

Juvenile Delinquency in Rajasthan: A Sociological Review



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Abstract

Children are innocent enough to be driven in any direction. It becomes easier for a person to drive the children in a negative direction when they feel uncomfortable with their family members, kinsmen, peer-groups due to the aggressive nature of the parents, quarrels and wars of tongue of the family members, immorality of the members of the peer-groups, separation of the parents, scarcity of food and other facilities at home.

In India, the cases of juvenile delinquency are increasing in spite of the various governmental and non-governmental efforts in the field. Media, in addition to the other factors, is especially responsible in increasing the number of cases of juvenile delinquency. Rajasthan is one of the popular states of India which receives thousands of tourists everyday. It too is not an exception to it. The children of the urban Rajasthan are more in the habit of committing such acts that fall in the category of juvenile delinquency. Delinquency is not limited only to the boys, rather it involves even the girls that include both the urban and the rural as well as both the educated and the uneducated girls. There are several factors responsible for the increasing cases of juvenile delinquency, but it is true that every form of juvenile delinquency has an adverse effect on the personality of the children who are once entrapped in it.

The paper is a review study carried on a few selected research papers found available in the various research journals, and that were written by both the Indian authors and the foreign ones. The paper highlights the various aspects of juvenile delinquency, and makes a special focus on juvenile delinquency in the state of Rajasthan where it is taking several innocent children into its tight grip.

Keywords: Juvenile, Delinquency, Delinquents, Criminals, Socialization, Goal-oriented.

Introduction

Bishwa Nath Mukherjee's Psychological Approach to Juvenile Delinquency is a relevant document on the juvenile delinquency in India. According to him, "Delinquency is a legal term which denotes acts of varying degrees of social consequence from mere naughtiness to major assault, punishable by law. It is commonly used to mean the mis-deeds of the juveniles only which are harmful to the Society. An adolescent is said to be a juvenile delinquent when he starts stealing, assaulting, indulging in sex offences and develops symptoms like pathological lying and truancy. Such offences are termed criminal actions when committed by a person beyond the age handled by the juvenile courts.

In India, the young offenders who fall in the age group 7-18 years, are juveniles. The Indian Penal Code uses the term 'juvenile offence' for the offences committed by the children of this age group, rather than the term delinquency just in order to separate them from the criminals lest the term 'crime' or 'criminal' should make the juvenile destructive in nature and temperament.

According to the Reformatory School Act 1876 & 1897, a person below the age of 15 years, convicted of any offence punishable by imprisonment or transportation is a juvenile offender. In order to make the hearing of such cases, there are special courts known as 'juvenile courts' to try out the youthful offenders.

Scenario of juvenile delinquency in Rajasthan

The scenario of juvenile delinquency in Rajasthan is too embarrassing. The Rajasthan police records reveal that the juveniles commit even the brutal cases like murder, rape etc. According to the report of India Today, an alarming high number of the cases of juvenile delinquency are there in Rajasthan. In 2011, the number of cases of rape, murder, attempt to murder were respectively 79, 71 and 65. Of course, there is the arrangement of one correction home in each of the districts of Rajasthan, and of one special home in Ajmer where delinquents who are above 16 and involved in heinous crimes are shifted.

Review of literature

1. Arun Kumar Agnihotri (2003), in his research article entitled Juvenile Delinquency: Scenario in Mauritius, finds that despite the reduction in total crime, the cases involving wounds & blows, damaging property and sexual assault (i.e. attempt upon chastity and rape) are found to be increasing. Rising trends in family problems (i.e. extramarital affairs, alcoholism, divorce and financial) and children problems (i.e. child with psychological problems, child with behavior problems and child neglect) in 2000 are thought to be important factors responsible for such crimes. The study stresses that, the improvement of financial condition, stability of family and the fight against alcoholism can play a major role to achieve this goal of reduction in crime among juveniles. Pediatricians can play a major role in violence prevention.
2. Faisal ibhram al matalaka and Mohammed Hussainat (2012), in their joint research paper titled Juvenile Delinquency and Family Environment in Jordan, wrote that environmental variables like size of the family , economic deprivation , parental deprivation , family discipline , inter parental relationship , child – parent relationship and parental acceptance – rejection play an important and effective role in the developmental growth of personality as well as social behavior of the delinquents .
3. Kavita Sahmey (2013), in A Study on Factors Underlying Juvenile Delinquency and Positive Youth Development Programs, elaborates that the influence of the media on the psychosocial development of children is profound. With advent of communication technology in recent times, a child's exposure to media including television, radio, music, video games and the Internet, has increased manifold. Direct impact of media was not pronounced in the findings of the study, except a few cases of theft. Overall, the perception regarding fairness of justice, both before and after the offence, was reported to be positive by the respondents. The results also indicated that owing to lack of funds and resources, the positive development measures for the juveniles were conspicuous by their absence.
4. Dr. Madhuker S. (2013), in the project report entitled A Study on Efficacy of Enhanced/Increased Age Prescription for Male Child under Juvenile Justice (Care & Protection of Children) Act, 2000, informs that the 'juvenile delinquency' has become a major 'law & order' problem for the law implementing agencies, especially for the 'police officials' and 'officials of juvenile homes'. The existing legal provisions seem to be ineffective in controlling the rising trend of juvenile delinquency. It was further fuelled by the amendment Act of 2000 through which the cut-off age for a male juvenile was increased from 16 years to 18 years. The said amendment was carried on the basis of a consideration that a male person of 17-18 years is not mature enough to be called an adult; but, it seems to have backfired when we see the present day ground realities. It is found that majority of the juveniles who are in conflict with law belong to poor socio-economic background. A large section of this group either has no school education, or if they have school education, it is up-to primary level only. An interesting thing to note here is that despite of having poor educational background, this group of juveniles has knowledge and awareness, both, of legal provisions and protections given under criminal justice system for them. The factors that play important role, in negative sense, in dealing with the issue of juvenile delinquency are, 'parental negligence', 'friend circle', 'lure for money, name & fame', and 'no fear of police and courts'.
5. Rolf Loeber, David P. Farrington, David Petechuk (2013), in their study Bulletin 1: From Juvenile Delinquency to Young Adult Offending (Study Group on the Transitions between Juvenile Delinquency and Adult Crime), report that the relationship between offending and age is bell-shaped. The prevalence of offending (the percentage of offenders in a population) tends to increase from late childhood, peaks in the teenage years (around ages 15-19), and then declines in the early 20s. This bell-shaped age trend is called the age-crime curve, which is universal in all Western populations. However, age-crime curves may vary in significant ways. For example, the age-crime curve for violence tends to peak later than that for property crime; the age-crime curve for girls peaks earlier than boys; the curve is also higher and wider for young males (especially those of a minority status) growing up in the most disadvantaged compared to advantaged neighborhoods.
6. Dr. Shivani Goswami & Dr. Neelu Mehra (2014), in their research paper titled Juvenile Justice Systems in United States and India: Modern Scenario and Much Needed Modifications, wrote that the number of serious, monstrous and odious crimes committed by juveniles are mounting up every day as these young offenders very well know that they can easily get free even after committing such ferocious, heart piercing acts.
7. Li Jucai (2014), in the study An Analysis of the Psychological Causes of Juvenile Delinquency, observes the issue of juvenile delinquency from

the psychological point of view, and holds that juvenile delinquency is a conspicuous social problem. A probe into the characteristics and laws of its formation may have real social significance.

8. Dr. M. Buvaneswaran (2014), in his study A Study of the Causal Factors Leading Juveniles to be in Conflict with the Law in Tamilnadu: Sociological Perspective, explained that Juvenile Delinquency is one of the serious problems of deviation which the children of almost all the modern societies of the world are facing. It is non-conformist behavior on the part of the child and it does manifest as a problem of personal disorganization but also a symptom of social break down. The phenomenon has been considered as a matter of great concern for every class of society down the ages in one or the other forms.
9. David L. Jones (2014), in his study Trends in Juvenile Delinquency discussed factors such as unemployment rates, high school dropout rates, poverty, and juvenile delinquency case rates in the United States. Further, the paper gives sample data types related to the mentioned methodologies that are used in performing the research together with their sources. Within the context of the study, the method of longitudinal analysis is the main method of data assessment used in establishing the link. The study indicates that longitudinal analysis method is vital in the analysis of variables of the same type that are meant to be compared within a given range or period of time
10. Mishra Elsie (2014), in his study Risk factors in family : A Study of Delinquent Children, discussed that family factors play a significant role in development of delinquency in the children. The children who are from broken home or are homeless commit more crime in comparison to their counterparts. But, it is seen not to be true in case of India. In India family members share an unseen bond of cooperation, harmony and interdependence. But what causes the concern in India is that children living with parents commit more crime than those children who are homeless and children living with guardians as per the National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB).

Objectives of the Study

1. To study child psychology and to concentrate on the various behavioural and attitudinal aspects of the children
2. To be familiar with the personality traits of the children who are considered goal-oriented
3. To be familiar with the personality traits of the children who get deviant
4. To learn about those children who develop anti-social attitude
5. To go into the depth of the meaning and concept of juvenile delinquency
6. To study the status of juvenile delinquency in the state of Rajasthan

7. To explore and study the causes of juvenile delinquency
8. To find out the effects of juvenile delinquency on the personality and family of the children
9. To find out the effects of juvenile delinquency on the society
10. To interpret the reformatory measures to check and control juvenile delinquency enforced by the government.

Hypothesis

1. Children have their own personality traits that lead them either to a positive side or negative side in future
2. All the children are not alike, and this difference is caused by the family and social environment
3. Those who meet a healthy socialization get inclined to certain goals
4. Those who meet an unhealthy socialization get deviated from the socio-cultural norms
5. Juvenile delinquency is a universal issue and is found all over the world
6. Family is responsible for juvenile delinquency
7. Physical and mental disorder, over-ambitions and desires of the children lead them to child delinquency
8. Poverty, penury and scarcity of money leads the children to juvenile delinquency
9. Juvenile delinquency has an adverse effect on the personality, family, career, marriage and future of the children.
10. Juvenile delinquency prevails in Rajasthan
11. The urban children are found to be more delinquent than the rural children.

Methodology

The paper is a review article designed on the theme of juvenile delinquency. For the systematic review making, research design was made, and inductive method of study was chosen. The steps that were observed to carry out the research include-selection of the title after much brooding over the theme of juvenile delinquency; search for the theme-related literature on the internet through its various sites; selection of the relevant studies that were supposed to be fruitful for supplying the required information and for adding new knowledge; thorough study of the selected research papers in order to get a sufficient feedback on the theme; classification of the studies on the basis of the nativity of the authors (Indian studies and the studies carried out abroad), year of the study and the contents; content analysis, and finally, arriving at findings and conclusion.

Findings

1. Delinquency begins with varying degrees of social consequence from mere naughtiness to major assault, punishable by law
2. The major factors that lead a normal child to juvenile delinquency include size of the family, economic deprivation, parental deprivation, family discipline, inter parental relationship, child – parent relationship and parental acceptance – rejection
3. The children in Rajasthan fall prey to juvenile delinquency under the influence of television, radio, music, video games and the Internet

4. Broken homes, family environment, friend-circle, over-ambitions etc. are responsible for turning a child into juvenile delinquent.
5. In Rajasthan, juvenile delinquency is found more in cities than villages
6. It is more among the boys than the girls
7. It is more among the uneducated adolescents than the educated ones
8. Most of the juvenile delinquents commit the cases relating to wounds & blows, damaging property and sexual assault, attempt upon chastity and rape.
9. The existing legal provisions seem to be ineffective, and it needs amendment in the interest of the future and safety of the juvenile delinquents
10. Juvenile delinquency spoils the life and career of the delinquents for ever
11. Some better reformatory system needs to be introduced in Rajasthan for the juvenile delinquents.
12. The cases of juvenile delinquency in Rajasthan are constantly increasing

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