

Residential neighborhood gang violence.

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Abstract:

Our study dealt with the phenomenon of neighborhood gang violence, Which is considered a very Dangerous phenomenon that affected-all societies to a varying degree leaving great effects on the population and society as a whole of fear, terror and panic attacks, These gangs were formed from the category of young men and adolescents, and their activities represented in the behavior of violence and assault theft ,drug promotion, sexual assaults, kidnappings, and threats to the population and we will try through our study, to identify the concept of neighborhood gangs, the causes and factors for the spread of the phenomenon of residential neighborhood gangs, and what are the mechanisms for limiting and preventing neighborhood gangs?

Keywords: *violence, neighborhood gangs, housing.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

The phenomenon of neighborhood gangs has witnessed a widespread and dangerous proliferation in recent times, leaving severe impacts on the residents of these neighborhoods, such as fear, horror, and panic attacks. This is because the existence of these gangs is accompanied by deviant behaviors such as addiction, drug trafficking, theft, and repeated attacks on individuals. The members of these gangs are teenagers and young adults who target the

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residents in their own homes, causing them great distress. This is a very concerning issue for both individuals and society as a whole. Not a day goes by without hearing about victims of these gangs, whether through murder, kidnapping, or assault. Many social and psychological studies have addressed the violence of neighborhood gangs through research and analysis in order to find solutions to this dangerous phenomenon. One of the most important studies in this field is William Klein's study (1992), which is considered a pivotal reference in the study of neighborhood gangs. Through his specific definition of neighborhood gangs as follows: a group of young people who see themselves as separate from society, and whose members engage in a series of numerous and diverse studies on neighborhood gangs, Klein provided us with a delinquent action that elicit negative reactions from law enforcement agencies and institutions. He also presented a clear understanding of how neighborhood gangs are formed and how to confront them. Additionally, Levin and Seigel's study (1997) in the field of criminology introduced the first experimental national program to combat neighborhood gangs in the early 1980s, specifically targeting the gangs in Chicago, United States. And Weisel (2002) adds that despite the existence of street gangs since the past century, attention to their presence increased even more in the 1990s due to the widespread prevalence of crimes committed by these gangs. This confirms the rapid changes they have undergone, including their well-organized structure, speed of execution, and planning, which is the most dangerous aspect.

Through our study we attempt to answer the following questions:

- What is the concept of violence in neighborhood gangs?
- What are the causes and contributing factors to their formation?
- what are the most important methods for limiting and preventing neighborhood gang activities?

1.2. The Importance of the Study:

Our study holds significant importance as it addresses a threatening phenomenon in residential neighborhoods, considering the following: The widespread prevalence of the neighborhood gang phenomenon, the significant and menacing threat posed by neighborhood gangs to the security of their residents, Neighborhood gangs are formed and comprised primarily

of young people and teenagers, who constitute an important demographic in society.

1.3 Study Objectives:

- To define the violence of neighborhood gangs and their characteristics.
- To identify the causes and factors contributing to the spread of neighborhood gangs.
- To understand the mechanisms of prevention and limitation of the spread of neighborhood gangs.

2. Terminology of the Study:

- **Violence:** The World Health Organization defines violence as the intentional use of physical (material) force or power, whether actual or threatened, against oneself, another person, a group, or a community, resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, impaired development, or deprivation.
- **Neighborhood gangs:** The Ministry of Public Security in Quebec defines neighborhood gangs as organized groups of teenagers or young people who prefer to use collective intimidation and violence to end criminal activities in order to gain power, recognition, or control over profitable activities.
- **Neighborhood gangs:** Any group, regardless of its name, consisting of two or more individuals who belong to one or more residential neighborhoods and engage in one or several actions with the purpose of creating an atmosphere of insecurity in residential areas or any other spatial area, or with the intention to impose control on them by morally or physically assaulting others, endangering their lives, freedom, or security, or damaging their properties, while carrying or using visible or concealed weapons. (Official Gazette of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, 05, 2020)
- **Housing:** The concept of housing is not limited to a space formed by walls and a roof where humans seek comfort, food, and rest. It goes beyond that to fulfill psychological, social, and cultural needs, which complement the physical needs, creating an integrated composition that connects the human body with humanity, unifying them. (Rania Mohamed Ali Taha, 2010,p32)

2- Forms of violence practiced by neighborhood gangs:

Violence has various forms and diverse meanings, which include:

- **Physical Violence:** This is the type of violence expressed through physical activity in which any part of one's body is used to intentionally cause pain or harm to others. It includes actions such as hitting, kicking, biting, spitting, pulling hair, and the use of sharp objects (Al-Bastaki, 2020, p10). Mattawaa provides a broader concept of physical violence, stating that it involves the use of muscular force alone or with the aid of other means such as swords, knives, stones, or spears, with the aim of harming others through physical injury. Physical violence refers to causing wounds, fractures, burns, etc., resulting from kicking or slapping. (Mattawaa, 2000, p21)
- **Verbal Violence:** As the name suggests, this type of violence is expressed through words. The means of violence here is speech. Similar to physical violence, the purpose of verbal violence is to infringe upon the rights of others through insulting and offensive language. Verbal violence often precedes actual or physical violence (Al-Bastaki, 2020,p10).
- **Psychological violence:** It is any behavior or act that causes harm and damage to others by doing something or refraining from doing it, such as harsh treatment, constant monitoring, commanding and prohibiting, intimidation, deprivation and harassment, ignoring, silence, and spying. Its aim is to exert control.
- **Violence against property:** According to El-Sharbini, it is defined as the destruction and damage of others' property, such as breaking, burning, or stealing these properties and taking possession of them (such as theft and extortion).
- **Sexual violence:** Loeber, Micklewright, and Lefschetz in 1995 defined it as adults' sexual control over sexually immature and unaware individuals, with the use of force, aiming to satisfy the perpetrator's sexual requirements and desires (Boufledja, 2008, p71).

3- Gang violence:

Gangs are associated with violent behavior, and studies indicate that when boys join a gang, they become more prone to violence and often engage

in illegal activities. Gangs seem to thrive in environments where social systems collapse and alternative forms of participatory cultural behavior are missing. Factors that encourage boys to join gangs include:

- Lack of guidance, supervision, and support from parents and other family members.
- Harsh physical punishments or being victimized at home.
- Associating with peers who have already joined a gang. (Global Report on Violence, 37)

Neighborhood gangs engage in various forms of violence, including verbal and psychological aggression, which is manifested through behaviors such as threats, fights, vandalism, and resistance. Additionally, all gangs utilize bladed weapons in their criminal activities, with some even progressing to possessing firearms and Molotov cocktails. (Zaatar, 2022, p101)

In addition to violent behavior, there is another deviant behavior present, which is drug addiction. The majority of gangs are involved in drug trafficking and distribution, as well as drug abuse and consumption. Furthermore, some gangs possess transportation vehicles that facilitate their criminal acts. It is also noteworthy that certain gangs include female members, either involved in drug trafficking or luring victims for assault, as well as concealing and covering up evidence related to criminal activities. (Lazazqa, 52, 2021)

- Causes and factors of the spread of neighborhood gangs:

There are several factors and causes behind the escalation of violence within residential neighborhood gangs, including:

- I. Family factors:** The family serves as the primary institution responsible for the socialization process of the new generation. It transfers the essence of culture to the child during their growth, including habits, traditions, artistic skills, and moral values. All of these elements are essential in assisting the new member to fulfill their social role and contribute to And it is the foundation of the existence of society, the source of ethics, and the primary support for regulating behavior and the framework in which individuals receive their first lessons in social life. The family has been influenced by the changes occurring in society, the economy, and all areas worldwide, and these

changes have been reflected in various aspects.(Abu Asaad & Al-Hathathna, 2011, p 39)

The emotional atmosphere of the family is considered one of the most influential factors in shaping the individual's personality and developing their psychological and mental abilities at all stages of their life, especially during adolescence, which is a sensitive period in a teenager's life. It serves as a starting point towards the future to demonstrate their distinctiveness, creativity, and excellence. (Aissoui, 2005, p07)

Furthermore, as Kaffafi (1998) adds, the turbulent emotional atmosphere or disrupted family climate hinders the growth of individuals collectively and does not allow freedom of self-expression or attention to cultural, scientific, recreational, and religious aspects.

And among the characteristics of a dysfunctional and turbulent family climate are:

- a- A turbulent family climate leads to the emergence of individuals with disturbances.
- b- Lack of flexibility and effectiveness in the family's rules and interactions with its members.
- c- The presence of divisions and factions within the same family.
- d- The prevalence of frustrations and pain in communication processes.

The teenager may find in a gang what they cannot find at home, such as freedom of opinion, support, and participation in current and immediate circumstances. As a result, the attraction towards the gang intensifies. In the absence of parental supervision and guidance, the gang becomes their only refuge. The mistreatment of children by their parents during childhood, authoritarian parenting styles, and exposure to violence within the family all push them to engage in the violence they have learned. Furthermore, weak parental supervision or the absence of one parent due to work or death are all factors associated with teenagers engaging in violence.

The factors influencing the family climate: There are several factors that have a clear impact on the family climate, and they are the variables of familial upbringing. The family, as a social institution, does not exist in isolation but is governed by the framework of the subculture to which it belongs (rural or urban). Family influences also vary with the family's socioeconomic, social, and cultural levels, the educational level of the parents, the size of the family, the gender and birth order of the children, and other variables that affect the parenting styles and treatment adopted with the children in each situation. In each of these situations, the teenager is subject to different familial influences that affect their upbringing from a young age, contributing to the formation and shaping of their personality. (Abdelmoti, 2004, p 119)

- II. Economic factors:** Material matters hold importance in family life as they form the basis of family existence and affect the achievement of family stability by providing for daily and family needs. Khalil (2000) found that a higher eco level of the family enables children to have opportunities for proper nutrition, educational opportunities, and cultural experiences that may not be available to impoverished families.
- III. Cultural factors:** The cultural level of the family surpasses in importance the social and economic levels in the growth of the family members' capabilities and their happiness. The family, particularly the woman, reflects the culture of this society in terms of values, customs, and attitudes. It is within the family that children learn standards of right and wrong, behavioral patterns to follow, and their duties and rights. (Al-Kandari, 2003, p 21)
- IV. Psychological factors:** These are referred to as psychological formation factors and encompass linguistic, sensory, and practical capabilities, as well as motives, emotions, and attitudes. The loss of a sense of security, protection, justice, frustration, and deprivation are all threats to satisfying basic human needs, which may drive individuals to resort to violence instead of legitimate methods. Additionally, we should not overlook the fact that the stage of life an

individual goes through, such as adolescence, is a phase of changes and fluctuations that must be taken into consideration. The health status of the teenager also plays a significant role in expressing their emotions and needs.

- V. Peer Influences:** The influence of peers during adolescence is generally positive and significant in shaping relationships between individuals, but it can also have negative effects. For example, associating with delinquent friends is associated with violence among boys. (World Report on Violence, 2002, p36)

Furthermore, the misuse of leisure time by young people itself becomes an opportunity for deviant peer groups or gangs to attract and captivate them, enticing them to achieve their aspirations through illicit means. However, this is contingent upon loyalty and adopting the same deviant orientations and activities. (Moussa & Swakri, 2021, p 203).

In recent years, there has been a distribution of new housing units across all the states of the country, which has created a different housing pattern. As a result, these housing units have attracted different families in terms of their regions of origin and their socioeconomic and educational levels, creating a new pattern within the population. This was confirmed by a study conducted by Hafida Ben Mohamed (2022, p. 581), where the new residents bring with them a marginalized culture that does not align with the prevailing culture of the indigenous or long-standing residents of the new neighborhoods. This creates a clash between the cultures of the two groups, which is considered one of the contributing factors to the formation of neighborhood gangs.

This is also confirmed by a study conducted by Ambrosius in 2021, which highlighted the urban transformation and its relationship to the emergence of neighborhood gangs. The researcher specifically found a correlation between relocation to new neighborhoods and the formation of gangs, especially when the relocation involved individuals with criminal records. This leads to the spread of gangs and an increase in violent crime rates, in contrast to the influx of non -

convicted individuals, which did not lead to an increase in violence (Ambrosius, 2021, p. 1).

VI. Religious and spiritual factors and causes: We must not overlook the role of the spiritual and religious aspects in instilling a sense of safety, tranquility, and peace in individuals' souls. Whenever this spiritual aspect is absent or weakened, behavioral deviations and distortions may occur. Values play a significant role in shaping proper behavior. As described by Halimi Al-Maliji, values are cognitive-motivational orientations directed towards individual behavior. They are acquired through previous personal experiences and also prepare individuals to acquire new experiences and information (Al-Maliji, 1985, p 125).

VII. Learning and educational factors: School dropout, unemployment, and lack of interest in vocational training or a profession or job make teenagers easy prey for peer groups of delinquents and gangs. (Ben Mohamed, 2022, p 383)

VIII. Media and communication channels: Media and social communication channels play a significant role in the occurrence of violent behavior among teenagers through imitation and emulation. The presentation of movies, images, and tempting content can allure children who may not fully comprehend their meaning and serious consequences. Continuous exposure to violence and cruelty in media messages leads, in the long run, to desensitization to danger and acceptance of violence as a means to respond to conflicts or engage in violent behavior themselves. (Abdel-Aal, 1993, p 27)

Moreover, the attraction of youth to power and admiration for gangs drives them to join neighborhood gangs, as if involvement and affiliation have become measures of masculinity, authority, prominence, and strength, exerting influence and power over members of society (Ben Mohamed, 2022, p. 580).

4- Previous studies:

Many studies have dealt with the violence of neighborhood gangs with study and analysis, and we mention the following:

- I. The Kee" study 2003:** which examined the individual and family characteristics of minors belonging to neighborhood gangs in Singapore, and found that gang youth have lower self-confidence and higher levels of aggression compared to control, along with a relative absence of parental abuse and apathy, with a less open level of communication within the family. (Azazqa, 2021, p. 48)
- II. Study of Mustafa Hegazy:** A study on a sample of delinquents placed in re-education institutions, in which he explained some of the most obvious, frequent and influential features that were observed in them as follows:
- Emotional arguing and periodic mood, Valdelinquent was moody between euphoria, joy, optimism and feet on the one hand and between depression, sadness, pessimism and indifference on the other.
 - The delinquent, rigid opinion, lacks flexibility.
 - The delinquent is unable to foresee the future, reserve for it, or estimate the consequences of his actions and the damage caused. (Shinar, 2016, p. 07)
- III. farid bin Al-Sheikh's 2016 study:** which analyzed the criminal behavior of extremists and elements of terrorist groups, where he referred to mafia groups, drug cartels and terrorist organizations, which use violence to ensure their superiority and show their power in order to show that they possess criminal capabilities, whether for the population or for their rival gangs. (Bin Sheikh, 2016, p 07)
- IV. Christian Amlagus Study 2021:** On cross-border deportations and walls of gang violence in Central America, in which he showed the relationship between deportation to new neighborhoods and the formation of gangs at their level, especially the deportation of people with criminal records, which leads to the spread of gangs with high rates of violent crime, unlike the flow of unconvicted did not lead to an increase in violence, and characteristics of neighborhood gangs:
- There are several characteristics and features shared by individuals forming gangs, including the following:
 - The majority of gang members are youths and teenagers.

- They come from low-income families.
- Gang members have poor academic performance, either experiencing academic failure, school dropout, or early school leaving.
- Addiction and drug abuse are common characteristics of gangs.
- Most gang members face family problems such as divorce and family disintegration.
- Gang members have lower self-confidence.
- They exhibit higher levels of aggression.
- They have lower levels of openness within their families. (Kee et al., 2003, p 401).

5- Mechanisms of limitation and prevention of the phenomenon of residential gangsterism:

Through this study, we attempt to shed light on the most important leading international programs in combating gangs, namely:

The European Research Program Eurogang for combating neighborhood gangs: It was launched in 1997 in Belgium by European researchers in collaboration with researchers from the United States of America. The program includes various research disciplines such as psychology, sociology, and criminal justice, adopting an integrated interdisciplinary approach. It has been operating for twenty years in European countries (Laazazaqa, , 2021,p56).

Strategies of the Eurogang Program:

Statistics Branch:	Experts Branch:	Prevention and Intervention Branch:	Youth Survey Branch:	Ethnographic Guidelines Branch:
Creating descriptive statistical data that includes changes occurring at the neighborhood level to provide an overview of the presence of	Conducting interviews with local experts from various disciplines who have a good understanding of neighborhood gangs.	Includes preventive and intervention programs and measures in neighborhoods, managed by decision-makers and experts.	Involves collecting quantitative individual data from youth in schools or other institutions to determine the likelihood of their	Includes guidelines and recommendations for gathering qualitative information about gangs through observation, interviews, inquiries, and community reports.

neighborhood gangs.			involvement in gangs.	
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(Laazazaqa, 2021,p56).

Algeria has developed a national strategy to prevent neighborhood gangs, which includes;

- Adopting vigilance; caution and warning.
- Early detection of neighborhood gangs.
- Media and awareness of the dangers of belonging to gangs.
- Providing balanced security coverage for residential neighborhoods.(brahmi,2023,p57)

In order to implement this strategy, two bodies were created to prevent neighborhood gangs, a national body and a state body, which consists of various ministerial departments at the central level, security services, civil society, and specialists in sociology, criminology, and psychology for the national committee, in addition to a state committee consisting of various bodies and departments, security and criminology specialists at the local level.(executive decree no,21-123 of march129,2021)

6- CONCLUSION

The phenomenon of violence in residential gangsterism has taken on a different pattern than before, characterized by organized criminal activities due to the rapid and immense technological advancements and exposure to diverse cultures.

This has led to imitation and emulation of foreign cultures, particularly among the youth and adolescents who lead these gangs. In order to curb the spread of this phenomenon, the Algerian government has established a special committee to combat these gangs. This committee operates at the level of each state, tasked with the legal and social control of these gangs, aiming to disrupt their activities and minimize their impact as much as possible.

Recommendations; To confront the phenomenon of violence in residential gangsterism, it is necessary for all societal institutions to collaborate and play their respective roles in controlling and minimizing the activities of these gangs. This can be achieved through:

- **Family:** The family should focus on raising and nurturing children with balanced upbringing, emphasizing the importance of values and religion, which highlight proper and healthy methods of child rearing. This should take into consideration the developmental stage in which children find themselves, as each age group has its own characteristics and psychological and social needs.
- **Schools:** Schools have a prominent and essential role in instilling principles of healthy and proper behavior to address the demands of life through guidance and proper direction for students, warning them about the dangers of joining these gangs.
- **Mosques:** Mosques have a significant and important role in instilling the principles of our noble religion, which emphasizes tolerance and accepting others without conditions or restrictions.
- **Sports and recreational clubs:** By promoting and activating the recreational and sports aspect for young people, they can spend their leisure time engaging in activities that help release negative emotions and alleviate psychological and social pressures that youth and adolescents may experience.
- **Security and judiciary:** The security aspect is important and necessary for establishing community safety and protecting the residents as a whole through social control and deterrence of lawbreakers. This is done to achieve social justice and create a secure and stable environment.
- **Scientific research:** Continuous research is essential to understand the causes, factors, and mechanisms of limiting and preventing the formation of neighborhood gangs. Awareness is the most important and primary step in prevention and addressing the phenomenon of violence in residential gangsterism.

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