

## THE DARK SIDE OF SOCIETY: CRIME FICTION AS A MIRROR OF PAKISTANI REALITIES AND FORENSIC LINGUISTIC INSIGHT

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### Abstract

*The Inspector Jamshed series, written by Ishtiaq Ahmad, is one of Pakistan's most influential works of crime fiction, offering rich insights into crime, law enforcement, and societal structures. This paper examines the series through the lens of Routine Activities Theory, a criminological framework that suggests crime occurs when three key elements converge: a motivated offender, a suitable target, and a lack of capable guardianship. The study explores how elite criminals, such as politicians and business magnates, exploit vulnerable targets within a society characterized by corruption, political instability, and weak law enforcement. Additionally, the paper integrates forensic linguistic analysis to examine the dialogue and narrative techniques used in the series. By investigating how criminals rationalize deviant behavior through language and analyzing Inspector Jamshed's moral struggles, the study reveals how language shapes power dynamics and ethical decision-making. The paper argues that the Inspector Jamshed series functions as both a form of entertainment and a social critique, shedding light on the flaws of Pakistan's criminal justice system. By combining criminological theory and forensic linguistics, this research offers a nuanced understanding of crime, justice, and morality in the context of a politically unstable society. Ultimately, the paper highlights the broader relevance of crime fiction as a tool for understanding social and legal issues, and how it reflects the tension between formal justice systems and the informal moral codes that govern society.*

**Keywords:** *Inspector Jamshed*, Espionage, Crime Fiction, Law Enforcement Ethics

### Introduction

The *Inspector Jamshed* series, authored by Ishtiaq Ahmad, is one of Pakistan's most influential and enduring crime fiction collections, occupying a special place in the hearts of readers. The series features the character of Inspector Jamshed, a highly resourceful, ethical, and fearless detective, who is tasked with solving high-stakes investigations that involve complex criminal conspiracies, political intrigue, and espionage. Over the years, the series has gained recognition not only for its gripping narratives but also for its ability to tackle crucial issues of law enforcement, crime, and societal dynamics within the context of Pakistan's unique socio-

political landscape. At the heart of the *Inspector Jamshed* series lies a rich interplay of crime and justice, with the detective navigating through a labyrinth of corruption, institutional inefficiencies, and moral ambiguities in his quest for truth. The novels take readers on a journey through the underbelly of Pakistani society, where political conspiracies intertwine with criminal behavior, and the lines between right and wrong blur as the characters—both good and bad—struggle to uphold their values amidst systemic corruption. From a criminological perspective, the *Inspector Jamshed* series serves as an invaluable lens through which to analyze criminal behavior, social deviance, and law enforcement in Pakistan. The novels are not simply about solving mysteries or catching criminals; they also serve as a social critique, highlighting how the justice system is often subverted by personal, political, or institutional interests. This nuanced portrayal of crime and justice provides insight into the moral dilemmas faced by law enforcement officers, the psychological and social forces that drive criminal behavior, and the often compromised nature of the criminal justice system in Pakistan. The novels offer a complex examination of the intersection between law, power, and justice, where the traditional role of the law is often undermined by those in positions of authority. This interaction between formally sanctioned law enforcement and informal practices or extra-legal methods reveals the inherent moral tension in the fight against crime and corruption, positioning Jamshed as an emblem of the struggle between personal ethics and professional duty. This paper aims to analyze the *Inspector Jamshed* series through the lens of key criminological theories such as strain theory, social control theory, and routine activities theory. These theories provide a framework for understanding the psychology and social context of criminal behavior and law enforcement in Pakistan, and how these dynamics are reflected in the novels. Through these criminological lenses, the paper will explore how the *Inspector Jamshed* series engages with societal issues such as criminal behavior, law enforcement dynamics, and the moral ambiguity that permeates the pursuit of justice. In the context of Pakistani society, which the novels depict as corrupt and politically charged, Inspector Jamshed becomes a symbol of integrity amidst compromise. His devotion to justice, however, is not without sacrifice. Throughout the series, Jamshed's commitment to righting wrongs often compels him to take unconventional actions—such as deception, coercion, and manipulation—to achieve his goal of justice. These actions raise important ethical questions, particularly about the limits of justice and the role of law enforcement in upholding it. In one such instance, Jamshed contemplates his morally dubious decisions:

***"Sometimes, to catch a criminal, you must think like one. It isn't easy, but when the law fails, there's no other choice" (Ahmad, 1994, p. 145).***

This quote underscores Jamshed's internal struggle, where the complexity of the situation leads him to question whether his personal ethical standards can withstand the pressures of a deeply flawed justice system. As he works within an institution marked by inefficiency and corruption, Jamshed frequently encounters situations where his commitment to the law is at odds with the actions required to achieve justice.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Crime Fiction and Its Role in Social Critique**

Crime fiction, as a genre, has long been used to critique social, political, and legal structures. According to Choudhry (2020), crime fiction in Pakistan serves as a tool for reflecting the failures of the justice system and exposing the pervasive corruption within legal institutions. The novels often explore themes of elite deviance, where the wealthy and powerful manipulate the system for personal gain. In Pakistan, these narratives often intertwine with political corruption and social inequalities. Hussain (2015) argues that crime fiction offers a mirror of societal challenges, showing how marginalized individuals and communities are often left vulnerable while those in power evade justice.

### **Routine Activities Theory and Crime in Literature**

Routine Activities Theory (Cohen & Felson, 1979) posits that crime occurs when three key elements converge: a motivated offender, a suitable target, and a lack of capable guardianship. This theory has been widely used in criminological research to understand patterns of criminal behavior in societies. The theory's application to crime fiction was explored by Khan (2017), who showed how criminal behavior in literature is often a result of systemic failures, lack of effective law enforcement, and the presence of motivated offenders exploiting vulnerable targets. In the *Inspector Jamshed* series, the elite criminals often represent motivated offenders, while ordinary citizens or political rivals serve as suitable targets. The failure of the legal system and political corruption represents the lack of capable guardianship.

### **Forensic Linguistics in Crime Fiction**

Forensic linguistics, the study of language in legal contexts, has been increasingly applied to crime fiction to analyze how language constructs power and moral positions. Hafez (2018) discusses how language in crime fiction not only advances the plot but also reflects societal norms and power structures. In the case of the *Inspector Jamshed* series, language plays a pivotal role in portraying moral dilemmas and ethical decisions. Javed (2017) highlights the importance of discourse analysis in examining the rhetorical strategies employed by both law enforcement officers and criminals, especially the use of neutralization techniques to justify deviant behavior.

### **Corruption and Social Control in Pakistani Crime Fiction**

The theme of corruption in Pakistan's legal system is central to the *Inspector Jamshed* series. Rahman (1996) notes that Pakistani crime fiction often exposes how political corruption, nepotism, and institutional inefficiencies prevent justice from being served. In the *Inspector Jamshed* novels, this is reflected in the portrayal of law enforcement officers who are either complicit in corruption or powerless to act against criminals with political connections. The failure of formal social controls is a recurring theme in Pakistani crime fiction, and Shaw & McKay (1942)'s social disorganization theory helps explain how weakened social institutions, like law enforcement, lead to increased crime and deviance.

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Selection of Primary Texts**

The study focuses on a selection of novels from the *Inspector Jamshed* series authored by Ishtiaq Ahmad, a significant work of crime fiction in Pakistan. The novels serve as a rich source for understanding the interplay between crime, morality, law enforcement, and justice within the context of a corrupt political system. Particular attention will be given to the novels where Jamshed interacts with elite criminals and uncovers political conspiracies, as these elements are central to the series' thematic exploration.

#### **Application of Routine Activities Theory**

Routine Activities Theory (Cohen & Felson, 1979) will serve as the central criminological framework for this study. According to this theory, crime occurs when three elements converge:

- A motivated offender who has the intent to commit a crime.  
A suitable target that can be exploited by the offender.  
A lack of capable guardianship, meaning weak law enforcement or political interference that allows crime to flourish.

#### **Forensic Linguistic Analysis**

In addition to criminological theory, forensic linguistic analysis will be employed to analyze the language used by characters in the series. This will focus on:

- Moral ambiguity in Inspector Jamshed's decision-making, where his ethical choices often conflict with the law.  
Techniques of neutralization used by criminals to rationalize their deviant actions, such as denial of responsibility or appealing to higher loyalties.  
Speech patterns that reflect social power structures, deviant behavior, and ethical dilemmas.  
The linguistic analysis will help in understanding the characters' motivations and the moral conflicts they face, which are central to the series' themes.

### **Data Collection**

Data will be gathered through a close reading of key excerpts from the *Inspector Jamshed* series. The focus will be on:

- Character speech: Dialogue from Inspector Jamshed, criminals, and law enforcement officials will be analyzed for linguistic patterns and moral discourse.  
Actions and decisions: The study will examine the ethical decisions made by Jamshed in relation to the crime he investigates and the systemic issues he encounters.  
Law enforcement ethics: Attention will be given to how Jamshed navigates the corrupt justice system while striving to maintain his integrity.

### **Data Analysis**

The data will be analyzed using both Routine Activities Theory and forensic linguistic methods:

- Routine Activities Theory will be used to identify instances in the novels where the three elements (motivated offender, suitable target, lack of capable guardianship) converge, leading to the occurrence of crime.  
Forensic linguistic analysis will focus on the linguistic strategies used by criminals to justify their actions and how Jamshed's ethical decision-making is reflected through speech acts and narrative voice.  
The linguistic analysis will reveal how language is used to negotiate moral boundaries and justify deviance, while the criminological analysis will examine how systemic issues within law enforcement and politics influence criminal behavior.

### **Criminal Behavior and Deviance: Espionage and Organized Crime**

#### **Crime and Political Intrigue**

The *Inspector Jamshed* series delves deep into the realms of espionage, political conspiracies, and organized crime, offering a complex and compelling portrayal of crime in Pakistan. The criminal activities in the series are not the work of ordinary criminals; rather, they are perpetrated by elite criminals—individuals in high-ranking positions within the government, business magnates, or even foreign agents who use their power, wealth, and political connections to manipulate systems for personal gain. These figures are often portrayed as untouchable, leveraging their influence to escape the scrutiny of law enforcement or, in some cases, to even control the judicial processes.

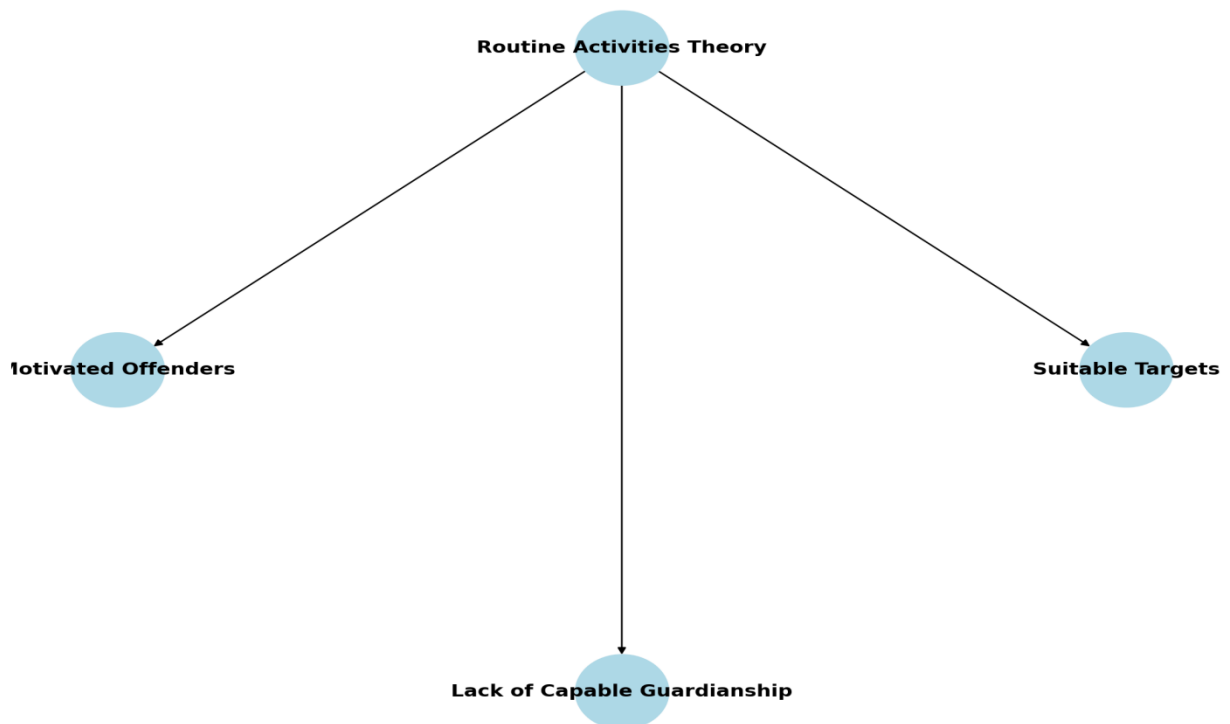
Jamshed’s constant battle against these high-level criminals reveals how political intrigue and corruption often serve as the breeding grounds for organized crime. The series suggests that, in a system where the wealthy and powerful control the levers of justice, those at the bottom of the social ladder are often left vulnerable and without recourse. This power dynamic forces Jamshed to challenge not only the criminals but also the political structures that protect them.

**Routine Activities Theory**

One of the criminological frameworks that can be applied to the crimes depicted in the *Inspector Jamshed* series is routine activities theory (Cohen & Felson, 1979). This theory posits that crime occurs when three key elements converge:

- A motivated offender: An individual who is willing to engage in criminal behavior for personal gain.
- A suitable target: A victim who is vulnerable to attack, often due to specific traits or circumstances.
- The absence of capable guardianship: The lack of effective protection from law enforcement or other societal institutions that can deter or prevent crime.

Routine Activities Theory Mapping: Indicators in the Inspector Jamshed Series



In the context of the *Inspector Jamshed* series, the motivated offenders are often individuals motivated by greed, power, or ideological objectives. These criminals may include political figures, business elites, or even foreign agents seeking to further their own interests at the expense of society. In particular, many of the offenders in the novels are politicians or government officials who are willing to use their position of authority for personal gain, including engaging in activities like espionage, bribery, and sabotage. These criminals have a

clear motivation—whether it is economic (e.g., embezzlement, insider trading), political (e.g., coups, subversion), or ideological (e.g., political extremism).

The lack of capable guardianship—both within the legal system and society at large—presents a vulnerable environment for these crimes to flourish. Jamshed's efforts to combat these criminals highlight the broken system in which individuals in positions of power are often protected by their ability to manipulate the legal and political frameworks around them. This lack of guardianship creates a power vacuum in which elite criminals can operate freely, further cementing their dominance and evading justice.

### **The Moral Complexity of Jamshed's Efforts**

Inspector Jamshed's pursuit of justice in the face of elite deviance is an arduous one. The absence of effective guardianship often forces him into morally compromised situations, where he must weigh the ethical consequences of his actions. For example, while he works within the bounds of the law, the complicity of the powerful and the corruption within law enforcement often push Jamshed to engage in acts of deception and coercion to ensure justice is served. His character's moral struggle is central to the narrative, showcasing the complexity of law enforcement in a society where institutional failure and elite criminality thrive.

Jamshed's efforts to restore guardianship within the system are framed as a direct challenge to the social order that allows powerful criminals to operate with impunity. His quest to maintain balance in the face of overwhelming institutional corruption reflects the resilience of individuals within the system, but also underscores the fragility of the justice system in the face of such entrenched power dynamics.

### **The Moral Ambiguities of Crime and Justice**

#### **Ethical Dilemmas in Law Enforcement**

One of the most compelling aspects of the *Inspector Jamshed* series is the exploration of moral ambiguity in law enforcement. The protagonist, Inspector Jamshed, is often faced with difficult decisions that challenge his ethical boundaries, raising critical questions about the role of law enforcement in a deeply corrupt society. These ethical dilemmas often force Jamshed to consider whether illegal tactics, such as deception, coercion, or violence, are justifiable in the pursuit of justice.

The tension between adhering to the law and seeking justice in a compromised system exemplifies the moral complexity inherent in law enforcement. This dynamic aligns closely with the concept of situational ethics—the idea that moral decisions are shaped by context and the specific circumstances of the situation (Cohen, 1973). In the case of Inspector Jamshed, his adherence to a personal moral code often conflicts with the reality of operating within a corrupt justice system where formal legal processes may fail. The novels show that while Jamshed is fundamentally committed to justice, his actions may sometimes deviate from traditional ethical standards to ensure the greater good.

For instance, Jamshed's use of deception is portrayed as necessary when dealing with high-profile criminals who have the means to evade the law. In one such scenario, he reflects on his moral stance:

***"The law may say one thing, but the truth is often hidden beneath layers of corruption. Sometimes, we must bend the law to make sure justice is done"***  
***(Ahmad, 1994, p. 193).***

This quote underscores the moral tension Jamshed faces as he navigates between personal morality and the practical realities of law enforcement in a society where corruption undermines formal justice systems. His decisions often highlight the complexity of ethical judgment, where ends justify the means when the law itself is broken.

At times, Jamshed's moral decisions parallel those of the criminals he pursues, whose behavior is often rationalized through techniques of neutralization (Sykes & Matza, 1957). These



criminals justify their actions by claiming that the system is inherently corrupt and that they are only exploiting its flaws. For example, one of the antagonists in the series states:

***"Why should I follow the law when it is the system itself that is broken? I am only taking advantage of the opportunities that the corrupt system provides"***  
(Ahmad, 1994, p. 215).

This rationalization mirrors the criminological concept of neutralization techniques, where criminals use justifications to make their deviant actions more palatable, thereby avoiding the guilt typically associated with criminal behavior. The novels juxtapose Jamshed's ethical struggles with the criminals' moral justifications, raising important questions about who gets to define justice and how moral decisions are made in a system that is far from perfect.

### **Social Critique: Corruption, Crime, and Legal Inefficiency in Pakistani Society** **Corruption and Legal Injustice**

A central theme in the *Inspector Jamshed* series is the inefficiency of the legal system and the widespread corruption within Pakistan's political and judicial institutions. Many of the criminals Jamshed encounters are able to exploit the weaknesses of these institutions to escape accountability. These crimes, often committed by elite individuals—politicians, business tycoons, and foreign agents—reflect the deep-seated inequalities in Pakistani society and the moral decay within the law enforcement structure.

The depiction of police corruption and political interference in the series reveals a justice system that is unable, or unwilling, to provide fair and equitable outcomes for all. Jamshed, despite his best efforts, frequently finds himself at odds with a system that protects the powerful while leaving the marginalized vulnerable. One of the key challenges Jamshed faces is the systemic protection of criminals by those in positions of authority, such as political elites or corrupt officials. In one instance, Jamshed's superior, a high-ranking police officer, advises him to drop an investigation into a powerful businessman:

***"Let it go, Jamshed. He's too influential. The law may not catch him, but he'll ensure the system does not punish him. Our hands are tied"*** (Ahmad, 1994, p. 267).

This quote starkly highlights the corruption within law enforcement and how political connections often shield criminals from prosecution. The moral dilemma Jamshed faces—whether to obey his superior or pursue justice despite the political ramifications—is central to the ethical struggle portrayed in the series. The inefficiency and corruption of the justice system provide a backdrop against which Jamshed must operate, ultimately forcing him to act outside the confines of the law to achieve justice.

### **Conclusion**

The *Inspector Jamshed* series provides a rich narrative for exploring the moral complexities of crime, law enforcement, and justice in Pakistan. Through the lens of criminology, the series offers a nuanced portrayal of the ethical dilemmas faced by law enforcement officers, the psychological motivations behind criminal behavior, and the challenges of navigating a corrupt and politically unstable justice system. By applying criminological theories—such as strain theory, social control theory, and routine activities theory—this paper highlights how the novels reflect the deeper social, political, and legal issues within Pakistani society.

In examining the moral ambiguities of crime and justice, the *Inspector Jamshed* series does not only entertain but also encourages readers to critically engage with the flaws of their own legal and political systems. The novels reveal the difficult decisions faced by those who seek justice within a system that is often deeply flawed, raising important questions about the limits of formal justice and the role of informal justice in maintaining social order. As Jamshed's actions demonstrate, in a corrupt system, the pursuit of justice often involves confronting personal and institutional moral compromises.

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