

Causes and Prevention of Juvenile Delinquencies

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INTRODUCTION

Juveniles are defined as any person under the age of 18 years. In any country, juveniles are considered the most important part of society. As we often come across this saying “Today’s Children are Tomorrow’s Citizens”, juveniles are expected to be the future leaders of our society. But in a country like India where the crime rate is increasing day by day, we find a lot of instances where juveniles are responsible for a particular that was committed. This is very devastating and shocking news for any country seeing their future leaders committing crimes ranging from small thefts to high profile murders, sexual offences, smuggling, etc. there are some reasons why these juveniles are committing crimes. There might be many factors forcing them to commit such crimes. The future of our country mainly depends upon these juveniles and if they are given proper education, they will contribute their talents for a better India. The reason might be anything behind the crimes that are committed by the juveniles but if this can be tackled and if the juveniles are provided with a proper environment, they can develop good skills and abilities. Such crimes committed by the juveniles should not be neglected as this has a high chance to become serious nature among them. juvenile crimes have now become a national concern and the government has expressed concern about preventing juvenile delinquency as well as punishing juveniles appropriately for the crimes committed by them.

DEFINITION OF A JUVENILE AND JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Initially, Section 2(a) of The Juvenile Justice Act, 1986.[\[1\]](#) defined a juvenile or a child as a person who has not completed 16 years of age if he is a boy and a person who has not completed the age of 18 years if she is a girl. Later, Section 2 of The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.[\[2\]](#) defines a juvenile or a child as a person who has not completed the age of eighteen years. Under the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015, a child in conflict with the law means “a child who is alleged or found to have committed an offence and who has not completed eighteen years of age on the date of commission of such offence”[\[3\]](#).

Delinquency is usually defined as an abnormality. In simple words, it is a behaviour that is usually not normal but anti-social behaviour. In a legal context, Juvenile delinquency is defined as the actions of a person who is below 18 years of age which does not abide by the law. But in general, Juvenile delinquency can be defined as the behaviour of a juvenile under a specified age limit that is anti-social and abnormal.

CAUSES OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

A person is not born as criminal but circumstances and specific situations make a person criminals. The environment they are exposed to inside as well as outside of their house, the behaviour of family members or any other close persons, mental and physical conditions of a person, play an most important role in shaping anyone’s life. In general, bad company, mental instability, love for adventures, social media,

poverty, etc., are some of the reasons for juvenile delinquency. When it comes to India, it can be said that poverty and social media play a major role in making juveniles commit crimes. The desire for money makes them inclined towards all such activities. And also, social media have the ability to imprint negative impacts on young minds. The reasons for juvenile delinquency can be majorly classified into two factors, a) social factors, b) personal factors.

SOCIAL FACTORS

- Broken Homes – A home may be broken up if one or both parents have died, one or both parents are suffering from serious health problems, if one or both the parents live far away for work purposes or if both the parents are divorced. It is a very important duty of parents to educate and interact with the children. If a home is broken up due to any reasons, it might leave an impact on the growth of the child. Children who lost their parental love and control will become more vulnerable to anti-societal influence
- Poverty – As discussed above, poverty is one of the major causes of Juvenile delinquency in India. Most of the juvenile crimes are committed by children who are from the poor family background. Parents in poor homes sometimes have to work for long hours to earn bread, so most of the time children in such homes will be left uncared for. These children fall under the influence of gangsters knowingly or unknowingly and they develop a desire for money which would lead to delinquency.
- Bad company – The peer group, the neighbours, and the companions will have a major impact on the behaviour of a child. If they are into bad companionship, this might lead to committing crimes. If the child joins a bad companionship or a group, it might lead to a change in the attitude of the child and there are high chances of him becoming delinquent.

PERSONAL FACTORS-

- Mental instability – It has been observed by many studies that a lot of a number of juvenile delinquents are mentally unstable. They might have been suffering from a mental deficiency or mental illness. As we all know, children who are mentally handicapped cannot make a distinction between what is right and what is wrong. Such children become vulnerable and are often used by gangsters for criminal purposes.
- Emotional problems – Emotional problems such as jealousy and inferiority are common among children who are delinquent. These children become delinquent when they feel that society is against them, they are not treated in a proper manner, and they are denied their basic rights. This type of inferiority will result in juvenile delinquency.

PREVENTION OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Prevention of juvenile delinquency requires a lot of effort on the part of the entire society. Only if the entire society contributes, we can successfully eradicate juvenile delinquency. Prevention of juvenile delinquency is considered an essential part of crime prevention in our society. By engaging young children in socially and legally usual activities, we can create awareness among young children as to what is right and what is wrong. Prevention of juvenile delinquency through family interventions has been proved as the best way to tackle juvenile delinquency. Family interactions have a major impact on shaping the life of the child. So, parents should stop nagging and use threats on children in order to gain control of the children. Some of the other ways to prevent juvenile delinquency are-

- EDUCATION – Educational and awareness programs such as programs to parents on how to behave with the children, how their behaviour will leave an impact on the children, how important is interaction with their children should be conducted. And children have to be properly educated in schools about social behaviors.
- PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION – programs should be conducted about parenting skills and how the interactions should happen between parents and children. Healthy discussions should take place between parents and their children in order to educate the child properly regarding the behaviour issues. Programs on how to respond to their child’s behaviours should be conducted for the parents.
- PREVENT BULLYING – Most of the time, children become victims of bullying near their neighbourhood by the other peer groups or on the school campus. This bullying might have an impact on the mental health of the children. Sometimes children might hold grudges and commit offences unknowingly.
- RECREATION – Recreation programs extend opportunities to the children to connect with other children and adults. They might make a positive friendship which might help them in future. These recreation programs should be designed in such a way that they would fit the personalities and skills that the children have. Extra-curricular activities, such as music, dance, sports, martial arts, painting, etc., have to be provided to the children to keep their minds refreshing and occupied.

CONCLUSION

Every country in the world has faced the problem or still facing the problem of juvenile delinquency at some point in time. However, the problem of juvenile delinquency is much higher in developing countries. In the developing world, there will be many factors that can affect the growth of a child. They are adversely affected by the changing conditions. People have to work hard to learn a living in the present era. And most of the time they had to leave their children alone in the home and they interact less with their children. Parent-children interaction is a most important aspect which can majorly influence the shaping of a child’s life. In order to tackle the juvenile delinquency problem, every person in society has to contribute to it for the successful eradication of juvenile delinquency. Separate rules have to be made for different kinds of crimes committed by them. If they are really found guilty of the offence, they have to be punished appropriately in a rehabilitation centre. It is important to educate parents on how to behave with their children if they commit any mistake and it is also important to provide children with proper legal and social education so that they can understand what is wrong and what is right.