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CRIME IN BANGLADESH: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Mst. Nurjahan Khatun¹
Mohammed Jahirul Islam²

Abstract

Bangladesh has been facing the problems of crime, criminality and corruption with its diversified forms, from the very beginning of the country's independence. The present study is an attempt to depict the comprehensive and holistic historical analysis of crime in contemporary Bangladesh with special references to crime trends and their associated causations. The study is mainly descriptive in nature and the data of the study has been collected from various secondary sources like police statistics, books, journals, periodicals and related literature. For the purpose of the study, the crime data from 1972-2009 has been analyzed. The major findings shows that the rate of crime has been increased in a steady way from 2003-2008 and the highest number of crime were committed in 2008 (1.58 lakh), though; it was decreased a little in 2009. It also indicates the committed crime of the years (2003- 2007) where 1.27 lakh crime was committed in 2003, 1.20 lakh in 2004, 1.26 in 2005, 1.30 in 2006, and 1.57 in 2007. It's a matter of concern that, the statistics represented only the crimes that are being reported to the police. The other important findings of the study states, most of the common crimes are the economic crimes; however, the trends of non-economic crimes especially political crime are alarming. In Bangladesh, to reduce crime the prime motivators like poverty, unemployment, political patronage, broken home, instigation by friends, and ignorance has to be addressed. Besides, various effective measures including public awareness, effective laws and policy, police reform, proper justice system has to be ensured.

Key Words: *Crime; Patterns and trends of Crime; Factors of crime; Causation of crime;*

Introduction

Bangladesh is a twice –born nation following its independence from British rule in 1947 and later its separation from West Pakistan in 1971 through the liberation war. Over a period of two decades, it suffered from what has been described as “internal colonialism”. It finally emerged as a sovereign nation in 1971 through mass agitation and a war of liberation which claimed millions of lives, but with a great dream for a country (Khan *et.al*, 1996: 1). From the very beginning of its birth, it is facing the problems of crime, criminality and corruption. This problem of crime has been spreading in each and every sector of the system, e.g. politics,

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administration, economy, society and culture etc. Crime undermines the development efforts at various levels of a country and that it drives the depreciation of all forms of capital that is physical, human, and social and also crime is one of the key obstacles for development in Bangladesh (Lewis, 2011).

After forty seven years of liberation of the country, Bangladesh is one of lower Medium Developed Country (MDC) in the world; with approximate per capita GNI income of \$3677 (2011 PPP\$), ranked 136 out of 189 countries in UNDP's 2017 HDI (UNDP, 2018). Out of a population of around 167.5 million (Worldometers, 2019), on average, 31.5 percent population lives under absolute poverty line. Bangladesh is belonging in the 12th position of the list of the countries in terms of CPI of TIB. Under that inauspicious condition, crime rate in Bangladesh has been increasing day by day, which is a serious problem for social and economic security of the people as well as national development. Information available in the Police statistics of the years (2003-2007) show that crime is increasing in a steady way and the highest number of crime was committed in 2008 (1.58 lakh), though it reduced a little in 2009. It also indicates the committed crime of the last five years (2003- 2007) where 1.27 lakh crime were committed in 2003, 1.20 lakh in 2004, 1.26 in 2005, 1.30 in 2006 and 1.57 in 2007 (Police Statistics, 2010). It's a matter of fact that the statistics showed only the crimes that are reported to the police.

A large number of theoretical and empirical researches have been conducted on historical patterns and trends of crime in worldwide. Firstly, many of the classic and seminal works in the field have concentrated on temporal and spatial patterns and aspects of crime (e.g. Brantingham and Brantingham, 1984; Goldsmith et al, 1999); convergence, diversity, and change in crime patterns and criminal justice responses to crime (Heidensohn & Farrell, **Social Science Review, Volume-35, No-2 (December), 2018**

1991) in European societies within historical criminology. Secondly, a good number of geographer, environmentalist and criminologists tried to link patterns and trends of crime and nature perspectives with special reference to weather (Cohn, 1990; Rotton and Cohn, 2000), climate (DeFronzo, 1984), temperature (Field, 1992; Anderson, 1987), seasonality (Harries et.al. 1984; Cheatwood, 1988) through their research. Alternatively, many of the sociological criminologists have pointed out the link between social change, ecology and crime trends from routine activity approaches (Miethe et.al. 1991; Cohen & Felson, 2016; Felson and Cohen, 2017); urbanization, and crime, collective violence (Lodhi and Tilly,1973); age and crime trends (Steffensmeier et.al. 1989) migration, ethnicity and crime (Hazlehurst, 1987).

On the other hand, crime is one of the most important popular media and political discourses in Bangladesh. However, there hardly exists any rigorous academic works on patterns and trends of crime and criminality in Bangladesh from historical perspectives. There was none to study this from criminological perspective as criminology was introduced as a new discipline and subject of study at Bangladeshi universities only in the 2000s. In Bangladesh, we have recently found some academic works regarding the crime and victimization. Firstly, Much of the academic works in Bangladesh tries to explore different nature of crime, for example, urban crime and violence (Shafi, 2000), female criminality (Faruk et. al. 2009; Islam and Khatun, 2012), rape victimization (Khatun and Islam, 2012), rape culture (Islam and Sharmin, 2018) and religious terrorism (Sato, 1993; Barkat, 2005; Riaz, 2008; Ahmed, 2008; Khan, 2006; Rahman & Kashem, 2011; Akas, 2011; Quamruzzaman, 2011; Islam et.al. 2011; Islam and Hossian, 2017) in Bangladesh. Only a few number of sociological criminologists try to link between social factors and crime and delinquency, for example, dietary behavior and adolescences delinquency (Haq et.al 2012), teasing and suicide (Alam et.al. 2014), family relationships and juvenile delinquency (Akter and Faruk, 2007), religiosity and crime (Islam et.al. 2013). Although all of the aforementioned works are important for exploring the

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general issues of crime and victimization, none of these studies, however, focus on the patterns and trends of crime in Bangladesh. It is noticeable that only a few of the sociologists consider the issues of temporal aspects of crime. An eminent sociologist A.K.M. Nazmul Karim (2000) in his seminal work entitled, “Crime in East Pakistan since 1947” stated that crime and criminogenic situation was related to economy, seasonal variation, political movements and breakdown of the systems of police administration. In another study on “Crime and Juvenile Delinquency in East Pakistan” by F.R Khan (1966) revealed that crime and juvenile delinquency are closely related to geographical factor (change of season, change in the phases of the moon etc), economic crime (poverty and employment), social factors (family life, customs and beliefs, community environment and legal system) and psychological factors (motives and emotion). In 1965, the study on, ‘Juvenile Delinquency in East-Pakistan’ by M. Afsaruddin (1965) has stated that multiple socio-economic and cultural factors were responsible for causing the problem. He also observed that, in society economic, political and religious institutions reveal a conflict between traditional and modern values, which have given rise to anomie and creates greater vulnerability to delinquent behavior. In a study, ‘Crime Index Bangladesh 2007’ focuses on dark figure on crime, typologies, factors of crime, crime rate, and analyses the crime trends. Issues which are covered include the offender and victim’s characteristics such as age, sex, occupation, crime commission, and causes of victimization and offender- victim relation in context of present day Bangladesh (Faruq and Khatun, 2008). Although some aforementioned academic work has been done by the academicians, those studies focused on certain aspect of crime and criminality which can hardly present a pen picture of crime situation in a given country from historical perspectives. This paper is intended to present the comprehensive and holistic scenarios of crime in present Bangladesh. This article is divided into three main sections and several subsections. The first section discusses the crime trends and their associated causation. The

second section deals with patterns of crime in Bangladesh in details. The third focuses on the different factors linked to crime.

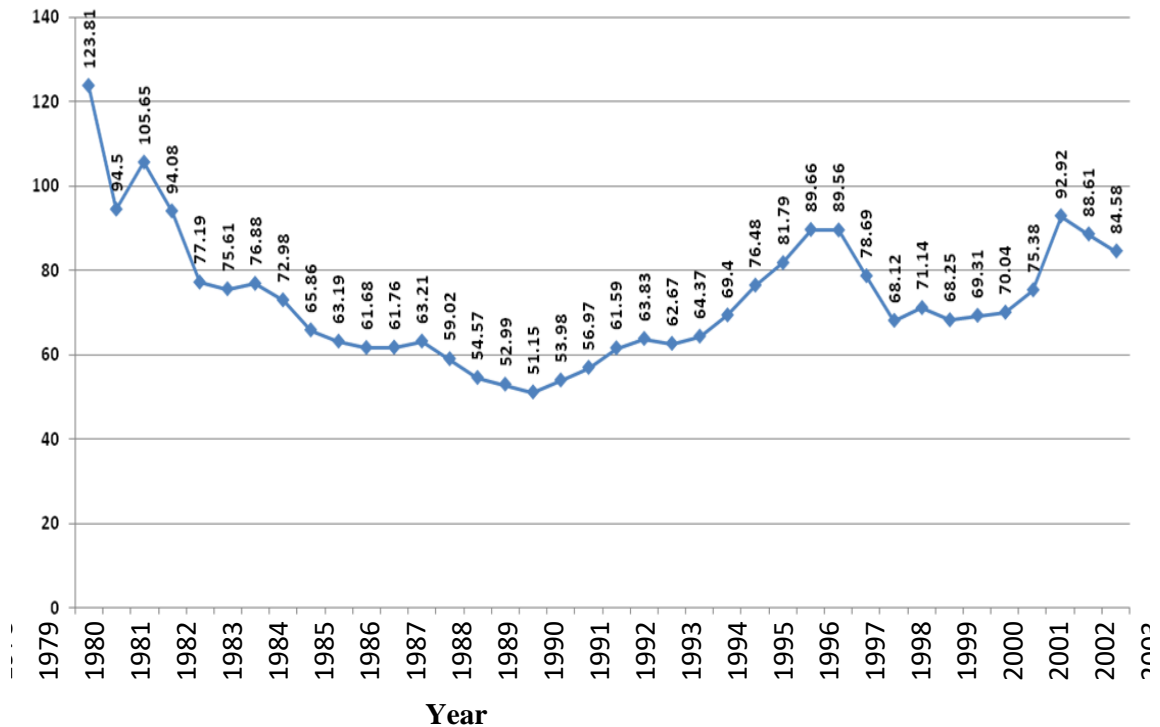
Patterns and Trends of Crime in Bangladesh

The word ‘crime’ juggles up many images to us (academician & Non academician), of mugging to murder, of cheating on taxes to serial killing, from cybercrime to terrorist attack. The English common law and the Penal Code, 1860 define hundreds of crimes, differing from each other with local variation but with certain common characteristics. Before we begin to explain the trends and pattern of crime in Bangladesh, we need to examine the specific definition of crime, common legal ingredients, or elements, found in criminological literature. According to criminologist Paul Tappan, “Crime is an intentional act or omission in violation of criminal law committed without defense or justification and sanctioned by the state for punishment as a felony or misdemeanor (Ahuja, 1996: 17)”. If we consider the above mentioned definition of crime, we see that there are seven basic requirements or elements of crime that is, the act, legality, harm, causation, *mensrea*, concurrence and punishment requirements (Adler, 2004). Although innocent victimization is not a typology of crime, on the basis of Police statistics and Crime Index Bangladesh 2007, we have identified eight types of crime following: Violent Crime; Property Crime; Public Order Crime; Political Crime; Hate Crime; Organized Crime; Victimless Crime and Innocent victimization. However, the general nature of crime and criminal activities in contemporary Bangladesh has changed rapidly due to the impact of rapid industrialization and urbanization, fluctuating nature of economy, changing nature of political situation and as well as transitional nature of world politics

Crime trends (1972-2009)

One of the most important characteristics of any crime is how often it is committed. From such figure we can determine crime trends, the increases and decreases of crime over time.

Crime rate of a country depends on the total population and the number of committed crime. Crime rate is measured as the number of crime per unit of population or other basis. During the independent war uncountable crimes had been committed all over the country by both Pakistani army and the betrayers (*Rajakars, Al Badr, Al Shams*) and this type of crimes are considered as war crime. Thousands of mass killings, rape, assault, extortion were occurred during the period of liberation war. Soon after the war, law and order situation of the country were broken down; as a result hijacking, robbery, assault, murder, extortion, theft and other hate crimes were increasing at an alarming rate. The figure-1 showed that the highest rates (123.81) of crime were occurred in the year of 1972. A number of factors, those are political instability, religious conflict, food crisis, criminal justice failure, low per capita income and low ratio of police and people, were associated with rapidly growth of crime rates immediate aftermath of liberation war especially in 1972. According to the police statistics, the data show that the crime rate decreases slowly with slight fluctuation between 1972 and 1988. The gradual decline in the crime rate after 1972 is an important phenomenon that requires a bit more analysis. One important factor is the military nature of political governance. Though many political leaders, military officers and government officers were killed due to *coup* by the army leaders during military age, the law and order situation of the country were strictly maintained. Moreover, we think that the number of reported crime were also low in military period because of having fear of victimization of general people. As a result, crime rate has decreased until 1988. After 1988, crime rate began to rise much more quickly. This trend continued until 1998, when the crime rate rose to 89.66 per 100,000. From that peak, the rate steadily dropped until 2001, when there were 68.12 crimes per 100,000. After that year the rate rose again until 2007. Limited resources, low social integration, globalized nature of world, unemployment, cultural and religious conflict were added to increasing crime rate. Since then it has decreased every year, to 84.58 in 2009.

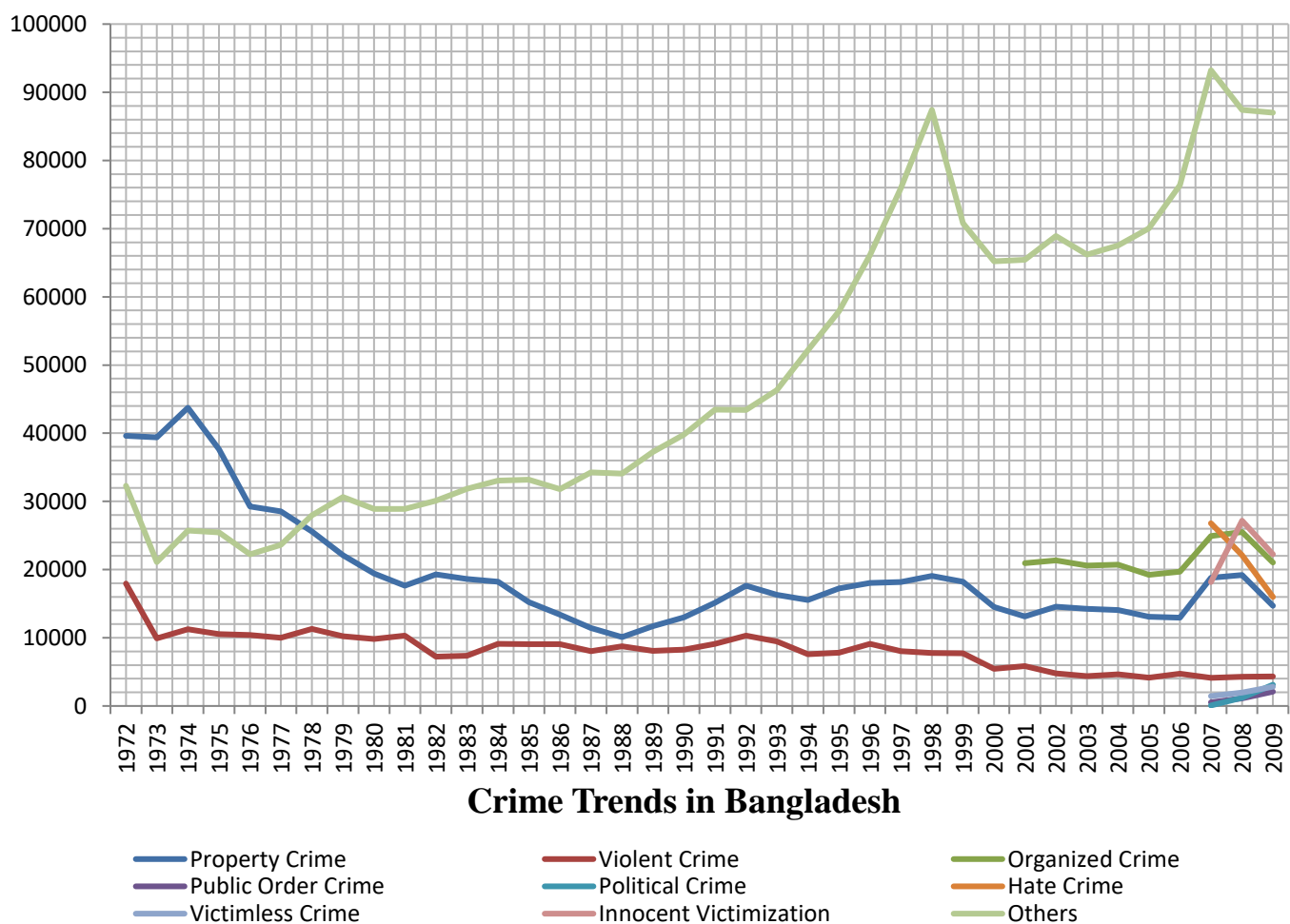
Figure 01: Rates of Crimes per 100000 Population in Bangladesh, 1972-2009

Patterns of Crime in Bangladesh

The trend in reported crime in Bangladesh since liberation war has been increased with slight fluctuation (Figure-2). According to police statistics, the number of total offences for both violent and property crimes have been decreases slowly. In 1972, there were approximately 18000 violent offences. In 2009 the violent offences was only 4331- a massive decreases. Property crimes have decreased at a similarly a large rate. In 1972, the total number of property offences was 39633. By 2009 the number of offences had fallen to 14689 property crimes. We know that the rate of crime in Bangladesh is increasing day by day. But in police statistics, we see the numbers of crimes are decreasing due to non-reporting tendency of crime. This fact demonstrates the failure and shortcomings of the criminal justice system of Bangladesh in reporting crimes by the victims. In effect of this deficiency, the police

organization is unable to records the exact number of crime and to construct appropriate crime typologies. There are many reasons for the non-reporting of crimes: (i). Victims may consider the crimes are insignificants and hope to avoid embarrassing situation the offender, (ii). Wish to avoid the publicity and inconvenience of calling the police, (iii) have agreed to the crime, as in gambling and some sexual offences, (iv) may be intimidated by the offender etc (Bohm & Haley, 2002: 39). Due to unscientific classification methods used by the police, others category of crime were highest in Bangladesh after liberation period. According to police statistics, in 1972 the number of total others crime was 32306. On the other hand, the number of reported other offences was 87022 in 2009- a massive increasing.

Figure-02: Patterns and Trends of Crime in Bangladesh



The violent offences include murder, riot, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault and acid violence. The property offences include burglary, larceny-theft and motor vehicle offences. The number of Crime reported in national daily indicates the rising tendency of crime in Bangladesh. From 2007 to 2009, violent crime increased in greater extent and the rate was in peak in the year of 2009. The rate of property offences increased 25 percent from 2007 to 2008 as per 100000 populations. It can be noted that the “others” typology of crime indicates the rest of the crime not included in the typologies of police statistics; for example cyber-crime, pornography, money laundering, terrorism etc.

Violent Crimes

As mentioned above, reported violent crimes have been decreasing in Bangladesh since independence. Each individual violent offense has a different pattern, and sub classifications within each offense have unique pattern worth exploring. Except crime reported in national daily, all violent crime have been decreasing.

Murder and Aggravated Assault: Murder and Aggravated assault fit together conceptually. They are separated, both legally and factually, by the ultimate quality of the harm done to the victim. Usually, ‘Murder’ is defined in criminology as the intentional killing of another person with malice aforethought (Adler, 2004: 238). However, The Penal Code, 1860 of Bangladesh defines murder, “...as an act by which the death is caused is done with the intention of causing death”(The Penal Code, 1860). Moreover, aggravated assault, is one in which the perpetrator inflicts serious harm on the victim or uses a deadly weapons. Whether a serious assault turns out to be murder or aggravated assault is often a function of the quality and the speed of medical care, or of random chance in inflicting a wound. In fact, it can easily be argued that the most reasonable crime rate to investigate from a criminological viewpoint is a

rate composed of the combination of the number of murders and the numbers of aggravated assault (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1984: 121-122).

From the year of 1972 to 2009 one lakh ten thousand two hundred and eighty one (110281) people were killed unlawfully. The incidence of murder cases was almost 5968 in 1972, followed by decreasing rate in succeeding years until a low point was reached in 1978, followed by peak in 2009. Due to the availability of weapon, breakdown of criminal justice system and as revenge of war killing such a big amount of murder were committed in 1972. In 2009, there were 6234 murders were reported to the police (Police Statistics, 2010). On the other hand, there were 11810 murders reported, in daily newspaper - almost double (Crime Index Bangladesh 2008, 2009). In the same year, there were 10651 aggravated assaults reported to the national daily.

The murder rate per 100000 populations in Bangladesh has doubled since 1973. Conversely, the number of aggravated assault almost doubled in 2009 than 2008. The murder and aggravated assault rate are increasing due to impact of poverty, unemployment, deteriorating situation of people's livelihood and political killing and clash after election.

Although the official rates for murder are probably quite close to the actual murder statistics, the official rates for aggravated assault probably understate the actual rates. About 60 percent of aggravated assaults with injury were reported to the police, but only about 50 percent of the attempts were (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1984: 124). Reporting rates for simple assault and assault without serious injury or threat of serious injury were substantially lower. People didn't reported assault as a crime.

Riot: A riot is a form of civil disorder characterized often by disorganized groups lashing out in a sudden and intense rash of violence against authority, property and/or people. While individuals may attempt to lead or control a riot, riots are typically chaotic and exhibit herd behavior, and usually generated by civil unrest (Uddin, 2010: 15). Police records showed that till 2009 there was less or more riot occurred. The highest number of riot took place in the year of 1972 (total 11980) and the lowest number of riot occurred in the year of 2008 (total 203).

In the context of Indian Sub-Content, riot seems to be the most serious typology of offences than any other ordinary crime. After the independence of British Rule in 1947, the political scenario of India and Pakistan were seriously affected and resurgence by communal riot between Hindu and Muslim. Historically, riots have occurred in Bangladesh due to religious and political conflict between races, poor working or living condition, government oppression and vandalism against ethnic peoples. Proper distribution of resources, secularized nature of constitution as well as political ideology and reduction of problems related to minority factors can reduce riot problems in Bangladesh.

Newly Emergent Violent crime: In 1990s, there were numerous newly emergent crime found in police statistics and daily newspaper report. The newly emergent violent offences include rape, abduction, women violence, acid violence and child abuse.

1. Rape: Rape is defined by the American common law as ‘the carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will’ (Siegel, 1998). However, rape has been defined in the section 375 of the Penal Code, 1860 of Bangladesh stating the following grounds.

“A man is said to commit "rape" who except in the case hereinafter excepted, has sexual intercourse with a woman under circumstances

falling under any of the five following descriptions: Firstly, Against her will; Secondly, Without her consent; Thirdly, With her consent, when her consent has been obtained by putting her in fear of death, or of hurt; Fourthly, With her consent, when the man knows that he is not her husband, and that her consent is given because she believes that he is another man to whom she is or believes herself to be lawfully married; Fifthly, With or without her consent, when she is under fourteen years of age” (The Penal Code, 1860).

There has been a dramatic increase in reported rape since 1991. The number of reported rape offences increased from 427 in 1991 to 3462 in 2008. Rapes reported in daily news suggest even higher levels of rape, ranging from 6023 in 2007 to 6572 in 2008. The increasing rate of urbanization, migration, jobless situation and finally lack ethics in education penetrates contemporary rape incidence in Bangladesh. Although statistical measures of all crime are, to some extent, unreliable, rape statistics may well be the least reliable. Police statistics clearly underestimate the number of rapes. Many women are reluctant to report rapes to the police. Some victims are afraid of reprisal, some are humiliated and embarrassed by the experience, and some do not wish to experience the humiliation and harassment that the criminal justice system frequently imposes on a rape compliant.

2. Child Abuse: Child abuse can be defined as causing or permitting any harmful or offensive contact on a child's body; and, any communication and transaction of any kind which humiliates, shames, or frightens the child. Some child development experts go a bit further, and define child abuse as any act or omission, which fails to nurture or in the upbringing of the children. The Children Act, 2013 of Bangladesh has identified all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse as the forms of child abuse. In our country child abuse was not considered as a crime till the year of 1991. The number of recorded child abuse offences increased from only 18 in 1994 to 967 in 2007 (Police Statistics, 2010). Recorded police data shows the geometrical increase of

child abuse in our country. Due to the poverty, lack of education, unconsciousness about child psychology and negligence about child rights, child abuse are increasing day by day.

3. Violence against Women: Violence against women remains a prevailing social problem in contemporary Bangladesh. Brutal attacks on women have become commonplace and widespread across the country. Daily news reports are filled with atrocities including physical and psychological torture, sexual harassment, sexual assault, rape, dowry related violence, trafficking, forced prostitution, coerced suicide and murder. The semantic meaning of 'violence against women' is direct or indirect physical or mental cruelty to women. The rate of reported violent acts against women has risen consistently and at an alarming rate, especially since the early 1990's (Farouk, 2005). It is not that violence against women was not present before 1990. But police department pay their special attention on those after this time; thus rape was enlisted in the year of 1990, acid throwing in 1996, serious bodily injury in 1996. Although these types of crimes existed in Bangladesh since independence, the police department has included those crimes after 1990. In contemporary age, women rights and feminist movement are organized by various NGOs in Bangladesh and International arena. Police record shows that violence against women rate is increasing day by day.

Property Crime

Usually, property crimes are related to forceful destruction of the property, grabbing property or material substances of human. Any economic loss of human beings caused by perpetrator can be termed as property crime. The vary concepts denotes an offence which is specially related to property in possession of human and which is snatched away by any perpetrator

(Faruk & Khatun, 2008). Sometimes, criminologists use new terms 'economic crimes' synonymously instead of property crimes. Criminologist Larry, J. Siegel defined as economic crime can be an act in violation of the criminal law designed to bring financial reward to an offender. The Penal Code, 1860 (Section 378-402) includes the crime of theft, robbery, dacoity, misappropriation of property as the forms of property crime in Bangladesh (The Penal Code, 1860). The study here includes theft, robbery, dacoity, and burglary as the forms of property crime. Reported property offences have been decreasing in the last 40 years in Bangladesh.

Theft: Theft (Larceny) was one of the earliest common law crimes created by English judges to define acts in which one person took for his or her own use the property of another. Theft is the illegal taking of another person's property without that person's freely-given consent. Siegel (2006) defined theft as 'the trespassory taking and carrying away of the personal property of another with intent to steal' (Siegel, 2006: 322). According to the section 378 of the Penal Code, 1860, theft refers "Whoever, intending to take dishonestly any moveable property out of the possession of any person without that person's consent, moves that property in order to such taking, is said to commit theft" (The Penal Code, 1860).

Theft is the most common crime occurs in both urban and rural Bangladesh. Immediate after independence, the law and order situation was very much weak for the lack of police personnel and administrative salaried people. In addition, the people and the entire country were affected by food crisis due to stagnant war economy and famine. So, people were not able to fulfill their basic needs. Thus, theft was committed in that time for hunger and fulfillment of needs. According to police records, theft occurred in a very high scale during the year of 1972 to 1977. During the period of 1978 to 1989, the number of reported theft offences is coming down; as in this period new technology and cultivation system was introduced and military administrative bureaucracy was very strict. After that, occurrences of

theft were dramatically increased due to population growth, unemployment and unequal distribution of resources.

Robbery: Robbery is a property crime as well as a violent crime. It is the combination of the motive for economic gain and the violent nature of robbery that makes it so serious. It is a particularly interesting offence to study. Robbery is a complex crime category. According to Uniform Crime Report by the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, robbery is the last index offences classified as violent offences. Moreover, Faruq & Khatun (2008) defined robbery under property crime because of having economic motive and intention. Robbery is the taking of property from a victim by force and violence or by threat of violence (Adler et.al, 2004: 258). In all robbery, there is either theft or extortion. Theft is robbery if, in order to the committing of the theft, or in committing the theft, or in carrying away or attempting to carry away property obtained by theft, the offender, for that end, voluntarily causes or attempts to cause to any person death or hurt or wrongful restraint, or fear of instant hurt or of instant wrongful restraint. Robbery differs from simple theft in its use of violence and intimidation. Offender display weapons, mostly guns and knives, in almost half of all robberies. According to police records, the study found that robbery occurred mostly by the year of 1972 to 1977 (Mean= 3600.67 per year). Availability of weapons, economic crisis as well as defective administration penetrated robbery in high scale on that period. As per the explanation of routine activities and opportunity theories, absence of capable guardian and opportunity encourages the intended offender to commit a crime. After that period, robbery doesn't seems to took place in such a high number till 2009 (Mean=942.48 per year). This study found that 63.15% of robbery occurred in home, 13.79% occurred in Bus, 4.53% occurred in Boat, 1.20% occurred in Mill, 0.68% occurred in Bank and 1.17% robbery with murder occurred (Police Statistics, 2008). So, we can say that peoples are threat of being robbed in living place and transportation.

Dacoity: Dacoity is a unique pattern of crime found only in Indian sub-continent's penal code as well as police statistics. It is criminal activities involving robbery by groups of armed bandits. When five or more persons conjointly commit or attempt to commit a robbery, or where the whole number of persons committing or attempting to commit a robbery, and persons present and aiding such commission or attempt, amount to five or more, every person so committing, attempting or aiding, is said to commit dacoity. According to Police records, the highest number of dacoity was found in the year of 1973 (4312), then the year of 1974 contain the second highest number of dacoity occurrences (4265). The lowest number of dacoity was taken place in the year of 1988 (623). It is interesting to know that the numbers of reported dacoity were increased rapidly in democratic period with slight fluctuation. Increasing rate of dacoity indicates organized pattern of criminality increased in contemporary Bangladesh. So, government should be more concerned to restrict organized criminality than ordinary offences.

Burglary: Burglary is a cognizable crime, the essence of which is entry into a building for the purposes of committing an offence therein. Usually that offence will be theft, but most jurisdictions specify others which fall within the ambit of burglary. According to Siegel, "Burglary is defined as 'the breaking and entering of a dwelling house of another in the nighttime with the intent to commit a felony within (Siegel, 2006: 328)". The Penal Code, 1860 of Bangladesh includes burglary among the property crime and identifies the acts of house breaking for appropriation of property during night. There were 12703 reported burglaries in Bangladesh in 1972. Between 1972 and 1974, the number of reported burglaries increased slightly, but since 1974, reported burglaries have decreased substantially until 2005. Moreover, the numbers of reported burglaries have slightly increased during 2006 to

2008. Overpopulation, unemployment, denationalization of industry, inequality and financial crises in world level are causes of such increase.

Public Order Crime

Public order crimes include acts that interfere with the operations of society and the ability of people to function efficiently. The violation of law by any one to the others, which is threatening to public tranquility in normal course of life or livelihood and consequent upon which a mental stress leads to a public disorder, is termed public order crime (Faruq & Khatun, 2008:22). Erotic materials, commercial sex, drug related crime and gambling etc. are treated as public order crime. However, a number of criminologists identify gambling and homosexuality as victimless crime. The Penal Code of Bangladesh (1860) describes the public order crime from the section 268 to 294 and includes the act of public nuisance, adulteration of food, drinks and drugs, rush driving, exhibition of false light, mark, negligence conduct with respect to poisonous substance, machinery, animal etc. It is a matter of sorrow that still now Bangladesh police have not compiled any details statistics on public order crime. Crime reported in famous daily newspaper indicates that public order crimes have increased day by day. Nude presentation of body in media, deterioration of moral values and breakdown of law and order situation influenced public order crime. Ninety two percent changes, which was a huge change in public order crime in 2009 than 2008 and the rate is changing almost double in consecutive years from 2007 to 2009. Public order crime was only 0.11% among all the crimes found in history, which is very negligible comparing others (Crime Index Bangladesh 2008, 2009). In Bangladesh, most of the public order crimes do not have any serious punishment; therefore it charges only instant minor fine. In effect of this inadequate punishment public commits this type of crime repeatedly.

Victimless Crime

Victimless crime is unique types of crime found in criminological literature, where offender and victim is the same person. Bohm and Haley (2002) defined victimless crime as 'Offences involving a willing and private exchange of goods and services that are in strong demand but are illegal' (Bohm & Haley, 2002: 37). As the offender goes against his or her own interest causing harm to own self is considered as victimless crime. The victim is treating himself as the offender here. The victim of this crime is solely responsible for the event of his victimization. Criminologists consider suicide, abortion, miscarriage, homosexuality, drug addiction as conventional victimless crime. Even though the Penal Code, 1860 does not categories those crimes as victimless crime; it outlines attempt to suicide, suicide, abortion, miscarriage, homosexuality, drug addiction as crime. These acts have separate punishment in the Penal code, 1860; for instance if anyone attempts to commit suicide and does any act towards the commission of such offence, shall be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year, or with fine, or with both (The Penal Code, 1860). Apart from suicide, other forms of victimless crime are not included to police statistics and/or newspapers. Consequently, the dark figure of victimless crime remains high than other forms of crime. Even Bangladesh Police does not have any official statistics of victimless crime. According to the collected data from newspaper, the rate of victimless crime changed almost 44% in 2009 than the previous years and the rate is increasing notably from 2007 to 2009 and among all forms of victimless crime the rate of abortion increased much. Victimless crime took place 3.23% in 2009 which is very little among all the crimes (Crime Index Bangladesh 2008, 2009).

Political Crime

In criminology, a political crime is an offence involving overt acts or omissions (where there is a duty to act), which prejudice the interests of the state, its government or the political system. Political crime means any illegal act conducted by state or state officials against

public with political motive and any illegal acts conducted by public against state. Generally, treason, sedition, police brutality, encounter and crossfire are considered as state sponsored political crime. Besides, terrorism, assassination, criminal conspiracy are considered as anti-state political crime. The offences by the government or ruling class is similar to white-collar crime, because these are taken part in the ground of violence by the ruling class people in the society such as, the bureaucrats, businessman and high profile intellectuals, who are usually the law makers or enforcers. Accomplishing the event with the mechanism of abusing authority of law enforcement agencies like police either through direct contact or through the political influence these types of offences usually take place. The Penal Code, 1860 of Bangladesh includes criminal conspiracy, sedition, and treason as crimes against state; however, the police statistics does not contain any list of those crimes. It can be noted that this type of crime is reported occasionally in Bangladesh. However, the police statistics of Bangladesh contains a separate form of crime called “political murder” that remains underreported due to political interference.

Notably, as a category of political crime, the cases of police brutality are published in newspaper most often. Police brutalities are some of the offences that are highlighted in the here. The figure of politically motivated crime indicates that it increases in a greater extent in recent couple of years and rate extended 157% in 2009 and surprisingly the percentage change was about 164% in 2008 comparing 2007 though the total rate is only 3.56% of total crime rate in 2009 (Crime Index Bangladesh 2008, 2009).

Hate Crime

Usually any violence against women is treated as these types of crimes. Not only that, any offence that is a shame deficiency for the society can be mentioned as hate crime. Any kind of offence, which is directly related to the destabilization of the weakest inhabitants of the society for their cultural entity or ruling opportunity in the society, is considered as such a

crime. Eve teasing, women suppression, religious, communal and ethnic riots etc. are the focused grounds of this type of offence. The rate of hate crime reduced about 28% in 2009 than 2008 and it is reducing significantly after 2007. The most bad side is that women suppression increased 37% in 2009 than 2008 though eve-teasing decreased at a larger extent that was 85% lesser than 2008. Hate crime was about 18% out of total crime in 2009. The recent incidents of hate crime include communal attack on Hindu and Buddhist community by Muslims and attack on indigenous people by Bengalese (Crime Index Bangladesh 2008, 2009).

Organized Crime

A form of offence, which is related to the course of illegal trade and committed by a group of offenders in syndicate form widely for economic gain, is called organized crime. Usually, organized crime takes place in the form of gang criminality, which is a part of organized crime. Drugs, illegal arms dealing, illegal storage, etc. are the highlighted areas for this crime. It was a positive sign in 2009 that organized crime took place in lesser rate than previous years. While the total number of organized crime was 37,539 it decreased to 16,226 in 2009 but its frustrating illegal arms dealings and illegal storage increased significantly in 2009. The total rate was about 18 percent among all forms of crime in 2009 while it was 43 percent in 2007.

Innocent Victimization

In criminology and victimology, innocent victim is a person, who bears no responsibility at all for his/her victimization. The term 'innocent or completely innocent victim' is mainly defined by the famous victimologist Benjamin Mendelsohn. The total number of innocent victimization was 22,241 in 2009 where it was 27,170 in 2008, so the rate dropped 18 percent in 2009 than 2008 though it jumped to about double in 2008 than 2007. Road accident was in top position as usual though it fell down 25 percent in 2009 but unnatural death increased

considerably in both the years of 2008 and 2009. Innocent victimization was in a significant rate that is about 25 percent among all the crimes in 2009.

Factors of Crime in Bangladesh

Crimes as social phenomena are changed by a numbers of factors that create the fabric of society. As we know, property crimes are strongly related to the state of economic opportunity, whereas, violent crimes are depends on the availability of weapons or on the societal factors stimulating conflict. In broad sense, changes in the demographic, economic, social, political, criminal justice structures etc can be seen to mirror, at least in part, changes in the crime pattern.

Demographic Factors: Demographic analysis is extremely important in the temporal analysis of crime. Empirical research in criminology has repeatedly demonstrated that different age groups, different ethnic groups, and the two sexes have different rates of criminal behavior (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1984). In Bangladesh, one factor that is often important in affecting crime is population composition particularly different age, sex and ethnic groups display very different rates of involvement in crime. Here crimes are disproportionately committed by adolescents and young adults. Few crimes are committed by the very young or the very old. According to Crime Index Bangladesh 2007 and crime reported on the national daily showed that in the year 2007, the age specific rates of criminal activity peaked in the age group 18-27 years and that were 44.41 percent of total crime. In 2008 and 2009, the age specific rates of criminal activity peaked in the age group 18-35years and that were 38 percent and 47.54 percent of total crime accordingly. As a demographic factor sex is also linked to the actual crime rates. In Bangladesh, criminal behavior, at least serious criminal behavior such as that recorded by the police or reported on the daily newspaper is primarily a male activity. According to Crime Index 2007, out of the total offenders nearly 95.73 percent of the offenders were male while 4.27 percent of the offenders

were female. Although, recently female criminality is considered as a significant issue in Bangladesh and women involvement is increasing in different types of crime such as prostitution, theft smuggling, kidnapping, drug abuse, pornography, black mailing, etc. Additionally, ethnicity is also an important demographic factor and different ethnic group commit different rates of involvement in crime in Bangladesh. Communal riot and hate crime is an example of such crime.

Geographical Factors: It is supported by the criminological theories that, geographical characteristics are directly related to the nature and extent of crime and criminality in a given region. In the analysis of crime and criminality in Bangladesh it is also relevant. Bangladesh is a land of rivers and mainly formed by the Padma, the Jamuna, the Bramaputra and their tributaries. Usually in the rainy season these river become over-flooded and cause heavy damage to the inhabitants in Bangladesh by damaging their crops. Again due to erosion the inhabitants are constantly changed their places of shelter and subsistence some of them become poor and at the same time ferocious. The contests for possession of land for survive leads to a large number of riot, murder and violence. As they lost their livelihood and easily hide their identity, often they become professional criminals and indulge in theft, robbery and dacoity. During the rainy season the villages are completely isolated from each other by water which creates opportunity for professional criminals for engaging in criminal activities. Besides, the factors like climate, temperature, humidity etc. are also related to criminality. These environmental factors may have specials effects on the socio-psychological state of people which contribute to the commission of crime. According to Index, in Bangladesh crime rates remains high in the summer and decrease in the winter. Patterns of crime in Bangladesh vary from urban to rural areas, hilly or forest areas to coastal areas. Crimes in *char* areas differ from plain land.

Due to poverty, economic and political crimes are very common in urban Bangladesh. Crimes against women, property crimes and violent crimes like murder are commonly seen in rural areas. Crimes against property are mostly found in riverside *char* areas. Crimes in slum areas often include drug, liquor, prostitution and juvenile delinquency. In summary, crimes like drugs, human, arms trafficking, trafficking of illegal goods and commodities are mostly visible in border and coastal areas, whereas, violent and property crimes are visible more in central urban zone. Additionally, dacoity, robbery, riots, land conflict and collisions, political extremism take place mostly in riverside areas, whereas, the hilly areas consists crime like kidnapping, abduction, land grabbing, ethnic terrorism and wildlife crime. Moreover, crimes like dacoity, wildlife and environmental crime are mostly visible in forest areas.

Seasonal Variation of Crime:Based on the spatialand temporal perspectives, the commission of crimes is based on the factors like climate, temperature, humidity, barometric pressure, etc. These environmental factors may have special effects on the socio-psychological state of people, which contribute to the commission of crime. According to sociologist Quetlet's "thermic law", crimes are predominated in the summer seasons and began to decrease in winter. The popular explanation about winter in Criminology, in winter, people do not go out most often due to the fall of temperature. Therefore, the possibility of potential victimization decreases during this season. SociologistsNazmul Karim opined that seasonal variations are associated with crimes like theft, dacoity and robbery. The findings of the study also resulted that theft and hijacking increase during the Bengali months of *Kartik*, *Agrahayan*, *Falgun* and *Chaitra* as people have lack of employment opportunities in agricultural sector during the period (Karim, 2000). In reality, still, people suffer from scarcity during the aforementioned period. In Bangladesh November, December, January & February month are the winter season, in this season 29.39 percent crime incident are

occurred (Crime Index Bangladesh 2008, 2009). Alternatively, according to the Thermic Law, due to the rise of temperature during summer (April, May, June & July), the mental state of human become more aggressive and they lose their temperament. As a result, one can be associated with crimes like murder, assault and rape. The findings of the study reflect that in this season 35.70 percent crime incident are committed. Our findings clearly show that the crime rate is changed according to the season (Crime Index Bangladesh 2008, 2009). During the rainy season, people have less opportunity to move from one place to another and the transportation system breaks down. In effect, crimes like theft, robbery, dacoity and burglary increase significantly.

Economic Factors: Economic conditions of a country influence criminality to a considerable extent. At present, economic factors like poverty, unemployment, inequality etc are the most important causes of crime in Bangladesh. As the inhabitants of developing country, a portion of the population in Bangladesh lives under the line of poverty. Here, the criminals are mainly from the poor classes and their primary motive of crime is monetary gain. When the economic distress of the poor villagers know no bound, crimes like theft, robbery and dacoity increases in villages. In Bangladesh, population explosion, industrialization, urbanization stimulated a large number of rural people to migrate the industrial urban areas for employment. Though the sifting of population is going on, it is too little to cope with the situation and maximum are living in the slum area. Here poor condition of life, the lack of income creates an inability to maintain an adequate standard of living and consequently triggers crime like drug abuse, trafficking, hijacking, prostitution, juvenile delinquency etc as a means to gain income. Not only that, in our country unemployment among young generation also creates excess leisure and its leads to spent in socializing with others in similar circumstances or in committing crimes when others are working. The employment of women and their outdoor activities have enhanced the opportunities for female criminality in

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Bangladesh. Now a day's money is the paramount consideration to assess the social status of a person in our society. So, people are engaging different types of criminal activities to reach that point especially bribery, corruption and white collar crimes are the best example in this regard.

Social Factors: Much criminological theory has centered on determining what social factors influence crime and hold the opinion that social factors are the fundamental causes of crime in a society. Generally, studies of social factors and crime have shown that family structure and relationship, peer-group relations, education, recreation, occupational status etc are related to crime. With the change of socio-economic conditions of the people the number of maladjusted families is increasing in Bangladesh. Though, the family is the primary unit for the children to adopt social values, norms, ideals etc. but recently the institution of family has disintegrated to such an extent that control of parents over their child has slackened thus leaving them free to behave as they like which creates the opportunity for crime. Like the family, the community influences are also important in making criminals in our society. Now the family, the religious institution and local community of Bangladesh are less integrated and less cohesive mainly due to technological advancement, industrialization, and urbanization etc. Consequently, these institutions tend to lose their effective control over their members particularly in respect of transmitting traditional moral values and social standards which caused crime differently (Sarker, 2001). Besides, misuse of religious sentiment is another cause of different violence and criminal activities by the extremist religious groups (JMB, HUJI etc.) in Bangladesh. Moreover, insufficient recreational arrangement in academic institution stimulated young people to fulfill their recreational need by watching TV, movies, obscene literature, cinema magazine, pornographic shows etc. Besides these air culture, computer, internet, cyber café etc. creates opportunity for crime and criminality

among young generations and they can easily committed crime like blackmailing, fraud, cybercrime etc. in Bangladesh.

Political Factors: Politics provides a special tool for the explanation of crime causation in contemporary age. If we consider the present nature of global world, political factor is the first and foremost penetrating factor of crime in third world also. Undeveloped and marginalized country like Bangladesh, the role of political leaders and their activities are the prime factors for economy and other state apparatuses. Bangladesh is the only state where different political systems were adopted and practised. Since the end of British colonial rule in 1947, the people of the country have experienced all kinds of governments, an uncountable number of political parties, numerous political movements and uprisings-if not revolutions-military rule, bureaucratic rule, basic democracy, democracy, *caretaker government* (Italic mine) and so on; all these in a short span of time (Khan, 1996: 22). The patterns and trends of crime in Bangladesh changed day by day due to the impact of different political system. To explain the crime in Bangladesh after post war period, economy and failure of criminal justice system were not only the causes of crime, but also the politics after 1975, was main indicator to determined crime. The huge number of political murder and control over people's right increased because of changing nature of political scenario (military coup and bureaucratic control) after assassination of Mujib in 1975. During the military government (1976-1990), the rate of crime was decreased because of the domination of armed forces and their strict control over whole country. It is a matter of concern that, the negative role of administration in counting crime and under-reporting have influenced for determining actual number of crime in military age. Because of adopting negative policies (Political Party Regulation Act, Islamization, Structural Adjustment Policy, Nepotism and Favoritism) by the military government, various types' of crime (Corruption, riot and riot murder, terrorism, fundamentalist attack, bombing and murder) were increased in the long run. According to

police records, the rate of crime have rapidly increased in democratic age, due to politicization of criminal justice organ (Police, Court, Judiciary and Prison system) and ‘patronage of criminal’ under corrupted politician and bureaucrats. In our opinion, though the rate of crime have increased as a result of political conflict, lack of democratic culture among politician, massive violence after election, unemployment, denationalization of industry, uni-polar nature of global world, and war and terrorist policy after 1/11 in democratic era, the negative policy of military government played crucial role to provide the breeding grounds of crime in Bangladesh.

Criminal Justice System Factors: Criminal justice system is the legal apparatus of government for preventing, reducing or controlling the incidence of crime. As a legal agency of government, it consists of police, court, prison and correctional services. Considering that the rates of crime of a country mainly depends on the effective roles and functions of criminal justice system. Police are the initial arm of the system and its function are enforcement of laws, maintenance of order, investigation of crime, detection and arrest of criminals, collection of evidence and getting conviction. It is a matter of great concern that ‘The Police Act 1861’ and ‘The Police Regulation, Bengal 1943’ were designed to serve the colonial interest of an imperial power still govern the day to day functions of Bangladesh police. Additionally, the number of police personnel is important for the law and order situation of a country. It is said that for every 200-250 people there should be one police member. In Bangladesh the police-people ratio is five times bigger than required ratio. The total number population in Bangladesh has already crossed 140 million whereas the total number of police member is only 123197 (Kader & Hussain, 2008: 235). The police people ratio in Bangladesh is only 1: 1138 (<http://www.police.gov.bd>). Moreover, Bangladesh police faces many problems by the interference of political leaders, superior officers, bureaucrats and officials. In another study showed that about 95% investigations influenced by the political leader. And

about 64% influenced by superior officers. Colleague influenced about 29% and about only 21% by family member and relatives (Alam and Islam, 2011). Furthermore, the proper role of judiciary is the prerequisite of effective criminal justice system. But in practice the role of judiciary in our country is also questionable. Besides, prisons play a vital role in the administration of criminal justice system by assisting the courts in the due execution of the sentences awarded by them. In developed countries, prisons are considered as a correctional institution for the criminals whereas in Bangladesh prison does not play any correctional role for criminals. Overcrowding, lack of facilities, prison violence victimization, corruption and juveniles inmates are common problems of Bangladesh prisons. Finally, the ineffective correctional service for juvenile delinquents is also an important limitation of criminal justice system. Though, there are three correctional centres in Bangladesh but no after care services are available here. That's why after completing the correctional period a juvenile become a recidivist criminal in future.

Conclusion

The findings of the study reflect a number of significant outcomes. Firstly, aftermath of liberation war the law and order situation of the country degraded. In effect, the number of crime was high during the period of 1972-1975. The most common factors of crime during this period include unemployment, lack of economic growth, politicization of criminal justice system, availability of arms, corruption of state officials, natural calamity, poverty, famine and political fragmentation. Secondly, the rate of crime decreased during the period of 1976-1988; as the military government imposed a strong disciplinary control over the population and the government attempted to manipulate the official crime statistics in order to prove their success in reducing crime rate. The major reasons for decreasing crime during this regime includes steady economic growth, foreign aid and remittances, employment opportunity, strong control mechanism by government. After that, the rate of crime increased

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again from the period of 1988 to 1999; the reasons here are twofold, firstly, the movement against the military government started to rise after 1988 and the law and order situation became loose. Consequently, the number of crime started to become high again. On the other hand, after the fall of military government, in a democratic regime, people became encouraged to report the crime to police more than before. Finally, the rate of traditional violent and property crime did not fluctuate much from 1999 to 2006. Although crimes like corruption, organized crime and religious extremism increased significantly due to state patronization of conservative government toward such crime. Side by side, public security and justice is questioned in the context of urbanization, modernization, industrialization, family disintegration, politicization, ineffectiveness of criminal justice system etc. It is noted that political violence between dominant political parties was visible from 2006 to 2007 and the rate of crime was in peak during this period. In general, from the independence to 2009, although the number of violent and property crime decreased in general, however, new forms of crime such as acid throwing, eve teasing, sexual harassment, cyber-crime, drugs and human trafficking, terrorism and political murder started to rise day by day. Therefore, according to the police statistics, even though the rate of violent and property crime declined significantly, other forms of crime continued to rise in an alarming rate. The study concluded that economic, social and political factors are mostly responsible for changing the nature and patterns of crime than geographical, seasonal and criminal justice factors. Though there is lack of accurate crime statistics and empirical research on causation of crime; it requires wide attention. Researcher, academics, law enforcement personnel should come forward to conduct more studies to identify the challenges. Finally, various effective measures including formulating effective laws and policies, police reform, legal and justice system reform should be ensured to improve the situation and curb the problem of crime in Bangladesh.

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Notes

*The study was conducted in 2010, as such, the data from 1972-2009 have been taken to analyze the findings of the study. The study has constructed a trend analysis of the forty years data and the major purpose of the study was to describe the nature of trends of crime of this period. The time frame of this study was limited to forty years period (1972-2009), considering the future endeavor to conduct a separate study from 2010 to onwards.

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