

ORIGINAL

The Role of Family Functions in Preventing Juvenile Delinquency in Moncongloe Lappara Village, Moncongloe District, Maros Regency

El papel de las funciones familiares en la prevención de la delincuencia juvenil en la aldea de Moncongloe Lappara, distrito de Moncongloe, regencia de Maros

Haeruddin¹ , Andi Haris¹, Rahmat Muhammad¹ 

¹Universidad Hasanuddin, Facultad de Ciencias Sociales y Políticas, Makassar, Indonesia.

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Corresponding author: Haeruddin 

ABSTRACT

Introduction: family as a social unit smallest own role important in formation character and behavior teenager through parenting, communication, and planting value, so that can prevent involvement they in mischief teenager as happened in the village Snout Lappara.

Method: this study used a qualitative approach by conducting in-depth interviews with key informants.

Results: results of this study indicate that effective and open communication, instilling social values and norms, and social supervision and control are the main functions of the family to prevent children from engaging in deviant behavior in Moncongloe Village. Lappara which means that the prevention of juvenile delinquency in Mungkloe Village Lappara is very dependent on how the family carries out these functions consistently.

Conclusions: role and function family in prevention mischief teenager realized through communication effective, planting mark and norm social, as well as supervision integrated proactive in a way consistent for form internal control and guard stability behavior teenager.

Keywords: Family; Juvenile Delinquency; Family Function.

RESUMEN

Introducción: la familia, como unidad social, desempeña un papel fundamental en la formación del carácter y el comportamiento de los adolescentes a través de la crianza, la comunicación y la formación de valores, lo que les permite prevenir conductas desviadas, como ocurrió en la aldea de Snout, Lappara.

Método: este estudio utilizó un enfoque cualitativo mediante entrevistas en profundidad con informantes clave.

Resultados: los resultados de este estudio indican que la comunicación efectiva y abierta, la inculcación de valores y normas sociales, y la supervisión y el control social son las principales funciones de la familia para prevenir la participación de los niños en conductas desviadas en la aldea de Moncongloe, Lappara. Esto significa que la prevención de la delincuencia juvenil en la aldea de Mungkloe, Lappara, depende en gran medida de la coherencia familiar en el desempeño de estas funciones.

Conclusiones: el rol y la función de la familia en la prevención de conductas desviadas en adolescentes se materializan mediante una comunicación efectiva, la formación de valores y normas sociales, así como una supervisión integrada, proactiva y coherente, para formar un control interno y proteger la estabilidad del comportamiento adolescente.

Palabras clave: Familia; Delincuencia Juvenil; Función Familiar.

INTRODUCTION

A family is a bond or unit bound by blood ties, consisting of a husband, wife, and children. The family is the smallest social unit that plays a vital role in shaping national character. According to Iver et al., a family is a social group characterized by shared residence, economic cooperation, and reproduction.⁽¹⁾ As the smallest element in society's social system, the analysis of family structures and functions is inseparable from sociological studies. In this context, sociology provides a framework to understand how families are formed, how they function, and how social phenomena such as individual relationships, social structures, processes, and changes influence family dynamics. Soemanto defines the family within sociology as a field that studies the formation of families, their reciprocal relationships, and the interaction among social actions, behaviors, group aspects, and the products of social life.⁽²⁾

Family dynamics play a major role in shaping adolescent behavior patterns, as the family is the first environment in which adolescents learn values, norms, and behaviors. Families that provide positive models through open communication and responsive parenting tend to foster adolescents who are emotionally stable and capable of forming healthy social relationships. Responsive parenting also enables parents to better understand their children's emotional needs, allowing them to offer appropriate support when facing developmental challenges.⁽³⁾

Juvenile delinquency refers to deviant actions or crimes committed by young people, representing a form of social pathology caused by neglect, lack of supervision, or social disorganization. The term juvenile originates from the Latin "juvenilis," meaning young or relating to youth, while delinquent comes from "deliquere," meaning neglected, which later evolved into the meaning of engaging in a-social, criminal, or rule-breaking behavior.⁽⁴⁾ Cases of juvenile delinquency in Moncongloe Village Lappara reflect a crisis of values among the younger generation and present a significant socio-moral challenge.

However, previous literature tends to focus more on general factors influencing juvenile delinquency—such as peer groups, socioeconomic conditions, or community environment—while offering limited in-depth analysis of how the specific roles, patterns, and effectiveness of family dynamics operate within local sociocultural contexts such as Moncongloe Village Lappara. This gap highlights the need to understand how the family, as the closest social unit, directly contributes to preventing adolescents' involvement in deviant behavior within this particular community setting. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the contribution and effectiveness of the family's role in preventing juvenile delinquency in Moncongloe Village Lappara.

METHOD

Research Location and Duration

The study was conducted in Mangempang Hamlet and Ballapati Hamlet, Moncongloe Village Lappara, Maros Regency, South Sulawesi. Data collection took place over two months, from May to June 2025.

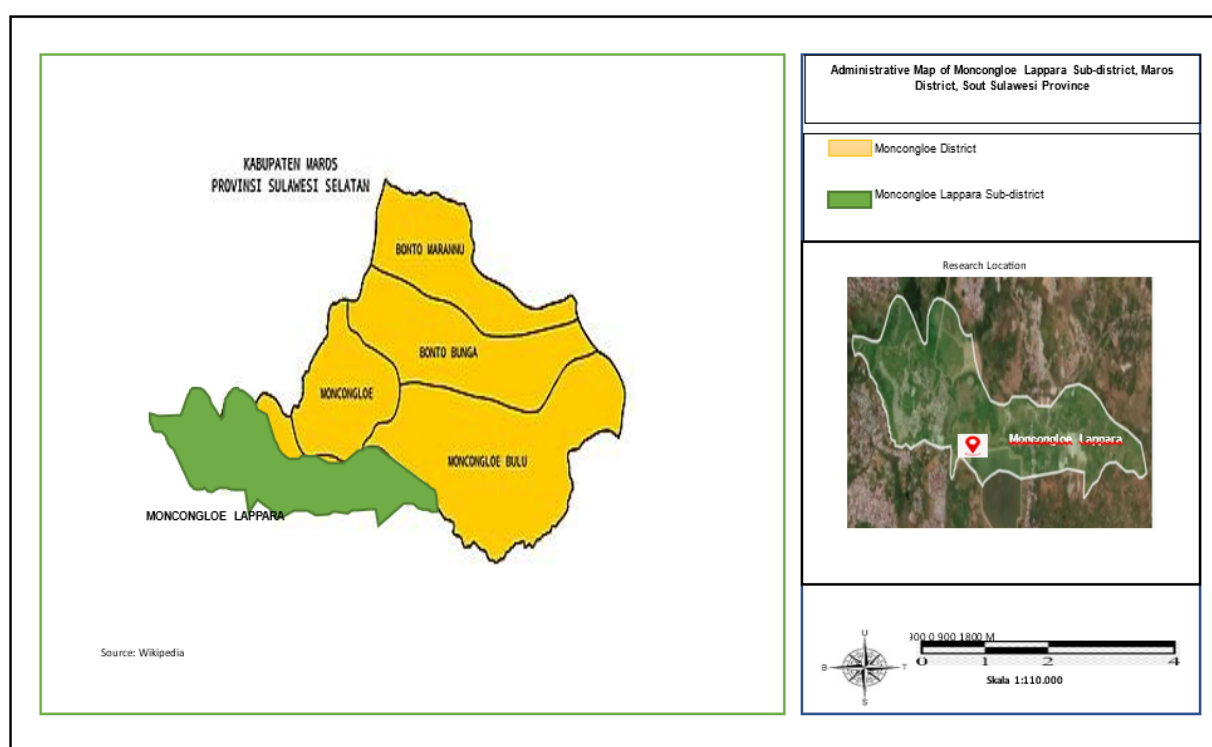


Figure 1. Village Area Map Snout

Study Design

This study employed a descriptive qualitative case study design to obtain an in-depth understanding of how family functions contribute to preventing juvenile delinquency in Moncongloe Lappara. The case study approach was chosen because it allows exploration of complex social phenomena within their natural context.

Population and Samples

A total of eight (n=8) informants were selected using purposive sampling, which is appropriate for qualitative studies requiring participants who possess specific knowledge, experiences, and relevance to the research topic. The sample size of eight was deemed sufficient because qualitative case studies prioritize depth over breadth, and data saturation was achieved when no new information emerged during interviews.

- Inclusion criteria included:
- Individuals aged ≥ 30 years;
- Residents of Moncongloe Lappara for at least five years;
- Having direct experience or insight regarding family dynamics and juvenile behavior in the community;
- Representing diverse social roles such as village officials, parents, community leaders, and workers.

Table 1. Research Informants

Informant Initials	Gender	Age (Years)	Background	Role/Relevance to the Study
SJ	M	46	Village Government	Provides insight into policy and village-level family intervention efforts
SR	M	52	Civil Servant	Represents experienced community member observing youth behavior
RM	M	48	Farmer	Provides grassroots perspective on local family dynamics
HS	M	39	Self-employed	Observes social interactions among youths in daily community activities
LM	M	52	Self-employed	Shares experience regarding community norms influencing youth
IT	F	32	Housewife	Provides maternal perspective on parenting and household dynamics
MY	F	35	Housewife	Shares insight into challenges of supervising adolescents
MR	F	42	Housewife	Represents parents dealing with youth behavioral issues

Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected using participant observation, document analysis, and semi-structured in-depth interviews.

- Interview Format: Semi-structured, allowing flexibility while ensuring key topics were explored.
- Duration: Each interview lasted 45-70 minutes.
- Location: Interviews were conducted in participants' homes or village offices, depending on participant preference.
- Recording: With informed consent, all interviews were audio-recorded and later transcribed verbatim.

Guiding Questions Included:

- How does your family communicate and resolve conflicts?
- What forms of supervision do parents provide to adolescents?
- What changes in adolescent behavior have you observed in the community?
- How do you view the role of the family in preventing juvenile delinquency?
- What challenges do families face in guiding adolescents?

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using Thematic Analysis, following Braun and Clarke's systematic procedures, complemented by Creswell's principles.⁽⁵⁾ The analysis involved:

- Transcription: Converting audio recordings into written transcripts.
- Familiarization: Reading transcripts repeatedly to understand the depth of participants' narratives.
- Generating Initial Codes: Identifying significant statements, concepts, and patterns.
- Searching for Themes: Grouping related codes into broader themes reflecting family functioning and juvenile behavior.
- Reviewing Themes: Refining emerging themes by checking coherence with coded data and the entire dataset.

- Defining and Naming Themes: Creating clear definitions for each theme to ensure analytical rigor.
- Producing Findings: Integrating themes into a coherent narrative aligned with the research objectives.

RESULT

Effective Family Communication

Effective communication emerged as a central protective factor within families. Parents who maintained frequent, open, and emotionally supportive communication reduced adolescents' likelihood of turning to risky peer groups, substance abuse, or delinquency as coping mechanisms. Communication served as a channel for emotional expression, problem-solving, and monitoring.

RQ1 – Father, 39 years old: *“I always tell my children not to keep their problems to themselves. If something bothers them, they must talk to me, because hiding problems often pushes children to escape through drinking or hanging out with the wrong friends.”*

RQ2 – Father, 52 years old: *“During meals, I always ask my children how their day was. If they have any problems outside, they should talk to me or their mother. Without communication, children feel unnoticed and seek attention elsewhere.”*

RQ3 – Mother, 42 years old: *“I maintain communication with my children wherever they are. If they go out, they must tell me where and with whom. I call them to ensure they are honest and not hiding anything.”*

Across participants, communication functioned not merely as information exchange but as emotional regulation, parental presence, and preventive guidance. Families with strong communication patterns demonstrated higher awareness of children's psychological needs and social exposures. This served as an internal buffer against deviant influences.

Instillation of Social Values and Norms

Parents actively instilled fundamental values—honesty, respect, responsibility, religious commitment—as internal moral guides for adolescents. This value transmission, reinforced through modeling and consistent reminders, strengthened internal control and reduced susceptibility to peer pressure, substance use, and other forms of delinquency.

RQ4 – Father, 48 years old: *“We always teach our children to be honest and to respect others. I also remind them not to get involved with drugs or alcohol because many teenagers today are caught in those problems.”*

RQ5 – Mother, 35 years old: *“I remind my children to pray and behave well. I tell them never to drink alcohol or try drugs because it destroys their future.”*

Value internalization was not abstract: parents used direct instruction, religious guidance, and lived examples to anchor adolescents' moral compass. Participants believed that strong internal moral regulation protected youth from *anomie*, or normlessness, which could otherwise increase the risk of delinquency.

Family Social Supervision and Control

Supervision and social control functioned as frontline mechanisms to prevent adolescents from associating with deviant peers or engaging in high-risk activities. Parents consistently monitored their children's friendships, whereabouts, daily routines, and social activities, including seeking community support for collective supervision.

RQ6 – Father, 52 years old: *“I supervise my children closely—who they meet, where they go, and even their habits at home. I worry because many teenagers here are arrested for drugs, so I ask neighbors to alert me if something is wrong.”*

RQ7 – Father/Village Head, 46 years old: *“I must know who my children are with. If they come home late, I call or video call them. As parents and as a community, we must watch over all children so they don't fall into drugs, alcohol, or fights.”*

Supervision extended beyond the nuclear family into community-based collective monitoring. This reflects a culturally embedded system of shared responsibility, enhancing the effectiveness of family-level control.

Table 2. Summary of Themes, Characteristics, and Supporting Quotes

Theme	Key Characteristics	Representative Quotes
Effective Family Communication	Emotional openness, regular conversations, parental responsiveness	<i>“Children must not keep problems to themselves; communication prevents them from seeking negative escapes.”</i>
Instillation of Social Values & Norms	Moral teaching, religious guidance, parental modeling	<i>“We always teach honesty, respect, and warn them about drugs and alcohol.”</i>
Family Supervision & Control	Social Monitoring peers, activities, whereabouts; collective community oversight	<i>“I supervise who they meet and where they go; neighbors also help watch over them.”</i>

DISCUSSION

This study examined how family functions operate as protective structures against juvenile delinquency in Moncongloe Lappara Village. The discussion elaborates on how the findings relate to broader sociological theory, confirm or challenge existing research, and highlight unique contextual contributions. Three major themes—communication, value internalization, and supervision—together illustrate how families in this rural community enact multi-layered social control to safeguard adolescents from deviant behavior.

Effective Communication as Relational Bonding and Preventive Mechanism

The study's findings reaffirm extensive literature that identifies parent-child communication as a determinant of adolescent behavioral outcomes. Research consistently shows that open, empathetic, and routine communication reduces the likelihood of adolescents engaging in substance use, violence, and risky social environments. The present findings align with these studies, indicating that communication enhances emotional security, nurtures trust, and provides adolescents with constructive avenues to express frustrations rather than resorting to deviant coping mechanisms.

However, the communication practices in Moncongloe Lappara exhibit distinctive features not widely addressed in previous literature. Beyond ordinary conversations, communication is embedded into daily rituals such as shared meals, constant check-ins via phone calls, and ongoing mutual monitoring between parents and children. This indicates a blended mode of affective communication and surveillance-based communication, where emotional closeness coexists with parental vigilance.

From a sociological standpoint, this reflects what Giddens describes as “relational reflexivity,” where individuals constantly reinterpret social expectations and negotiate family roles in dynamic contexts. Communication becomes not only expressive but also regulatory—fulfilling both expressive (emotional support) and instrumental (behavioral monitoring) functions. This dual nature of communication emphasizes that in rural communities experiencing rise in drug and alcohol cases among youth, parents adopt communication strategies that are more intensive and preventive compared to urban families.

Value and Norm Internalization as Cultural Anchoring and Moral Safeguard

Consistent with Durkheim's foundational argument that moral education is central to social cohesion, this study reinforces the view that families are primary agents of moral regulation. The internalization of religious values, moral principles, and social norms among adolescents in Moncongloe Lappara is not only a pedagogical practice but also a cultural tradition embedded in daily life. What distinguishes the present findings from earlier studies is the strong integration of religious teachings with moral discipline, suggesting that religious norms function as cultural anchors guiding adolescent decision-making. Prior research often separates moral instruction from religious practice, but in this context, the two are deeply intertwined. This reflects a local adaptation of Parsons' theory of pattern maintenance, where cultural values are preserved and transmitted through family institutions to maintain societal stability.

Furthermore, value internalization appears to be reinforced through a form of anticipatory socialization, where parents frequently reference real cases of drug abuse, theft, and violence—often witnessed through social media or within the local community—as cautionary frames for shaping youth behavior. This demonstrates that families in Moncongloe Lappara engage in context-responsive moral teaching, adjusting traditional values to contemporary risks in the digital age. Such integration of traditional norms with modern risk-awareness illustrates the dynamic nature of rural sociocultural systems. It suggests that value transmission in this community is proactive, continuous, and adaptive—expanding the theoretical understanding of how rural families negotiate modernization and technological change while preserving moral stability.

Family Supervision and Social Control as a Multi-Level Safeguard

The findings support social control theory, particularly Hirschi's assertion that strong bonds to the family protect adolescents from delinquency. In Moncongloe Lappara, supervision and social control extend far beyond routine parental oversight. They form a multi-layered system, involving:

- Direct supervision: monitoring friendships, whereabouts, and daily routines
- Technological supervision: using phone calls and video calls to track children
- Community-based supervision: neighbors and village leaders participating in collective oversight
- Cultural reinforcement: communal norms encouraging parents to correct not only their own children but others as well

This collective model of social control is rarely highlighted in Western-centric studies, which typically emphasize individual parental responsibility. Instead, the findings align with Indonesian rural sociocultural frameworks emphasizing communal solidarity (*gotong royong*), shared responsibility, and informal sanctions within the community. This collectively enforced supervision suggests that informal social control still plays

a significant role in rural communities, complementing formal mechanisms such as law enforcement. It also demonstrates how traditional community structures can help mitigate modern social problems like substance abuse and juvenile violence. This finding enriches sociological theory by illustrating how informal social control persists and adapts in contemporary village environments. Moreover, the involvement of the village head as both a parent and community leader illustrates a blurring of familial and institutional authority. This dual role reinforces community-level preventive structures and emphasizes the moral responsibility of local leaders in shaping youth behavior.

Implications

The findings of this study provide important implications for strengthening the sociological understanding of family functions within rural communities. The results demonstrate that universal family mechanisms—communication, value internalization, and supervision—are contextually adapted to local cultural structures, reinforcing theories of functionalism and social control. These findings highlight the dynamic interaction between traditional norms, religious values, and modern challenges such as digital influences, offering deeper insight into how rural families negotiate continuity and change while maintaining social stability.

From a practical standpoint, the study underscores the need to enhance family capacities in preventive communication, value-based education, and consistent supervision. Parents may benefit from targeted programs that develop effective communication strategies, integrate local cultural and religious values into daily routines, and adopt healthy forms of technological monitoring. Strengthening these capacities can reduce the vulnerability of adolescents to deviant peer influences, substance use, and other forms of delinquent behavior, particularly in communities where social transformations are occurring rapidly.

At the policy level, the results suggest the importance of building collaborative frameworks between families, community leaders, schools, and local government institutions. Community-based oversight programs, youth mentorship activities, and early detection systems for at-risk adolescents can be formalized to sustain existing informal practices. Involving village heads, religious leaders, and community elders in structured preventive efforts can enhance social cohesion and widen the protective network supporting youth development.

Limitations

This study has several limitations that may affect the extent to which the findings can be generalized. The research is based on a small sample size ($n = 8$) from a single rural village, which limits its transferability to broader populations with different cultural, economic, or social dynamics. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data may introduce social desirability bias, particularly concerning sensitive issues such as alcohol and drug use, where respondents may provide answers aligned with socially acceptable norms.

Another limitation relates to the scope of perspectives included in the study. Since the data were gathered exclusively from parents and adult community members, the voices and lived experiences of adolescents are absent. This creates a potential interpretive gap, as parental perceptions may not fully represent the complexities of youth social environments. Furthermore, the role of digital media influences and cross-community factors were not explored in depth, which may affect a holistic understanding of juvenile behavior dynamics.

Future Research

Future research should include adolescents as primary participants to capture their perspectives on communication, supervision, and value internalization within the family context. Including adolescent voices will provide a more balanced and nuanced understanding of the mechanisms influencing delinquent behavior, allowing for a more comprehensive model of youth development in rural communities. Expanding the study to urban or semi-urban areas would also allow comparative analysis and illuminate how family functions differ across diverse sociocultural environments.

Further studies could adopt mixed-method or quantitative approaches to test the relationships identified here, particularly the influence of communication patterns, social supervision, and value internalization on delinquency prevalence. Researchers may also investigate the role of digital technology—both as a risk factor and a supervisory tool—in shaping parent-child dynamics. Finally, exploring the effectiveness of community-based interventions such as religious programs, youth organizations, and neighborhood watch systems can provide actionable insights for designing broader social policies aimed at preventing juvenile delinquency.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on in-depth interviews conducted in Moncongloe Lappara Village, Moncongloe District, Maros Regency, researchers concluded that the role and function of the family is a crucial instrument in preventing juvenile delinquency, implemented through three main mechanisms: effective communication, instilling social values and norms, and social supervision and control. Informants consistently identified open communication as the

foundation for building supportive relationships, allowing adolescents to share problems rather than seeking escape in deviant behavior. Furthermore, families consciously carry out their primary socialization function by instilling moral values and behavioral norms, supported by parental role models and religious education, as an effort to build internal control in adolescents. This method is reinforced by proactive social supervision and control, where parents monitor children's activities and, in some cases, involve the community in collective supervision. Thus, the effectiveness of juvenile delinquency prevention depends heavily on how families consistently integrate these three functions, making the family a vital unit responsible for social reproduction and the stability of individual behavior.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

AUTHORSHIP CONTRIBUTION

Conceptualization: Haeruddin, Andi Haris, Rahmat Muhammad.

Data curation: Haeruddin.

Formal analysis: Haeruddin, Andi Haris, Rahmat Muhammad.

Research: Haeruddin.

Methodology: Haeruddin, Andi Haris, Rahmat Muhammad.

Project management: Haeruddin, Andi Haris, Rahmat Muhammad.

Resources: Haeruddin.

Supervision: Andi Haris, Rahmat Muhammad.

Validation: Andi Haris, Rahmat Muhammad.

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Drafting - original draft: Haeruddin.

Writing - proofreading and editing: Haeruddin.