



Islamic Values, Religious Practices, and the Reintegration of Juvenile Offenders in Pakistan: A Qualitative Study from Dir Valley, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Submission: June 29, 2026 Revised: July 12, 2026 Accepted: July 28, 2026 Available Online: August 10, 2026 Keywords: <i>Juvenile offenders, reintegration, Islam, religiosity, recidivism, restorative justice, Pakistan.</i> Corresponding author: Hamid Alam* Email: hamid.alam@uom.edu.pk	This study aims to examine the effectiveness of Islamic values and practices in reintegration of juvenile offenders in Pakistan. The qualitative method was used for the collection of data. 25 participants including juvenile offenders, family members, religious scholars, community leaders and probation officers in Dir Valley Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were interviewed using semi-structured interview technique. The findings showed that Islam provides for the transformation of identities, a redefined sense of life goals, a reinforcement of informal social control and a limitation of recidivism through moral guidance and accountability. Through community-based religious practices, such as the activities of the mosque, tableegh (infiltrating) and restorative justice processes like jirga and sulh, barriers to empowerment like poverty, stigma and social exclusion are also being addressed. The study concludes that religion is an important tool in successful juvenile reintegration and also emphasizes the need for culturally and religiously oriented juvenile rehabilitation policies in Pakistan.

Introduction

Reintegration of juvenile offenders, unlike adult offenders, is a complex process as this happens during the formative developmental stage where identity formation, self-control and social relationships are in transition. Any unwanted or inappropriate circumstances at this stage can pose long term adverse psycho-social impacts that last till adulthood (Steinberg, Chung, & Little, 2004). Offender reintegration is usually discussed in terms of issues of unstable housing, unemployment and the stigma of a criminal record (Gill & Wilson, 2017; Hussain et al., 2025) however, juvenile reintegration needs to be considered in the context of the impact of these issues on the normal development of adolescents. It is a developmental perspective that brings an important difference between the juvenile reintegration and the reentry of adults (Steinberg et al., 2004; Hussain & Sajid, 2024).

Recent studies in Pakistan point to institutional deficiencies that impede juvenile reintegration. Lack of prison services and poor pre-release planning coupled with insufficient probation services means that many youths re-enter society without support

(Hussain & Khan, 2026; Hussain, Ibrahim, Said, Khan, & Daraz, 2025). These results reflect larger evidence that justice-involved youth are less equipped than non-offending youth to move into adulthood, both socially and at families (Steinberg et al., 2004).

Religion can be used to facilitate youth reintegration by giving the youth a prosocial identity, moral guidance, and social support. Research indicates that in supportive religious contexts, Muslim religiosity tends to be negatively correlated with deviant behavior (Mohammad & Banse, 2023; Sahin & Unlu, 2021). While Pakistan's juvenile justice system prioritizes rehabilitation within the Islamic framework (Dilawar, 2024), there is a clear disconnect between theory and practice regarding juveniles' reintegration experiences (Hussain & Khan, 2026; Hussain et al., 2025). This suggests that an examination of religion as a reintegration tool for justice-involved youth is necessary, particularly as a practical resource.

Religion has been shown to be a resource that can be used to support desistance and reintegration by helping to cope with incarceration and lessen the risk of reoffending (Hallett & Johnson, 2014; Hallett & McCoy, 2015). The literature points to two primary pathways: a psychological pathway which suggests that religious engagement can contribute to the process of identity transformation, which can lead to desistance from offending (Denney, 2018; Giordano et al., 2002, 2008; Maruna et al., 2006; Paternoster & Bushway, 2009); and a sociological pathway, which argues that attachment to prosocial social norms and institutions is strengthened through religious involvement (Giordano et al., 2008; Hirschi, 2002; Laub & Sampson, 2003). These insights taken together indicate that religion can support reintegration in two ways: through personal transformation and social integration.

The majority of the available studies on the relationship between reintegration and religion is in Western and Christian contexts. Very little attention has been given to the role of Islamic ideals in the rehabilitation and reintegration of juvenile offenders particularly in south Asian context (Fauziyah et al., 2024; Bartsch & Stelly, 2023; SpearIt, 2012). This study is intended to fill the knowledge gap by exploring perspectives in Pakistani context.

Literature Review

Religious institutions are considered one of the major socialization agents (Konkel, 2020). Offender reintegration is promoted by faith-based organisations which offer emotional, spiritual and practical support to offenders and reinforce prosocial social bonds (Jang, 2018). Lower juvenile delinquency, reduced criminal self-identification, and decreased recidivism among returning offenders, have been shown to be related to religious affiliation and participation (DeCamp & Smith, 2019; Warner & Konkel, 2019; Khan, 2020).

Religious involvement fosters conformity to prosocial norms and reduces risky behaviors through values and support from communities (Nguyen, 2020). Religiosity has been shown to play a role in positive behaviour change, a sense of purpose and to facilitate desistance from offending in both incarcerated and released offenders (Stansfield et al., 2017). Stewart & Rapp (2017) and Mowen et al. (2018) found that adolescent involvement in religious activities has also been shown to have a positive association with positive outcomes and supportive networks, employment and mentoring.

Religious social capital links people to families, communities, and institutions that help to strengthen informal social control and prosocial behaviour (Satinsky et al., 2020). Strong religious networks foster civic involvement, social cohesion, and pro-social values that help to curb delinquent and aggressive behaviors (Saba & Khalid, 2021; Clark et al., 2020). These mechanisms are used to reinforce social ties and create positive social contexts for successful reintegration (Cnaan & Heist, 2018; Ntim & Manu, 2019).

An increasing number of empirical studies have found that an inverse relationship exists between religiosity and delinquency. Miller & Vuolo (2018) and Batool et al. (2021) found that adolescents and young offenders who were religious exhibited lower rates of offending and substance use. Likewise, a higher engagement with religious and spiritual programming is linked to reduced reconviction and better reintegration outcomes (Jang, 2018; Stansfield et al., 2019). In addition, several other studies have found that religious involvement fosters social support, community belonging, and prosocial values among community members and juvenile offenders (Johnson, 2018; Sells et al., 2020).

While much of the literature on religion and crime focuses on Christian settings, there is growing research that indicates the Islamic context and institutions could be a factor in the rehabilitation of offenders in unique ways. Fauziyah et al. (2024) found that community-based Islamic mentoring and religious instruction can foster religious commitment and the reform of offender identity among former juvenile offenders. Religiosity is often cited as a coping and reintegration resource for Muslim prisoners (Bartsch & Stelly, 2023) and mosque-based support and Islamic principles of rehabilitation and restoration are identified as protective factors in successful reintegration (Russell Webster, 2023; SpearIt, 2012).

In conclusion, the literature reviewed identifies the significance of the role of religion in offender reintegration, social bonding, and behavioural change in the context of identity, informal social control and religious social capital. But the evidence is still limited to the west and largely Christian contexts. Thus, in Pakistan, the role of Islamic values, family structures and community based religious practices in assisting juvenile offenders in reintegration is far from the under-researched field, and there is a significant gap in literature.

Significance of the Study

In the Pakistani context, where religion plays a vital role in social life, there is a lack of in-depth study of the role of Islamic values and religious practices in reintegration of juvenile offenders in Pakistan. In doing so, the study draws upon concepts of identity transformation and informal social control, while situating them in an Islamic and South Asian context, to understand the interplay of religion, family and community as a facilitator or an obstacle to reintegration. It is one of the first context-based studies on juvenile offender reintegration in Pakistan, which sheds light on the impact of Pakistani religious beliefs on the process of reintegration, as well as structural issues like poverty, stigma, and the lack of aftercare services. The results will be helpful in theory development and in the design of culturally and religiously tailored rehabilitation and reintegration programs for youth offenders by correctional institutions, community-based organizations, and policy makers.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

An integrated theoretical framework of Cognitive Transformation Theory, Social Bond Theory, Religious Social Capital Theory, and Restorative Justice Theory guides this study. The Cognitive Transformation Theory unveils the ways Islamic principles contribute to identity transformation and cessation of delinquent behavior by internalizing self-reflection, repentance and prosocial self (Giordano et al., 2002). The Social Bond Theory explains the importance of attachment to religious groups and community-based religious organizations in strengthening conformity to societal norms and prevention of antisocial behavior among juvenile offenders (Hirschi, 2002). Moreover, Religious Social Capital Theory guides how religious networks add in psycho-emotional and socio-economic support required for successful reintegration (Cnaan & Heist, 2018). Lastly, the Restorative Justice Theory explains how Islamic teachings and practices provide effective and pragmatic platform to alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, satisfying the victim and offender, their families and the broader community, leading to successful reintegration of juvenile offenders (Braithwaite, 2002; Sodik, 2024). This integrated theoretical model explains how Islamic guidelines assist juvenile offenders' successful reintegration in Pakistan.

Aim of the study

To explore the role of Islamic values and religious practices in the reintegration of juvenile offenders in Pakistan.

Research Question

How Islamic values and religious practices in community reintegrate Juvenile offenders in Pakistan?

Methodology

Qualitative research method was used to examine the role of religious engagement in the process of identity transformation, informal social control and reducing recidivism amongst the juvenile offenders in the Dir Valley of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Pakistan. The data were obtained by conducting semi-structured interviews with a purposive sample of 25 participants, comprising juvenile offenders, their families, community leaders, religious scholars, and probation officers who are engaged in reintegration activities. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the collected data where themes were guided by the patterns in relation to the significance of Islamic practices in addressing psycho-social and economic factors hindering the reintegration of juvenile offenders, suggesting a culturally relevant rehabilitation framework guided by Islamic practices.

Findings

Identity Transformation

The perspectives of the understudy juvenile offenders, family members, religious scholars and probation officers explored that Islamic teaching and practices worked as an effective source of identity transformation among the juveniles. Islamic practices helped juveniles adopt Islamic moral values of accountability, forgiveness and responsibility that positively influenced their personalities and concluded with productive reintegration outcomes.

"Thanks to my Imam Masjid and my father's friend who taught me understanding things from the lens of Islam and being a Muslim. This helped me think of myself, my acts-the acts that now I perceive as sin and for which I will be accountable in the court of God where nothing and no one can rescue. The only thing that can rescue all of us is our positive (AMAL) acts". – Juvenile Offender

The importance of religious instruction in developing self-awareness and hope is highlighted in this quotation. The interactions with the Quran were an opportunity for this offender to reflect on what they had done and consider a new identity for himself. It emphasizes how religion can serve as a force for change that can enable people to move beyond the stigma attached to their past and to live in a more positive and productive manner.

"There was a change in my son's attitude when he was regular in his prayers, and attended religious functions, becoming responsible and respectful." – Parent of a Juvenile Offender

One parent's view highlights the noticeable differences in behaviour brought about by religious involvement. Prayer and regular engagement in religious activities create discipline, respect and accountability, not only for the juvenile offender but also for the family dynamics. The quote captures the influence of religious practices on promoting positive attitudes and relationships.

"Islam teaches us to seek forgiveness and to forgive ourselves, which is very powerful for young offenders who have not been able to let go from their past." – Religious Scholar

A religious scholar's view on forgiveness' emphasizes the psychological and spiritual advantages of forgiveness. Islamic teachings inspire criminals to seek forgiveness from Allah and from themselves, which allows them to transcend the feeling of guilt and to have a feeling of tranquility within. This is important in helping offenders to be able to move on and develop a better future for themselves after committing the offence.

"Religious engagement can help offenders regain their humanity and offer them a way to find redemption, and to reconnect with their communities that are often the source of the problem". - Probation Officer

Religious involvement in the life of juvenile offenders is a multi-dimensional phenomenon which is taking care of their moral, psychological and social needs. The teachings of Islam give them the direction to redefine themselves, transform their behavior and get rid of crime. Families, religious leaders and probation officers are key to reinforcing this change and provide a whole environment for it to take place. Religious involvement can help to build discipline, purpose, and hope for the future making it easier for individuals to grow in their personal lives and easier for them to be reintegrated into the community, thereby decreasing recidivism and helping to create a more unified community.

Reconceptualizing Success and Purpose of life

Islamic teachings not only offered guidelines for the behavior of the youth through prayer, repentance, and following religious duties, but also a greater sense of purpose that would shift the way juveniles lived, away from delinquency and toward a more socially acceptable way of life. The juvenile offenders' experiences of Islamic teachings had an impact on their understanding of success and their future aspirations. Many of the participants described that once they perceived success as having material possessions, being on the right side of peers, or the pursuit of fast money. But hearing the guidance of religion prompted them to consider their lives according to the concepts of responsibility to Allah, moral responsibility and preparation for the afterlife.

*"Previously I used to believe that success was with money, luxury and my friends' respect, but now I know that the true success is earning halal money, being respected by my parents and living according to Islam, if Allah is pleased with me, then I am successful".*____ Juvenile Offender

*"I got to listening to Islamic teachings and started offering prayers regularly and I realized that life is temporary and that I only need to do good works, be patient and become a better Muslim and a better person for success".*_____ Juvenile Offender

For many juveniles, the idea of "life is a test" and "afterlife is the end" allowed them to cultivate a perspective toward the future that helped deter their engagement in delinquent behavior. As opposed to pursuing immediate rewards, participants have become more aware of the importance of moral behavior, family obligations and community integration as measures of success.

During reintegration, Islamic values also played a pivotal role in changing the perceptions of juveniles towards life goals, according to probation officers. The officers indicated that religious education fostered reflections, accountability, and building prosocial identities which conflicted with offending conduct.

"Many youngsters arrive at us with the expectation that success is to be gained by power, money or impressing their peers and over time they begin to grasp that true success is to be achieved as a responsible member of society and fulfill their responsibilities to their family, community and their religion"._____ Probation Officer

"Islam teaches these adolescents a moral compass that helps them recalibrate their priorities. They begin to consider their behavior and what it will bring to them and their families, and they are more aware and more willing to refrain from certain actions for fear of disgrace"._____ Probation Officer

Family members of juvenile offenders also indicated that there were considerable changes in attitudes, aspirations and definitions of success among the juveniles after exposure to greater Islamic teachings.

"Previously, my son wanted to make quick money and he was spending most of his time with his friends who influenced him to pick bad habits; now, he is talking about finishing his education and then helping the family as well as earning an honest living, he said success is not only about earning money but about becoming a good human being and a good Muslim"._____ Father of the Juvenile

"He has turned his way completely, he is no longer judged by what people own, nor by the amount of money they have. He says that a man who is successful is someone who avoids evil, helps others, and earns Allah's blessings"._____ Juvenile Offender's Sister

In sum, these narratives portray the role of Islamic teachings in the reconstruction of personal identities and life goals of juvenile offenders. Islamic teachings were, in this way, an important source of meaning, allowing the adolescents to imagine future selves beyond immediate socio-economic pressures and to imagine future selves based on hope, responsibility and prosocial engagement.

Informal Social Control Through Community-Based Religious Practices

Religious practices, which are embedded in community, can serve as informal social control, especially in situations where formal forms of social control are absent or poorly resourced. Congregational prayers, religious events, Qur'an study circles, community learning sessions, etc., offer juvenile offenders contact with positive role models, and a sense of accountability to their community. Such practices help instill discipline, respect, and social responsibility, encouraging deviants to engage in positive actions. Participants of the study revealed:

"Social responsibility is a core principle of Islam, and the community here promotes it as a way to help youth offenders get back on track." – Probation Officer

One significant aspect of community involvement in religion in Pakistan is the involvement of Tableeghi Jamaat, a grassroots movement of Islamic revival which puts great emphasis on individual spiritual growth and moral reform and religious outreach. A number of probation officers, religious leaders and family members pointed out the role of Tableegh in rehabbing and re-integrating juvenile offenders. Young offenders were asked to attend *Seh Roza* (three-day missions), *Chilla* (forty-day missions) and occasionally attend Four-Month Tableeghi tours, in all of which they devoted themselves to learning and the dissemination of the teachings of Islam. These activities cut the offenders from harmful environments and groups that foster delinquent behavior. Participants' daily lives were very structured and focused during these periods with a concentration on prayer, religious learning, self-discipline, communal life, and service to others. These experiences helped them to reflect morally, to exercise self-control and to foster prosocial identities based on religious values.

"Many juveniles who went on a three day or forty day mission with the Tableeghi returned with a completely different attitude, they became more disciplined, more respectful and more focused on building a better future for themselves." – Probation Officer

"Tableegh is to draw people closer to Allah and instill good character into them and we have seen how young offenders get humility, patience and responsibility through participating in these gatherings". – Religious Leader

"It changed my thinking when I went on Chilla, I didn't hang out with the people that used to get me into trouble, I was learning about Islam, praying and meeting the people who were on a mission to make me better." – Juvenile Offender

"My son's behaviour and attitude improved after 40 days of Tableegh, he started to help people in the society and become more respectful to family members." – Family Member

"The four months Tableeghi mission is a place where the young ones learn discipline, cooperation, punctuality and service, all of which are necessary for successful reintegration into society"._____ Religious Leader

Community based religious practices are a strong mechanism of informal social control which offer guidance, support and accountability to juvenile offenders in the process of successful reintegration. In the Pakistani context, mosques, gatherings and in particular the activities of Tableeghi Jamaat serve as potentially meaningful avenues for rehabilitation as young offenders are groomed in environments where they can learn to be disciplined, spiritually developed and pro-social.

Reduction of Recidivism Through Religious Morality and Guidance

The ability to provide a structured and moral approach to recidivism reduction is a strong point of religious morality, especially Islamic morality, among juvenile offenders. Islamic values, such as the prohibition of harming others and the emphasis on lawful conduct (haram and halal), guide offenders to reflect on their actions and the consequences of those actions. Juvenile offenders learn to take responsibility and accountability for their actions, with an increased understanding of right and wrong through the internalisation of these moral teachings. Such a code of conduct not only helps to discourage criminals from engaging in illegal activity, but also encourages positive and lawful behavior.

“In the mosque, I learned that stealing and hurting people is haram, so I realised how much harm I had caused, and how not to cause it in the future.” – Juvenile Offender

This quote focuses on the offender's own awareness, based on Islamic principles, that such crimes as stealing and hurting others are immoral as well as illegal. Islam has a clear moral guideline with the concept of haram (forbidden) which makes it easier for the offenders to understand the ethics of their actions.

*“Religion gave me a life's direction; now I don't feel the need to return to my old nature because I know Allah is looking”.*____Juvenile Offender

The former offender's statement highlights the importance of religious belief in giving meaning and accountability. A person feels a sense of accountability to Allah (God) for previous sinful acts, and he is motivated to refrain from engaging in the same sinful acts. This strengthened intuition of personal responsibility to God provides another dynamic to self-control, which leads to behavioral modification.

“It is observed that a stronger sense of responsibility and accountability develop within juvenile offenders who adopt religious learning. Resultantly, they perceive their delinquent acts beyond violation of state law and feel guilty for committing sin due to violating religious teachings”. – Probation Officer

“Majority of the juvenile probationers reveal that remaining in religious groups, we knew the difference between halal and haram adding to our understanding that certain forms of drug addictions are Haram. Consequently, we quit such behaviors as we do not want to face the curse of Allah.-----Religion offers effective supervision even in the absence of family members, community members and probation officer as the juveniles consider themselves accountable to Allah who supervise all creatures”. – Probation Officer

“Juveniles are thoroughly found reporting that Islamic teachings helped them stopping relationships with delinquent peers as they are quite aware of the consequences of wrong doings both in this and eternal world”. – Probation Officer

Religious morality was a consistent factor that probationers across the board reported as an important variable contributing to decreasing recidivism among juvenile offenders. The participants found that Islamic education gives juveniles a clear moral standards and values; the concept of halal and haram, being accountable to Allah, repentance and social responsibility. The teachings inculcate self-discipline and develop an intrinsic sense of self control, which is not on the basis of external supervision. As the juveniles mature in the understanding of the repercussions of their actions both religiously and socially, they become more capable of resisting negative influences and making legal choices. Therefore religious involvement can not only bring about behavioural change, it also helps to foster a commitment to ethical behaviour, which can play a significant part in successful rehabilitation and help prevent re-offending.

Overcoming Structural Barriers Through Religious Community Support

Keeping in view the gaps in the formal justice system and the structural barriers like poor socio-economic conditions, lack of opportunities and stigma within Pakistani society juvenile offenders face maximum challenges in the process of reintegration. Collected data reveal that the restorative justice mechanism guided by Islamic teachings, comprised of community elders, religious

leaders and community members earned significant results in the reintegration of juvenile offenders. Adopting Islamic ideals of *Sulh* [reconciliation], *Hoqooq ul Ibad* [human rights], mercy, forgiveness and collective responsibility, the recovery of harm is ensured through long lasting rehabilitation instead of applying punitive approach.

Participants reported cases where juveniles were not able to compensate victims because of extreme poverty. In these cases, religious leaders called upon the community to respond according to Islamic principles of Zakat and charitable giving, and they were able to facilitate this process while helping the offender to meet their obligations without forcing already impoverished families into even greater economic difficulties.

“A young boy had stolen money from the shopkeeper and was arrested in the process, and during the Jirga, the Imam shared with them that the money was the right the victim had to be compensated for and that the money of the boy was the right he had to be compensated for, and that there could be no better way to use Zakat than by doing so, and the boy's family was very poor and they could not afford to pay, and so he approached a respected elder and told him that the money should be paid on his behalf, and the compensation was accepted by the young boy and the Jirga was settled peacefully.” – Religious Leader

This story shows how Islamic principles were put into practice for restorative justice. Instead of the lack of money to ensure accountability, community resources were mobilized to make up for the victim and provide an opportunity for the offender's rehabilitation.

“In this case, the Imam was the head of the Jirga; he reminded them that justice should not cause additional suffering to a poor family, the victim got his money, the wrongdoer admitted his fault and the community helped settle the matter without causing further suffering.” – Community Elder

The story captures the justice and compassion that are a sign of local religious dispute-resolution mechanisms. Community members understood the rights of the victim and the need of the offender for support and reintegration.

Religious leaders were not only a part of financial settlements, but they also contributed significantly to mitigating stigma and restoring relationships between offenders, victims and the community. They practiced mediation and counseling to promote forgiveness, accountability and social acceptance.

“The Imam talked to me after the settlement and told me that it wasn't enough, but I had to prove my change by my actions; this advice stuck with me and encouraged me not to associate with bad company”. – Juvenile Offender

Important to note, however, that a significant outcome of these Islamic guided restorative processes was the restoration of trust between offenders and their communities. Participants commented that juveniles reintegrated into social networks and re-engaged in their community life more easily when they reached a resolution through religiously facilitated mediation.

“After the Jirga, people stopped seeing him as a criminal, because he admitted his mistake and asked for forgiveness.” – Family Member

The results show that religiously based restorative justice process is a major source of socio-economic and socio-psychosocial support for juvenile delinquents in Pakistani society. In the event that the offenders are not able to compensate victims because of their poverty, community members can use Zakat and charitable contribution to meet restorative justice requirements, ensuring the rights of victims and promoting offender rehabilitation. At the same time, religious mediation can also minimize stigma, repair social relations and offer moral advice in behavioral change. These practices are rooted in indigenous practices of restorative justice which embody Islamic values, with the ultimate objective of not only conflict resolution but also of successful reintegration of juvenile offenders into mainstream society as responsible and productive members.

Discussion

The current study found that Islamic values fostered identity transformation in juvenile delinquents through the processes of tawbah, prayer, Qur'anic engagement, and religious mentoring. Overall, these findings are consistent with the cognitive transformation theory of desistance, which argues for changes in self-identity and receptivity to change that precede behavioral change (Giordano et al., 2002). Religious practices were used as “hooks for change” and created positive self-concepts and alternative future orientations. Similar to the past studies, Islamic rehabilitation programs have proven to be beneficial for young offenders in reconstructing their identity and reintegrating them into society (Fauziyah et al., 2024). Forgiveness and self-reform

is also significant as there is research indicating that religion offers meaning, hope and psychological resources that facilitate the process of desistance from crime (Jang, 2018; Maruna et al., 2006).

An important theme was the new definition of "success" in regard to juvenile offenders. The participants shifted from material, peer-based and secular notions of success to religious piety, legal means of livelihood, family duties, and plans for the afterlife. The finding is consistent with desistance research that posits that a change in behavior is related to the emergence of a prosocial future self (Giordano et al., 2008; Paternoster & Bushway, 2009). Unlike a substantial amount of desistance work in the West, which focuses on adult roles, such as gaining stable employment, or marrying, as catalysts for identity change and desistance (Laub et al., 1998; Sampson & Laub, 2003; Paternoster & Bushway, 2009), the present study will focus on the importance of religious beliefs and spiritual aspirations in shaping future oriented thinking among juvenile offenders in Pakistan. Islamic teachings therefore gave a moral compass, enabling the participants to redefine the purpose of life and personal goals.

The findings are consistent with the social control theory that argues that high level of social bonds lower the risk of offending (Hirschi, 2002). Engaging in congregational prayers, religious ceremonies and Tableeghi Jamaat activities helped juveniles become part of prosocial networks, positive role models and organised routines, which further reinforced their commitment to conventional values and social integration. These results are consistent with age-graded social control theory, which emphasizes the role of social bonds and community attachment in desistance (Laub & Sampson, 2003). Tableeghi Jamaat extends the scope of rehabilitation research on faiths further. In line with the literature which shows that religious communities have a positive impact on social support and recidivism reduction (Jang, 2018; Mowen et al., 2018), respondents stated that being involved in Seh Roza, Chilla and Four-Month Tableeghi missions had a positive effect on their disengagement from delinquent peers and increased their self-discipline, responsibility and community-oriented values.

The results indicated that Islamic Morality is an important mechanism in reducing recidivism. The principles like halal and haram, accountability to Allah, fear of Allah's judgement influenced decision making of juvenile offenders. In line with the prior studies, increased religiosity correlated with decreased delinquency and increased self-regulation (Batoool et al., 2021; Miller & Vuolo, 2018). Religious teachings were used to stimulate participants to look at their actions from a moral and spiritual perspective, not just a legal one.

Religion was also identified as a source of internalized social control by probation officers. This finding is consistent with previous research showing that religious involvement can improve self-control, moral responsibility, and prosocial behavior among justice-involved people (Jang, 2018; Stansfield et al., 2019). The participants did not depend on external supervision but rather they developed a sense of accountability based on the fact that Allah knows everything.

A unique contribution of this study is the identification of religiously guided restorative justice practices within Pakhtun society. The participation of Imams, Jirga members and community elders in the resolution of conflicts demonstrates the indigenous processes of conflict resolution based on Islamic principles of Reconciliation (Sulh), Forgiveness and Restoration of Rights (Huqooq-ul-Ibad). This result aligns with the scholarly views that assert that Islamic legal traditions include restorative aspects focusing on compensation, reconciliation, and community harmony (Sodik, 2024).

Islamic social welfare principles also underlie the application of Zakat to compensate victims for impoverished juvenile offenders, which further illustrates how the principles of Islamic social welfare can help to facilitate reintegration. Instead of formal services, the results show that religious resources in the community play a critical role in poverty alleviation, stigma reduction and social exclusion, as seen in many Western reintegration models that emphasise the role of formal services. These findings have been echoed by studies focusing on the importance of mosque-based support, religious mentorship, and Islamic charitable work for the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders (Bartsch & Stelly, 2023; SpearIt, 2012).

Recommendations

Pakistani community is inclined towards religion Islam and any framework guided by Islamic teachings can easily be internalized and practiced. Findings of this study indicate that Islamic practices and religious institution played effective role in the rehabilitation and reintegration of juvenile offenders. Accordingly, this study recommends:

1. The professionals involved in the rehabilitation and reintegration of juvenile offenders must be equipped with required Islamic knowledge and trained in Islamic practices that help in effective rehabilitation of juveniles.

2. Joining Tableeghi Jumat for an appropriate duration, as suggested by the probation officer should be considered a mandatory condition for the juvenile probationer.
3. Restorative justice practices guided by Islamic principles should be promoted to restore the harm, enhance accountability and reconciliation.
4. Coordination between probation officers and religious institutions must be developed and directed towards reintegration through utilization of spiritual therapies and socio-economic support through Zakat and other Islamic practices.

Directions for Future Research

1. Studies are required to explore the role of Islamic teachings and practices among female juvenile offenders.
2. There is a need for a longitudinal study to evaluate the long-term effects of religious involvement on desistance and re-offending.
3. Further quantitative research might be conducted to examine the relationship of these constructs: Religiosity and Social Support with regard to reintegration outcomes.
4. Comparative studies are needed to examine the effectiveness of Islamic teachings versus secular frameworks in the reintegration of juvenile offenders.

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