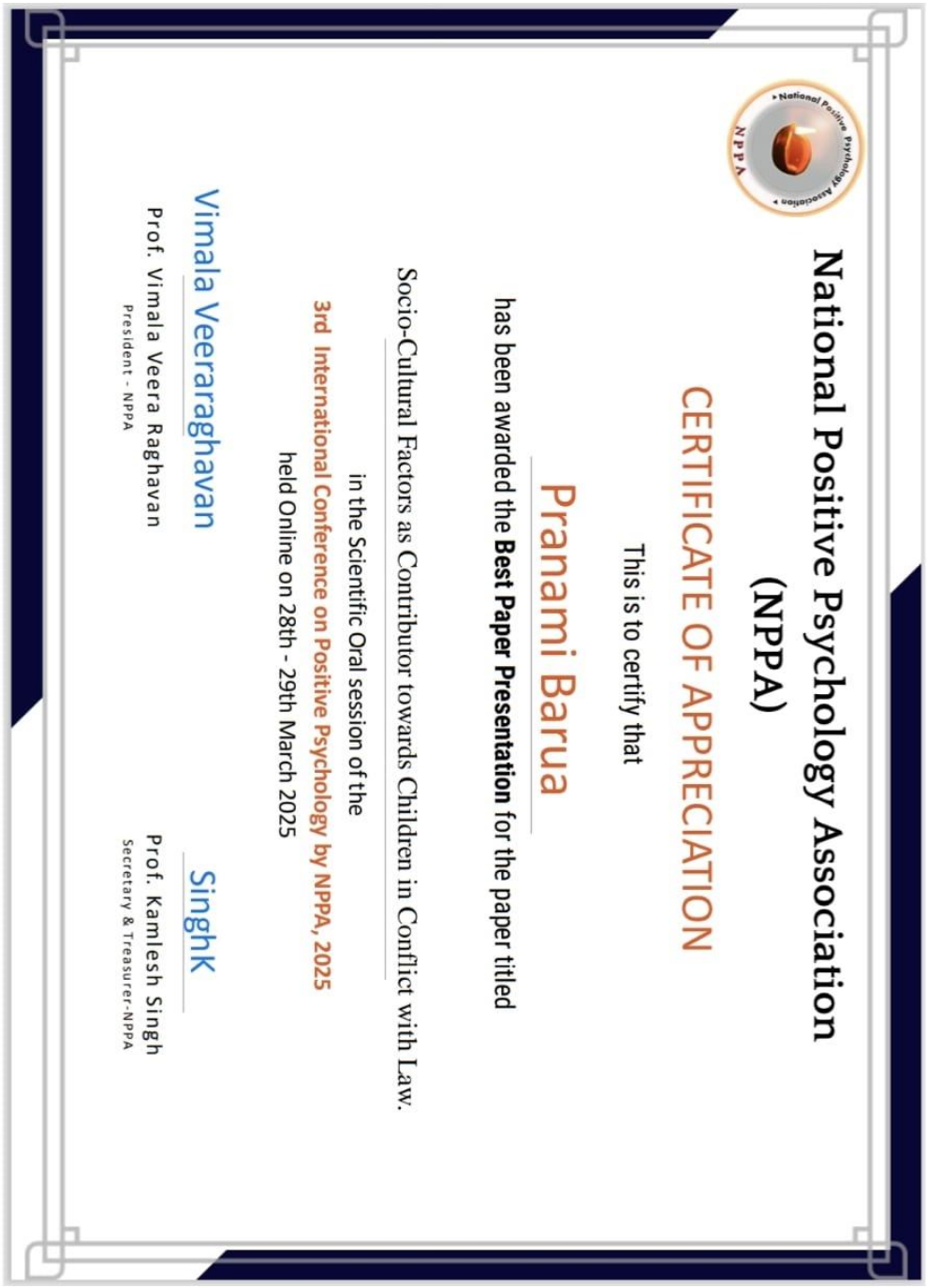

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in the Scientific Oral session of the

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held Online on 28th - 29th March 2025

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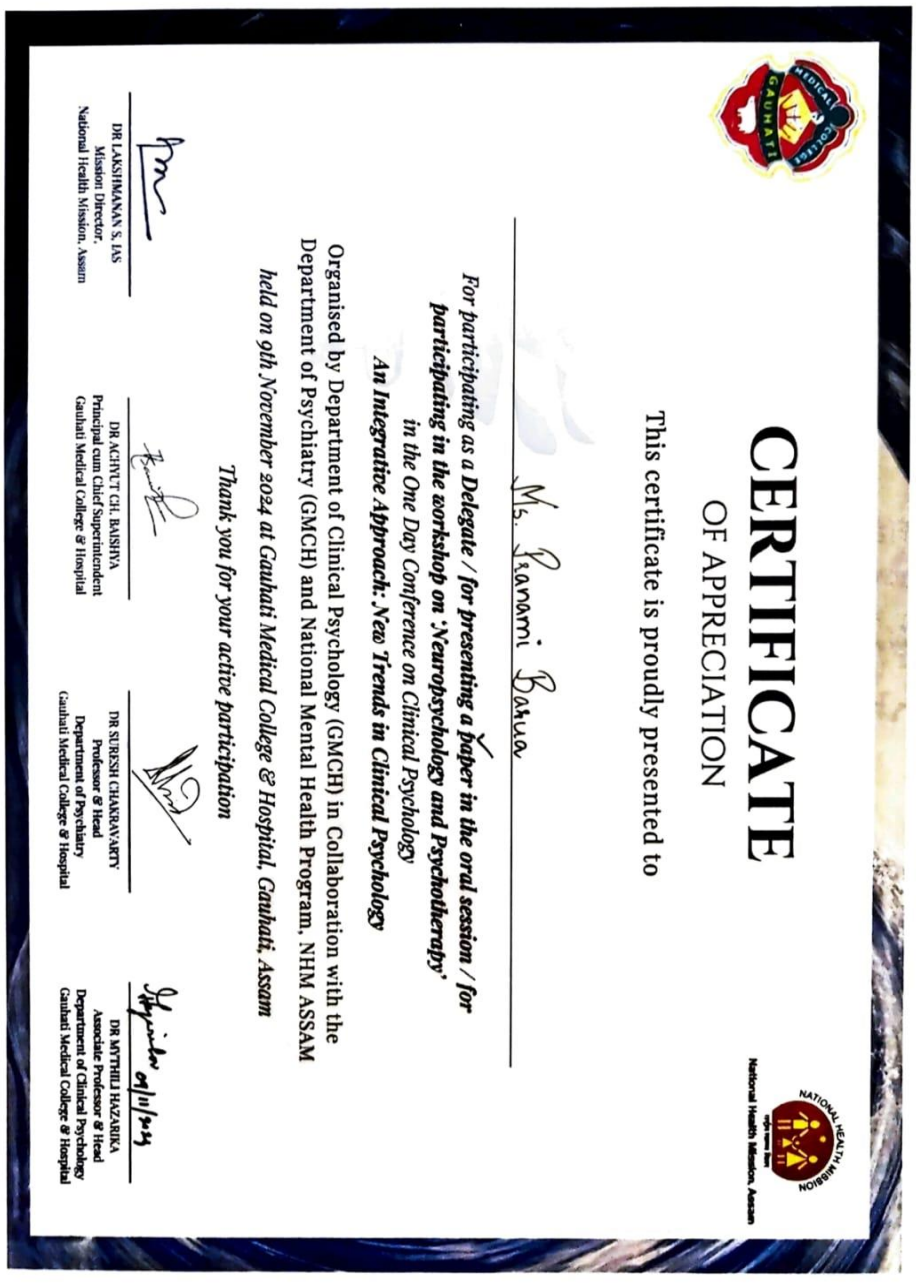

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Organised by Department of Clinical Psychology (GMCH) in Collaboration with the Department of Psychiatry (GMCH) and National Mental Health Program, NHM ASSAM *held on 9th November 2024 at Gauhati Medical College & Hospital, Gauhati, Assam*

Thank you for your active participation

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Mission Director,
National Health Mission, Assam

DR ACHYUT CH. BAISHYA
Principal cum Chief Superintendent
Gauhati Medical College & Hospital

DR SURESH CHAKRAVARTY
Professor & Head
Department of Psychiatry
Gauhati Medical College & Hospital

DR MYTHILI HAZARIKA
Associate Professor & Head
Department of Clinical Psychology
Gauhati Medical College & Hospital

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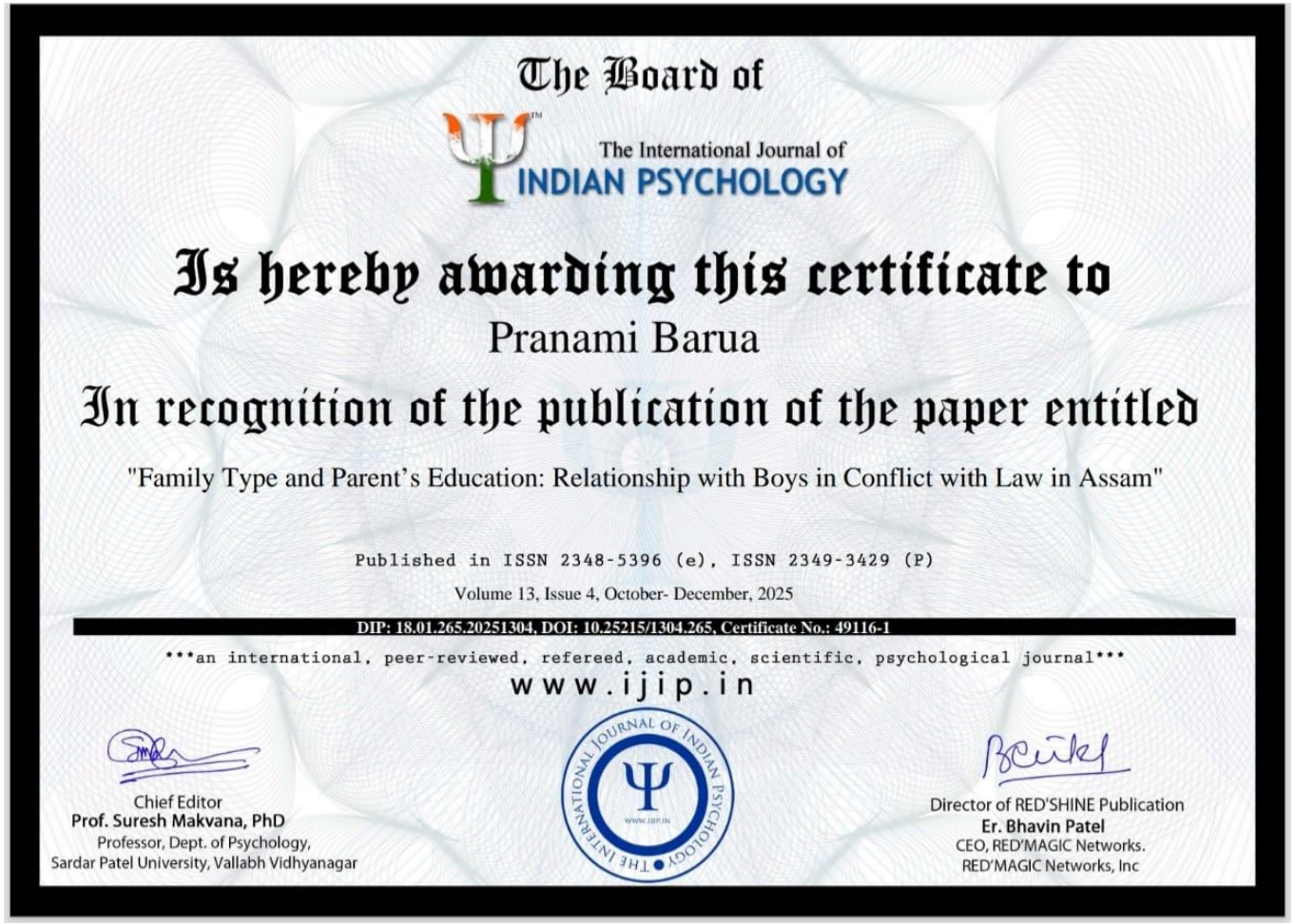

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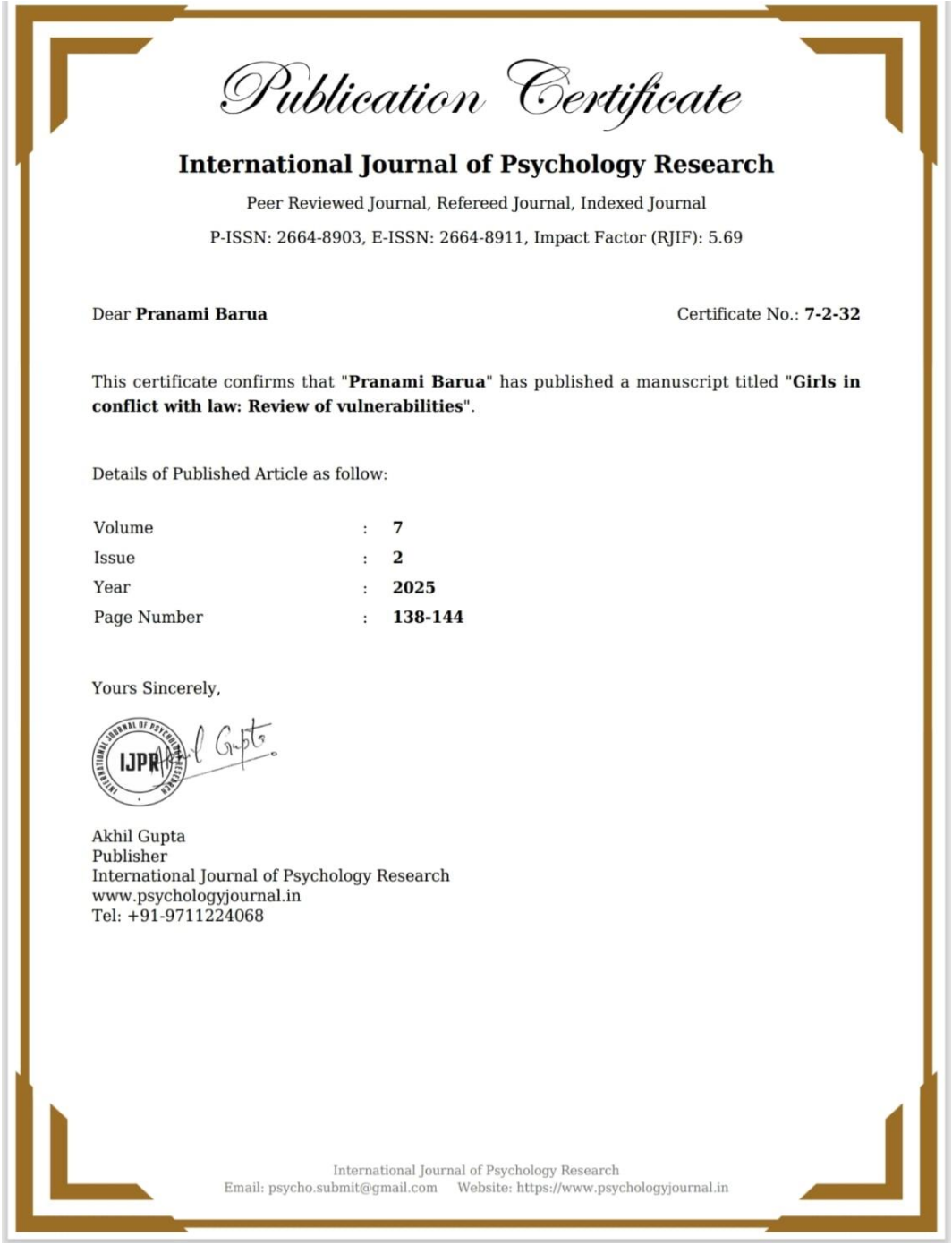

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Name of Candidate:	**PRANAMI BARUA**
Degree:	Doctor of Philosophy
Department:	Psychology
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Date of Admission:	11.11.2020
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MZU Registration Number:	2100115
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(Prof. ZOKAITLUANGI)

Head

Department of Psychology

SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS AND PERSONALITY OF CHILDREN IN CONFLICT WITH LAW IN ASSAM

AN ABSTRACT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

PRANAMI BARUA

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DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

MARCH, 2026

SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS AND PERSONALITY OF CHILDREN IN CONFLICT WITH LAW IN ASSAM

BY

PRANAMI BARUA

Department of Psychology

Supervisor

Prof. ZOENGPARI

Submitted

In partial fulfilment of the requirement of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology of Mizoram University, Aizawl

Juvenile delinquency represents a complex social and psychological phenomenon that emerges from the interaction of individual dispositions and environmental influences. In contemporary developmental and social psychology, increasing attention has been directed toward understanding how socio-cultural environments shape behavioural outcomes among adolescents. Children in Conflict with Law constitute a particularly vulnerable population whose life circumstances often include social marginalization, disrupted family structures, limited educational opportunities, and exposure to adverse community environments. Within the framework of the juvenile justice system in India, especially in socio-economically diverse regions such as Assam, understanding the socio-cultural and psychological determinants of delinquent behaviour is essential for designing effective prevention, rehabilitation, and reintegration strategies. The present study was undertaken to examine the socio-cultural context, personality characteristics, and socio-cultural adaptation patterns of adolescents involved in conflict with the law and to explore how these factors contribute to delinquent behaviour.

The study was guided by interdisciplinary perspectives drawn from developmental psychology, personality theory, and socio-cultural frameworks of behaviour. Classical developmental theorists emphasize that adolescence represents a critical stage in identity formation, emotional regulation, and social integration. During this stage, individuals are particularly sensitive to environmental influences such as family relationships, peer groups, cultural expectations, and institutional structures (Steinberg, 2014). When these environmental contexts are characterized by instability, deprivation, or inadequate support systems, adolescents may encounter difficulties in social adjustment, which can manifest as behavioural problems or involvement in deviant activities (Moffitt, 1993). Personality characteristics also play a significant role in shaping behavioural responses to environmental pressures. Traits such as extroversion and neuroticism influence emotional regulation, social interaction, and coping patterns, thereby affecting an individual's ability to adapt constructively to social demands (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975). In this context, the concept of socio-cultural adaptation becomes central, as it reflects the capacity of

individuals to effectively navigate the social, cultural, and interpersonal expectations of their environment (Ward & Kennedy, 1999).

The primary objectives of the study were: (i) to examine the socio-demographic and socio-cultural characteristics of children in conflict with law; (ii) to compare personality traits, particularly extroversion and neuroticism, between delinquent and non-delinquent adolescents; (iii) to assess levels of socio-cultural adaptation among the participants; and (iv) to determine the predictive role of personality traits in the likelihood of involvement in conflict with law. In addition to quantitative analysis, the study also incorporated qualitative insights in order to obtain a deeper understanding of the lived experiences, social contexts, and developmental challenges faced by adolescents in conflict with the law.

A comparative research design was employed for the study. The sample consisted of 200 adolescents aged between 14 and 18 years. The study group included 100 children in conflict with law residing in observation homes and juvenile justice institutions in Assam, while the control group consisted of 100 non-delinquent adolescents drawn from educational institutions in the same socio-cultural setting. A combination of purposive and convenience sampling techniques was used to select participants while ensuring comparability across age and demographic characteristics.

Data were collected using multiple instruments. A Socio-Demographic and Socio-Cultural Schedule was developed to gather information related to family structure, parental education, socio-economic status, educational background, and community environment. Personality traits were assessed using the Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI) developed by Eysenck and Eysenck (1964), which measures two major personality dimensions: extroversion and neuroticism. Extroversion reflects sociability, activity level, and positive emotional engagement with others, whereas neuroticism reflects emotional instability, anxiety, and vulnerability to stress. Socio-cultural adaptation was assessed using the Revised Socio-Cultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS-R) developed by Joseph Wilson (2013), which evaluates the extent to which individuals are able to adjust to social norms,

interpersonal expectations, and community life across multiple domains such as social interaction, communication, institutional functioning, and personal adjustment.

The study adopted primarily quantitative and explored qualitative approaches to data analysis. Quantitative data were analysed using statistical techniques including descriptive statistics, chi-square tests, Mann–Whitney U tests, correlation analysis, effect size estimation, and logistic regression analysis. Qualitative information obtained from participant interactions and contextual observations was used to complement the statistical findings and provide a richer understanding of the socio-cultural realities influencing the lives of adolescents in conflict with law.

The findings of the study revealed significant socio-cultural disparities between children in conflict with law and their non-delinquent counterparts. Adolescents in the study group were more likely to come from disrupted family environments characterized by parental separation, single-parent households, or inconsistent care giving structures. Lower parental education and socio-economic disadvantage were also more frequently observed among the study group. Educational discontinuity, school dropout, and irregular school attendance were prominent among delinquent adolescents, reflecting broader patterns of marginalization and reduced access to institutional support systems. These findings align with earlier research indicating that family instability, poverty, and lack of educational engagement are major predictors of juvenile delinquency (Farrington, 2005).

Significant differences were also observed in personality characteristics between the two groups. Statistical analysis using the Mann–Whitney U test indicated that adolescents in conflict with law demonstrated significantly lower levels of extroversion compared to the control group ($U = 52.00$, $p < .001$). This suggests that delinquent adolescents may exhibit reduced social engagement, lower levels of positive interpersonal interaction, and diminished participation in constructive social activities. In contrast, the CICL group showed significantly higher levels of neuroticism compared to the non-delinquent group ($U = 0.00$, $p < .001$). Elevated neuroticism reflects heightened emotional instability, anxiety, and

vulnerability to stress, which may contribute to maladaptive coping strategies and behavioural difficulties.

Correlation analysis further highlighted the relationship between personality traits and socio-cultural adaptation. Extroversion demonstrated a moderate positive relationship with socio-cultural adaptation ($r = 0.48$, $p < .01$), indicating that adolescents with higher levels of extroversion tend to exhibit better adjustment to social environments, interpersonal relationships, and institutional expectations. In contrast, neuroticism showed a negative relationship with socio-cultural adaptation ($r = -0.29$, $p < .01$), suggesting that emotionally unstable individuals experience greater difficulty adapting to social and cultural contexts.

Logistic regression analysis was conducted to examine the predictive role of personality traits in involvement in conflict with law. The results revealed that extroversion functioned as a protective factor, significantly reducing the likelihood of delinquent involvement ($\beta \approx -0.82$, $OR = 0.44$, $p < .001$). This indicates that higher extroversion is associated with lower probability of adolescents becoming involved in legal conflict. On the other hand, neuroticism significantly increased the likelihood of involvement in conflict with law ($OR \approx 2.86$, $p < .001$), highlighting the role of emotional instability as a risk factor in delinquent behaviour. The regression model explained a meaningful proportion of variance in legal involvement, suggesting that personality traits, although not the sole determinants, play a significant role in shaping behavioural outcomes among adolescents.

Qualitative observations further supported these findings by revealing the everyday challenges experienced by adolescents in conflict with the law. Many participants reported experiences of family conflict, financial hardship, lack of parental supervision, and exposure to negative peer influences. Some adolescents described feelings of social exclusion, frustration, and emotional distress associated with academic failure or limited opportunities for personal development. These narratives illustrate how socio-cultural disadvantages interact with psychological vulnerabilities to increase the risk of delinquent behaviour.

Overall, the study demonstrates that juvenile delinquency cannot be understood solely as an individual behavioural problem; rather, it emerges from the dynamic interaction between socio-cultural circumstances and psychological characteristics. Family disruption, poverty, peer influence, and educational marginalization create conditions that may hinder healthy socio-cultural adaptation among adolescents. When combined with personality traits such as high neuroticism and low extroversion, these environmental pressures may increase the likelihood of behavioural maladjustment and conflict with legal norms.

The findings of the study carry important implications for policy, practice, and intervention within the juvenile justice system. Preventive strategies should focus on strengthening family support systems, improving access to education, and promoting positive peer and community engagement among vulnerable adolescents. Psychological interventions aimed at enhancing emotional regulation, resilience, and social competence may help reduce the risk of delinquent behaviour. Furthermore, rehabilitation programs within juvenile justice institutions should incorporate personality development, life skills training, and community-based reintegration initiatives to support the long-term adjustment of children in conflict with law.

In conclusion, the present research contributes to the understanding of juvenile delinquency by highlighting the combined influence of socio-cultural vulnerabilities and personality characteristics on adolescent behaviour. By integrating quantitative and qualitative perspectives, the study provides a comprehensive account of the developmental and contextual factors that shape the experiences of children in conflict with law in Assam. The findings underscore the need for holistic, multi-level interventions that address both psychological development and socio-cultural environments in order to promote positive developmental trajectories among vulnerable youth.

Keywords: Children in Conflict with Law, Juvenile Delinquency, Personality Traits, Socio-Cultural Adaptation.

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