

# Chapter 5

## Research Design



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### 5.1 Contextual Factors of Data Selection

This chapter describes the data sampling and methods of the study that were used. As mentioned already in Chap. 1, risky neighborhoods in Germany, Pakistan, and South Africa were placed in the scope. In order to investigate the issue of youth violence, the research team selected a sample from those cities well known for youth violence in the three different countries. The choice of the study location was challenging due to diversity and heterogeneity of the nation-wide population. Making the choice was subjected to understanding the grounded societal and economic conditions, the welfare structure of each society, the legal conditions, and specific risky urban neighborhoods in culturally different countries. Furthermore, it was important to identify the localities within the urban metropolitan cities, which were perceived as being more violent compared to the other locations within each country. The research team wanted to investigate the street norms and its connection with the violent behavior of the young people, while keeping in view migrant populations (for instance in Germany), ethnicity, language, and economic disparity (in the case of Pakistan) and compositions of organized groups/gangs (like South Africa). Indeed, there was a pluralistic environment to compare these societies. The population was also difficult to compare with different languages and ethnic diversities in a single country (examples Pakistan and South Africa) where people had unique cultural identities within geopolitically defined boundaries and peculiar economic backgrounds and social inequalities.

The magnitude, type, and nature of violence were also expected to vary across these three countries. Germany has the lowest level of officially recorded violence. Although founded that rightwing extremism existed in Germany (Sabbagh 2005) and further that increased rightwing populism creates a social climate hostile to foreigners (Kurtenbach 2018a; Piatkowska and Hövermann 2018), this was not the case in the neighborhoods we selected. Similarly, incidents of intolerance and extremism were also reported among the migrant populations of the country. Against this background of a low level of violence in Germany as well as the low level of reported violence

among youth in the German selected neighborhoods, these neighborhoods serve as a reference point—a starting point on a continuum of levels of violence—at least from a methodological point of view, to compare this with the varying situations in the other two countries. It was reported that some ethnic and religious people and places in Germany were marginalized. Ethnic minorities and migrants were excluded from mainstream society (Zdun 2007). It was also noted that the gap between the rich and poor was increasing among the German migrants and ethnic minorities, and this could be the reason that some of the young people were inclined toward deviance and violent activities or simply that they had time to spend on the street in the urban neighborhoods of Germany. They were also the victims of apathy, inclined toward delinquency due to an identity crisis, humiliation and lack of meaningful engagement, less parental interest in their children’s socialization, and institutional lassitude to engage young people. All of these factors lead to the establishment of some parts of the city, which were seen to be risky urban neighborhoods in Germany.

On the other hand, Pakistan was among the countries affected by intolerance, radicalization, extremism, and terrorism. It was “ground zero” for the “war on terror.” Collective violence (in terms of bomb blasts and street crime) was more common compared to violence committed by individuals. Although reported violent crimes are on the rise in Pakistan, regrettably there are no available records to distinctively classify which incidents of violence are or have been committed specifically by youth. In the field of academic research as well, only few homicide studies were conducted from the medicolegal aspects (Chotani et al. 2002; Farooq et al. 2010). Particularly, the last decade has been full of incidents of bomb blasts, killings, abduction, and street crimes, but there were scarcely any reported cases of the youth violence in Pakistan, except ethnic violence (Haleem 2003). Medicolegal studies, nevertheless, were limited to road accidents, fights, and reported every kind of homicide, without any classification or rural–urban distribution. Similarly, youth violence was not part of any of the political, social, and economic disparity debates. However, it was reported that parts of Karachi had gang violence (Layari gang war, Uzair Baloch gang and Muttahida Qaumi Movement affiliated gangs); however, they considered themselves “groups” rather than gangs. The mobility of the average citizen was even restricted in parts of the city, whereas other areas of the country did not experience any territorial control. In any case, the risky urban neighborhoods were not the focus of any of the sociological investigations or they were difficult places in which to conduct studies.

The level of the youth violence was reported to be high in South Africa. Parts of the South Africa were termed as “no go areas” for the security agencies. Gangs had territorial control and leadership of each gang was the unofficial authority of control in its territory (Mbembé and Rendall 2000). One could identify the recognized gangs in South Africa, whereas this phenomenon was almost nonexistent in the other two countries of this study (Germany and Pakistan). Although South Africa is middle-to high-income country on the African continent, it nonetheless has a high rate of homicide and organized gangs. Racial inequalities were still high despite the fact that apartheid period ended in 1990s (Ballard et al. 2006). Mistrust and the colonial legacy play a dominant role in South African society. The country has variations

**Table 5.1** Neighborhoods in Germany, Pakistan, and South Africa

Country	City	Selected neighborhoods
Germany	Berlin Dortmund Duisburg	Neukoelln (North), Wedding Nordstadt Marxloh
Pakistan	Rawalpindi Islamabad	Dhok Matkial <sup>a</sup> Bari Imam, France Colony
South Africa	Cape Town Durban	Hanover Park Umgeni/KwaMashu

<sup>a</sup>This locality was quite inaccessible due to military operation in the area and the research team replaced it with the Bari Imam neighborhood of Islamabad

in language, race, and ethnicity. However, these gangs were not mixed and more divided on the racial, linguistic, or ethnic lines. Often, they were organized under the leadership of gangsters who control the territory. However, we do not know much about the non-gang-related street violence and the norms beyond it in risky South African neighborhoods, which are in the spotlight of this study. South Africa was known for its violent gangs among these three different countries, cultures, and economies.

Keeping in mind the variations among these three societies, it was observed that there were more differences between the three societies than similarities. Thus, researchers selected only places which were closest to each other in terms of economic, social, and violent conditions in order to understand the *commonalities*. It was observed that young violent people were visible in each locality in the urban neighborhoods of these three countries. Both violent and nonviolent young people were either students or they were out of school and engaged in groups, which we may term as “loose gangs” and “lose groups” in Germany and Pakistan, or formal gangs in South African context (Kynoch 2005).

We selected different cities within each country, and within them, risky neighborhoods (Table 5.1). The profiles of the neighborhoods are described in the country-specific chapters, being Chaps. 6–8. However, we do observe a high level of variance between these neighborhoods, regarding violence and ethnic diversity, which reflects the differences at country level as well. However, all neighborhoods are hot spots of violence within their cities. Particularly, South Africa and Pakistan were important to understand variations as well as commonalities.

This study is qualitative in nature as it deals with deviancy and specific street and cultural codes (Anderson 1999; Ross 2018). Thus, the research team conducted in-depth interviews, and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with both violent and nonviolent youth and gathered expert opinions from key respondents. The FGDs were conducted in the initial phase, and the purpose was to understand the given conditions and pretest the tool for data collection. However, the adolescents were

observed to be portraying themselves as descent and socially accepted individuals during formal interviews in the presence of their fellows. They were bragging about being conformists, loyal to family, and affirmative of social norms. No one from the respondents in the group setting was willing to share real insight into violence-related norms. After two FGDs from each country, it was decided that face-to-face interviews and expert opinions were more appropriate, compared to FGDs.

## 5.2 Sampling Strategy

The researchers faced a number of challenges to determine the exact number for the sample for this study. Initially, we decided to take not less than 30 in-depth interviews through stratified, quota but purposive sampling. Some of the respondents would be interviewed through snowball sampling, if necessary. However, the recruiting for interviews was different between the countries. In Germany, community youth centers were the places where the interviews were done, while in Pakistan and South Africa more informal ways were needed to conduct the interviews. The ages of the interview partners were between 16 and 21 years. Although it was our intention at first, it was not possible to guarantee that we would have a mixed sample that would include participants who had criminal records. Respondents did not talk openly about it before the interviews or behaved phony in front of their peers. Thus, the interviews were single interviews in a private atmosphere and thus the juveniles could talk openly about their beliefs and biography and it turned out that some more reserved youth did indeed have a heavy record, while others had never had contact with the police. Therefore, every interview begun with a clarification of the goal of the study and then small talk about school, hobbies, the Dictaphone already switched on with the knowledge of the interviewee. After such a “warm-up phase,” which took between 5 and 15 min, the interview started by talking about the interview questions.

The researchers were also interested to include ethnic, linguistic, racial diversity along with their status as migrants and native respondents in order to make the data more representative and reflective of different social categories to maximize the validity and reliability of the research technique. Thus, the research team selected migrants (mainly EU countries, Turkey or of Arabic origin) from the German sample. The number of migrants in the German sample is quite high, 28 of the 30 interview partners have a so-called migration background, which means that one of their parents did not have German citizenship or were born in another country. This reflects the ethnic composition within those segregated neighborhoods in Germany, especially in migrant arrival areas (Kurtenbach 2018b).

From Pakistan, the research team selected 15 Pashtun respondents and 15 of Punjabi origin adolescents who were gathering in the risky urban neighborhoods in the three localities (Bari Imam and France Colony of Islamabad and Dhok Matkial in Rawalpindi). Although the Punjabi population proportion was higher in Pakistan (around 53%) compared to the Pashtuns (about 15%), it was in-line with the literature that indicated that both the higher reported delinquent acts and higher homicide

rates were observed among this ethnic group. Additionally, the sample areas have a representative population from both Punjabi and Pashtun ethnicities. Nonetheless, the research team from Pakistan was unable to find other ethnic representations in the study areas. They were not present in the study locale, nor could they be accessed during the study period.

In South Africa, it was quite challenging to select the sample. The researchers decided to conduct the interviews from the black (20 interview partners) and from the colored population (10 interviews). It was observed that there were rare cases of the white population engaged in youth-related violence in the urban neighborhoods of South Africa, and their overall population size was also limited (Steyn and Foster 2008; Thomson 2004). However, black youths were reported to be highly inclined toward youth gangs and their population size was high (Sawyer-Kurian et al. 2009).

Also, interviews with up to 10 experts per country were conducted, to understand the local cultural and social context of the youth violence, as well as the country-specific law and order situation. For instance, police often deal with the young deviants in every country and they control the area and their role is to manage and minimize criminal and deviant acts. However, their role and dealing with young people was different in each country. The role of police to deal with and control deviant youth was dominant in Germany. This role, though, was limited in Pakistan and South Africa, where the police were perceived as an oppressive institution to control people as per its colonial legacy, and did not hold moral authority to deal with crime and violence. Street youth, in contrast to the main population, do not obey law enforcement agencies and the criminal justice institutions, as per Anderson's code of the street. Elders were considered more responsible to control and manage the daily affairs, conflict and violence in Pakistan. Only in extreme cases was the police considered an option to deal with the adolescent violence.

The research team entered into the field and established connections with the interviewees after introducing themselves formally. They briefed them about the study objectives and got their permission to conduct interviews. Gatekeepers (in the Pakistani context) assisted to build a rapport with the respondents and it eased the interview process due to the confidence instilled by this process. A number of interviews were recorded with the permission of the respondents. Meanwhile, a number of interviews were only documented based on the verbal conversations as interviewees did not permit their voices to be recorded. Particularly, five interview partners (three from a Pashtun background and two Punjabi) abandoned the interviews and refused to have their conversations recorded in Pakistan. They were reluctant and felt uncomfortable. Similar experiences were also recorded in Germany and South Africa.

### 5.3 Interview Guidelines and the Analytical Strategy

The research team developed a comprehensive interview guideline, out of the theoretical discussion contained in Chap. 3, and which reflects the core elements of the code of the street. This included requests about daily activities of the juveniles,

delinquent or peaceful actors, and involvement and engagement in violent or nonviolent acts. Also, questions about family relations and their involvement in violent acts, law enforcement agencies, and trust or trust deficit were included in the semi-structured talks if needed. Finally, questions about the perception of the neighborhoods were included. Retrospectively, the interview guideline was an appropriate instrument for the interviews and it portrayed a broader picture of the code of the street. The interview questions are included in Table 5.2.

Based on intensive debates on project workshops, the research team developed an analytical framework for the study. It is in-line with Anderson street code, and it portrays the street norms related to the young persons' violent behaviors. The purpose is to evaluate and investigate the street code in order to understand the risky neighborhood and public spheres in three countries. Therefore, the data analysis was done in two steps, through coding by using MAXQDA 18 software. First, deductive coding of the core codes, listed in Table 5.2, was made. The purpose was to compare the most important elements of the code of the street in all three countries and to evaluate this approach at the same time. Findings of this step are presented in Chap. 9. Second, inductive coding was done to figure out additional, violence-related norms or justifications. The interviews from each country were coded in a separate MAXQDA dataset, to avoid that the findings of one country overlaid those from another or that a category was claimed through, which might not be true for more than one country. All interviews were coded by the four-eye principle, which means that a minimum of two researchers coded the material and controlled each other. This guarantees the validity of the coding. If necessary, a third researcher was asked to clarify contentious passages. Choosing this complex way of data analysis for comparison allows a cross-cultural comparison of violence-related norms and attitudes, evaluates if the code of the street is operating equally in every context. Furthermore, also additional categories were added to discuss street violence in risky neighborhoods, which are discussed more in detail in Chap. 10.

## 5.4 Ethical Concerns

This study insisted on getting the permission of the interview partners, ensured their anonymity, confidentiality, and a careful analysis of the data. We were very conscious of the need to manage these principals of the research ethics. We got permission from the respondents to discuss the street code. A number of respondents were willing to talk about it. Similarly, some respondents declined to discuss the issue or they left and declined to complete the interview. In any case, we maintained the confidentiality of the respondents and did our best to make our respondents comfortable and protect their privacy in-line with the research ethics. Furthermore, in Germany respondents received a 20 € stipend, but in Pakistan and in South Africa we avoided to go with money into risky neighborhoods, because of safety concerns. In Pakistan, we provided food, drinks, and snacks in order to talk and discuss the issue in-line with the local cultural context. It was improper to provide money to the respondents as per local customs.

**Table 5.2** Interview questions and empirical codes

Interview question	Code	Examples
What is respect?	Respect	A young man is respected in terms of his engagement in violent or nonviolent activities
What is a friend?	Friends and family	A friend assists, cooperates, and provides strength when needed during violent acts or he assists to avoid violent activities. He is trustworthy and highlights his friends' strength and covers their weaknesses
What is violence?	Perception of violence	Physical abuses, harm, or cursing a person is perceived as violence
What is success for you?	Success and aspiration	It is necessary to show off muscles to the opponents. Get success in education, employment and do not fail in exams, work, or assignment. Shame has a high value and one must avoid to be a victim of shame
What kind of clothes/tattoos do you (want to) wear?	Symbols	Often youngster wear clothes with tattoos, wear wristbands. Some people communicate with words or gestures, which represent the street code
What is disrespect?	Respect	Young person bulldozes others and imposes his will forcefully and ask others to follow his orders. Ordering people around and obedience of the others demonstrates power. Dishonor of a person or family is also disrespect
What is tough?	Acceptance of deviant behavior	A tough boy should be hard, physically strong, a fighter, and have capacity to resist and take a stand against others
How do you solve an ambiguous situation?	Acceptance of deviant behavior	Some may get support from the police when they are weak in a fight. Others ask elders (parents/guardians). Many call their friends, group members to fight with the second party and overcome the opponent
Who provides security?	Acceptance of deviant behavior	Friends support friends. Similar groups (like ethnicity, migrants, and gangs) support each other. They overcome and fight. They manage control over others
What is an enemy?	Enemy	The person who hurts one's group and cannot be relied upon is the enemy. An open mind must be kept about those who are not trustworthy
What makes your neighborhood unique?	Neighborhood perception	Drug trafficking is one sign. Often quarrels among the youngsters are another sign. Teasing, gazing at the girls, and an easy place to interact with a deviant person

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