

Trends and Factors Associated with Juvenile Delinquency: A Study from India

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ABSTRACT

Children are the most guileless creations. However, they develop deviancy in them due to various social and environmental factors which impinge upon their innocence and propels and prods them to be deviants. In the present era, juvenile has become a major social problem with a rise seen in number of children getting involved in various unlawful activities. Involvement of both male and female delinquents in various offences such as theft, burglary, riot, murder, and rape, carrying illegal arms and drugs, gambling activities has increased enormously. The analysis of NCRB data from the year 2006-2016 collected from the States and Union Territory of India exhibits that juvenile crime is rising at an alarming rate. The paper explains various trends observed in juvenile crime based on IPC and SLL crimes, age of the offending and gender of the offenders as well the various attributes of the juveniles apprehended. The analysis of these data found that most juveniles have become cruel victims of various socio-economic compulsions like poverty, lack of parental guidance, lack of education, peer pressure etc. The problem of juvenile delinquency requires special attention and a child-friendly approach towards protection and prevention of children for becoming deviants.

Key Words : Juvenile delinquents, Crimes, Age of offending, Attributes, NCRB reports

INTRODUCTION

Juvenile delinquency is one of the banes of modern time, the most challenging and complex social problem faced across the globe. It denotes criminal act committed by children who are below the age of eighteen years. The problem of juvenile delinquency is not only faced by developed countries but also by developing and under developed countries. Like many other countries around the world, the rise in juvenile delinquency is a major concern in India too.

India is the second most populous country of the world. Children make up 39 % of the total population of India (Childlineindia.org.in, 2018). 28% of the children population lie in the age group of 6-10 year followed by 27% in the age group of 11-16 years and 16% in the age group of 16-18 years. 21.9% of the Indian population resides below the National poverty line (Asian Development bank, 2018). Children living in extreme poverty in India account for more than 30% alone (UNICEF and World Bank, 2016). Extreme poverty along with other factors like parental ignorance, lack of proper education, bad neighbourhood, peer influence, migration, cultural conflict, excess use of

internet, frustration due to less available opportunity etc. (Ferdousi, 2011) act as some of the major attributes which lead to the development of criminal behaviour in children. Lack of proper control by parents, guardians as well as society along with lack of self-control lead to deviancy in children (Karzon, 2008 and Ferdousi, 2011).

According to National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) report for the year 2013, the total number of IPC (Indian Penal Code) and SLL (Special and Local Laws) crimes committed by juveniles have increased by 13.6% and 2.5%, respectively in comparison to that of previous year. Juvenile crime constitutes just 1.2 per cent of the total crime occurring in India. Every year incidences of crime by juveniles have shown a steady increase. This rise in juvenile delinquency can be explained by attributed to factors like low income of the family, the kind of relation a child have with parents, the education received by children etc. The paper tries to find out if any relationship exists between the above attributes and juvenile delinquency as well as to study. The juvenile crime trends based on gender, the type of crimes committed and the age of the juvenile offender.

Research Objectives :

- 1) To analyse the juvenile delinquency trends based on age, gender, type of crime and attributes by which juveniles are classified in NCRB reports
- 2) To understand the attribute leading to juvenile delinquency

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted with the data obtained from NCRB website about juvenile delinquency. NCRB compiles crime data from all the 36 States and Union Territories of India. The information on various crimes and offenders are collected from police reports, finally being compiled into an annual report under publication titled Crime in India (Mukherjee *et al.*, 2001). Juvenile delinquency data from NCRB reports from 2006 till 2016 are taken into consideration. The data have been then categorically divided based on the classifications provided in Crime in India reports. IPC crimes have been divided into five categories namely offences affecting the body (murder, attempt to murder, hurt, kidnapping and abduction), offences against woman (rape, sexual harassment, molestation), offences against public tranquillity (rioting), offences against property (theft, dacoity, robbery, burglary) and miscellaneous offences (cruelty by husband/ relatives). SLL crimes are divided into five categories, crime against scheduled castes and scheduled tribes (SC/ST Atrocity Act), offences against state related Acts, arms/explosive (Arms Act and Explosives and Explosive Substances Act), information technology, liquor, arms and narcotics drug (Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act) and other regulatory and enforcement act (Gambling Act, Excise Act and Prohibition Act).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The information collected about juvenile delinquents from the NCRB reports are then presented in the form of graphs and tables based on the categorization of IPC and SLL crime. This presentation of the data shows the growth and fluctuation pattern of various crime committed by juveniles over a decade. The graphical representation of the data will also provide information about the type of crime most commonly committed based on age and sex of the offender, the states which have highest crime rate under various crime heads and various attributes which may have led to development of criminality in juveniles.

Trends of Juvenile Delinquency from 2006 – 2016 :

As per the NCRB reports, crimes committed by juveniles like theft, rape, murder, hurt etc. have increased steadily over the years. It is evident from the reports that juvenile crime rate has been steadily increasing over a decade from 1.9 to 2.6 per cent as well as an increase is found in crimes committed by juveniles in the age group of 16-18 years. Based on the understanding of the following reports various trends relating to juvenile delinquency are discussed below:

Table 1 : Incidences of juvenile crime, Percentage of juvenile crimes to total crime and Rate of crime by juvenile from 2006-2016			
Year	Incidence of juvenile crime	Percentage of Juvenile Crimes to Total Crimes	Rate of Crime by Juveniles
2006	25817	1.1	1.9
2007	27028	1.1	2
2008	27691	1.2	2.1
2009	28247	1.1	2
2010	25298	1	1.9
2011	27962	1.1	2.1
2012	31973	1.2	2.3
2013	35861	1.2	2.6
2014	38565	1.2	2.7
2015	33433	1.1	2.5
2016	35849	1.2	2.6

Source: NCRB reports from 2006-16 in Crime in India

As evident from Table 1 an increase in incidences of juvenile crimes is seen over a decade. The percentage share of the crime committed by juvenile to the total cognizable offences has remained 1.2 or 1.1. The rate of crime committed by juveniles has increased steadily over the years. Along with the rise in incidences of juvenile crime, an increase is seen in the number of juvenile (both boys and girls) apprehensions.

Table 2 : Total juvenile apprehended and Juvenile apprehended based on gender			
Year	Total juveniles apprehended	Boys	Girls
2006	32145	30375	1770
2007	34527	32671	1856
2008	34507	32795	1712
2009	33642	31550	2092
2010	30303	28763	1540
2011	33887	31909	1978
2012	35123	33205	2058
2013	43506	41639	1867
2014	48230	46638	1592
2015	41385	40468	917
2016	44171	43089	1082

Source: NCRB reports from 2006-16 in Crime in India

Table 2 clearly displays that juvenile apprehended under various IPC and SLL crimes have grown in considerable numbers in the present time. Involvement of boys under various crimes is seen to be far more than girls. The total number of boys apprehended under various crime has shown a steady increase whereas fluctuation in the number of girls apprehended under various crime can be observed over the period.

Types of Crime :

Crime can be broadly divided into two parts: IPC crimes and SLL crimes. Various types of crime have been classified under these two categories. Based on the classifications of crime these two categories are further subdivided. IPC crime has been subcategorized into: crime against body, crime against state, crime against property, crime against woman and miscellaneous crimes. SLL crimes have been subcategorized into: crime against scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, offences against state related Acts, arms/explosive, information technology, liquor, arms and narcotics drugs act and other regulatory and enforcement act. Based on these categorization of crime, the following crime trends are observed in case of juvenile delinquents:

Table 3 : IPC Crimes Committed by Juvenile Delinquents from 2006-2016											
Year/Type of Crimes	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Murder	605	672	743	844	679	888	990	1007	841	853	892
Attempt to Murder	489	547	563	603	543	642	876	825	728	980	933
Hurt	355	3810	4257	3646	3800	4096	4681	4902	1568	1027	1151
Kidnapping and Abduction	271	301	254	396	524	760	789	1121	1455	1630	1538
Riot	988	1440	1574	1422	1081	1347	1690	1486	1092	1017	1315
Theft	5316	5606	5615	5253	4930	5320	552	6386	6717	6046	7717
Burglary	2675	2603	2702	2431	2271	2609	2625	2860	2546	2605	2747
Robbery	321	409	500	72	551	639	767	904	1024	1358	1276
Dacoity	99	144	161	150	97	134	174	160	182	193	218
Rape	656	746	776	798	858	1149	1175	1884	1989	1688	1903
Sexual Harassment	148	129	132	153	174	168	183	312	113	111	81
Molestation	488	476	560	474	546	573	613	1424	1591	1439	1540
Cruelty by Husband and Relatives	219	302	239	284	283	322	261	281	209	97	0

It is clearly evident from table 3 that juveniles apprehended under crimes like murder, attempt to murder, hurt and kidnapping and abduction have increased immensely. Incidences of riots committed by juvenile increased over the year with marginal decrease in some years. Theft and robbery committed by juveniles are rising while burglary and dacoity are showing minor fluctuations in number of incidences in some years over their increasing trend. Incidences of rape and molestation of woman committed by juveniles have increased enormously. Involvement of juveniles in the incidence of cruelty against woman by husbands and relatives has increased till the year 2013 and

Table 4 : SLL Crimes Committed By Juveniles from 2006-2016											
SLL Crimes/Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Arms Act	256	279	257	223	154	159	177	230	160	187	228
Explosives and Explosive Substances Act	4	8	7	16	13	11	16	14	8	15	5
Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act	57	64	66	61	82	78	87	142	137	123	172
Sc/St (Prevention of Atrocities) Act	41	52	45	21	28	34	95	70	48	33	17
Information Technology Act	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	17	22
Gambling Act	891	780	596	1149	326	424	326	652	432	218	211
Excise Act	520	528	357	465	249	198	278	323	325	152	225
Prohibition Act	600	496	398	592	314	313	319	360	2079	130	173

Source: NCRB reports from 2006-16 in Crime in India

reduced in the year 2014 and 2015. Incidences of cruelty by husband and relatives have been removed from the list of IPC crimes for juveniles.

Incidence of SLL crimes against juveniles have shown a fluctuating trend over the years. As seen in Table 4 incidences of crimes included in Arms Act and Narcotic drugs and psychotropic substance Act against juveniles have increased considerably over the years. While incidences of crime against children under Gambling Act, Excise Act, Prohibition Act, SC/ST (prevention of atrocities) Act and Explosives and explosive substances Act have reduced over the years.

Table 5: Age wise IPC crimes committed by juveniles from 2006- 2016

Year	7-12 Years		12-16 Years		16-18 Years	
	Number	%	Numbers	%	Numbers	%
2006	1595	5	12535	39	18015	56
2007	1460	4.2	12114	35.1	20953	60.7
2008	1281	3.7	12272	35.6	20954	60.7
2009	1133	3.4	10741	31.9	21768	64.7
2010	927	3.1	10123	33.4	19253	63.5
2011	1211	3.6	11019	32.5	21657	63.9
2012	1286	3.2	12063	30.3	26473	66.5
2013	1330	3.1	13346	30.7	28830	66.3
2014	872	1.8	11220	23.2	36138	75
2015	602	1.5	11052	26.7	29731	71.8
2016	637	1.4	10957	24.8	32577	73.8

Source: NCRB reports from 2006-16 in Crime in India

Age of Juveniles :

It is clearly seen in Table 5 that highest number of juveniles apprehended under various IPC crimes falls in the age group of 16-18 years. An increase is observed in the number of juveniles apprehended in the age group 16-18 years over the years. A decrease is seen in the number of juveniles apprehended in the age group of 7-12 years and 12-16 years under various crimes. Every year the highest number of juveniles are apprehended in the age group of 16- 18 years followed by

Table 6 : Age wise gender categorization based on IPC crimes committed by juveniles from 2006-2016

Age/ Type of Crime	7-12 Years			12-16 Years			16-18 Years		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Murder	183	27	210	3107	209	3316	7541	343	7884
Attempt to Murder	94	11	105	2491	93	2584	7145	175	7320
Hurt	925	86	1011	13370	928	14298	28360	1536	29896
Kidnapping and Abduction	75	37	112	1770	151	1921	7567	315	7882
Theft	3267	261	2528	25990	798	26788	48714	959	49673
Robbery	95	2	97	2769	23	2792	7956	22	7978
Burglary	1581	60	1641	15869	207	16076	21274	275	21549
Dacoity	21	1	22	492	12	504	1985	24	2009
Riots	399	45	444	5707	431	6138	17431	810	18241
Rape	245	5	250	4295	37	4332	10199	82	10281
Molestation	100	7	107	2859	24	2883	7696	42	7738
Sexual Harassment	16	0	186	465	6	4781	1567	5	1572
Cruelty By Husband	15	21	36	388	304	692	1332	871	2203

Source: NCRB reports from 2006-16 in Crime in India

juveniles in the age group of 12-16 years and 7-12 years.

Theft, hurt, burglary, riots, rape and murder are the crimes which are highly committed by both boys and girls of all ages throughout the years as seen in Table 6. Theft as a crime is committed highly by both boys and girls over all the three age groups, followed by burglary, hurt and riots for both boys and girls. Boys in all these age groups have committed more crimes like theft, hurt, burglary, riots, rape and murder. In case of girls, crime like theft, hurt, burglary, riots and cruelty by husband and relatives show a rising number in all age groups.

Table 7: Age wise SLL crimes committed by juveniles from 2006- 2016						
Year/ Age	7-12 Years		12-16 Years		16-18 Years	
	Number	%	Numbers	%	Numbers	%
2006	485	9.2	1640	31.3	3121	59.5
2007	310	6.5	1434	30.2	3012	63.3
2008	178	5	1123	31.7	2244	63.3
2009	177	3.8	1128	24.2	3360	72
2010	169	6	786	27.8	1877	66.2
2011	333	10.7	971	31.1	1817	58.2
2012	403	9.3	1117	25.6	2837	65.1
2013	394	8.3	1321	27.9	3026	63.8
2014	204	3.6	686	12.1	4774	84.3
2015	51	2.2	515	22.3	1745	75.5
2016	24	1	610	26	1711	73

Source: NCRB reports from 2006-16 in Crime in India

It is evident from Table 7 that juveniles apprehended under various SLL crimes have decreased over the years. A significant decrease in number of juveniles apprehended in the age group of 7-12 years is found while fluctuation is observed in the number of the juveniles apprehended in the age group of 12-16 years and 16-18 years. Highest number of juveniles in the age group of 16-18 years have committed more SLL crime, compared with juveniles in the age group of 7-12 years and 12-16 years.

Table 8 : Age wise gender categorization based on SLL crimes committed by juveniles from 2006-2016									
Age/ Crimes	7-12 Years			12-16 Years			16-18 Years		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Arms Act	16	0	16	510	4	514	1968	1	1969
Explosives and Explosive Substances Act	4	0	4	41	0	41	128	2	130
Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act	19	0	19	226	21	247	924	25	949
SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act	10	0	10	128	12	140	409	22	431
Information Technology Act	8	0	8	15	0	15	60	1	61
Gambling Act	34	0	34	1285	61	1346	5761	70	5831
Excise Act	22	8	30	806	45	851	2862	130	2992
Prohibition Act	58	10	68	764	174	938	4057	987	5044

Source: NCRB reports from 2006-16 in Crime in India

Table 8 clearly shows that boys of all ages have committed more crime than girls. More juveniles (both boys and girls) in all age groups have been apprehended under Gambling Act, Excise Act and Prohibition Act. Increase in number of juveniles especially boys is observed in crimes like Arms Act and Narcotic drugs and psychotropic substance Act in the age group of 12-16 years and 16-18 years.

Classification of juveniles apprehended based on different attributes from 2006-2016
NCRB has identified the three attributes of juvenile delinquents namely:

Table 9 : Classification of Juveniles Based on Educational Status				
Years	Illiterate	Primary	Above Primary But Below Matric	Matric / H.Sec. and Above
2006	7975	12688	9405	2077
2007	7926	12659	10620	3322
2008	9069	12544	10072	2822
2009	7781	11653	10461	3747
2010	6339	11086	9855	3023
2011	6122	12803	10519	4443
2012	7226	13459	13983	5154
2013	8392	13984	15423	5812
2014	10530	15004	17637	5059
2015	4757	14229	19056	3343
2016	5412	14501	20014	4244

Source: NCRB reports from 2006-16 in Crime in India

It is clearly observed from Table 9 that juveniles who have attended middle (standard V to IX) school have committed more crime followed by children who have attended school till primary level (standard I to IV). Juveniles who have completed matriculation and above have committed less crime. Juveniles who are illiterate/ never attended any school or formal education have committed significantly less crime than juveniles who have attended school and had some sort of formal education.

Table 10 : Classification of Juveniles Based on Living Status			
Years	Living with Guardians	Homeless	Living with Parents
2006	4958	2197	24990
2007	5099	2354	27074
2008	4852	1848	27807
2009	4657	2352	26633
2010	4082	1672	24549
2011	4386	1924	27577
2012	5793	2390	31639
2013	5800	2462	35244
2014	7905	1632	38693
2015	4315	1622	35448
2016	4550	1560	38061

Source: NCRB reports from 2006-16 in Crime in India

Majority of the juveniles who are apprehended under various crimes are staying with their parents followed by juveniles living with guardians as seen in Table 10. Homeless children contribute very little to the crime committed; thereby emphasising children learn antisocial behaviour from parents and family environment.

Table 11 : Classification of Juveniles Based on the Income Group

Years	Annual Income (Upto Rs.25,000)	Annual Income (Rs. 25,001 To Rs.50,000)	Middle Income (Rs. 50,001 To Rs. 1,00,000)	Middle Income (Rs. 1,00,001 To Rs. 2,00,000)	Upper Middle Income (Rs. 2,00,001 To Rs. 3,00,000)	Upper Income (Above Rs. 3,00,000)
2006	23268	6353	1913	499	52	60
2007	23626	7296	2339	1037	136	93
2008	21453	8025	3885	826	281	37
2009	21576	7450	3151	1142	290	33
2010	18980	7310	2836	860	257	60
2011	19230	9059	3892	1212	398	96
2012	21049	10360	5458	1972	648	335
2013	21860	11885	6494	2296	626	240
2014	26809	10813	6887	2507	776	439
2015	17543	11695	7982	2757	951	457
2016	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source: NCRB reports from 2006-16 in Crime in India

Majority of the juveniles come from families having an annual income less than Rs. 25,000 followed by juveniles whose families' annual income varies between Rs. 25,000-50,000. Less number of juveniles are apprehended from upper middle income families and upper income families. Marginal number of juveniles belong to families in the middle income group (Rs. 50,000-2, 000000). This clearly states that maximum of the juvenile population belong to poor families with low income.

Discussion :

Increase in juvenile crimes is a serious concern. Analysing the data collected on juvenile delinquents from NCRB, it is clear that with each passing year the juvenile involvement in the commission of various crimes have been increasing. IPC crime like theft, burglary, hurt, riots, rape and molestation of woman have increased. In case of SLL crime, involvement of juveniles in gambling, excise act, prohibition act, narcotic drugs and arms are found to be huge. Highest number of juveniles are convicted under various IPC crimes in various states of India. The states having the most apprehended juvenile delinquents are Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh followed by Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The country's capital Delhi, has shown increase in molestation, rape and burglary too. The increase in incidence of theft and burglary can be attributed to the low income of the family. While increase in incidences of hurt, rape and molestation can be alluded to social media influences (like porn movies and magazines, internet etc.).

The maximum age of criminal responsibility in India for juveniles is 18 years and minimum age of criminal responsibility is 7 years. Children below 7 years cannot be convicted as they are believed to be immature. Based on NCRB reports from 2006- 2016 it is clear that children in the age group of 16- 18 years of age *i.e.*, in adolescent phase of their life have committed more crime. Theft, burglary, hurt, rape and molestation seem to be committed mostly by juveniles in this age group.

The reason behind this increase can be better explained by the age-crime curve explained by Hirshi and Gottfredson, 1983 (as cited in Farrington, 2007). The age-crime relationship is bell shaped known as the age-crime curve. The prevalence of offending tends to start increasing from late childhood and peaks during the teenage years (15-19 years) and gradually decline in their early 20's (Farrington, 2007). According to Blokland and Hanneke (2012) the curve for violent crime peaks at a late stage than for property crime. The reason behind increase in crime rate during adolescence is explained by various social scientists, criminologists, psychologists, sociologists and neuropsychologists. Neurological studies conducted in 21st century give ample evidence that development of brain regarding emotional maturity, decision making and risk taking continue well into mid 20's (Farrington *et al.*, 2012). There is more influence and importance of peers during the adolescent years, (Labile *et al.*, 2000; Warr, 2002) and therefore it is not at all uncommon that most adolescents commit crimes in this age groups (McCord and Conway, 2005). Most adolescents who break the law do so with the help of their peers. It is so because psychosocial capacities which improves decision making and leads to reduced risk taking behaviour such as "impulse control, emotional regulation, delay in gratification and resistance to peer influence continue to mature well into young adulthood" (Steinberg, 2007).

The study found that boys commit more crime in comparison to girls. This trend is also observed in all the three age categories. Girls are involved in same type of crimes like boys. Highest incidences of theft, burglary, riot are reported against girls and boys. Crimes like murder, attempt to murder and cruelty by husbands and relatives have shown an increase in commission by girls in the age of 12-16 years and 16-18 years over the years while crime like rape, molestation and sexual harassment committed by boys increase in the same age groups. Increase in theft, burglary, riots committed largely by juveniles of both the sexes can be attributed to similar risk factors like economic status of the family, neighbourhood and type as well as influence of peers. Though boys and girls share almost many similar risk factors causing deviancy but boys and girls are very differently affected by these risk factors. Even though they are exposed to similar kind of risk factors which can be linked to their offending still there exist some differences in the *level* of risk conferred and the *rate* of exposure for particular risk factors. Victimization of girls in home, community or at school seems to be a predominant factor for the development of violent behaviour in girls (Molnar *et al.*, 2005). As girls have greater chance to internalize negative emotions like depression and anxiety when abused. In some cases they show externalizing behaviour, like becoming violent for self-protection from further abuse, or due to anger on the abuser (Zahn *et al.*, 2008). Gender disparity in number of incidences of crime committed by juveniles can be better linked to family dynamics and parental expectation regarding their sons' and daughters' obedience to their authority which differ for son and daughter (Chesney-Lind, 1988 and Zahn *et al.*, 2008). Many researchers state that girls share a stronger connections to their family than boys throughout life (Gecas and Seff, 1990) and this strong family connection most often prevents girls from committing crime. Studies show that when this strong connection weakens due to sexual abuse, instability, violence or due to lack of parental supervision, girls may indulge themselves in risk-taking behaviours which can lead to delinquency in future (Zahn *et al.*, 2010).

Attributes Contributing to Juvenile Delinquency :

There are several social attributes that may contribute towards turning a child into a deviant. Social factors like family influence, economic background, bad neighbourhood, deviant peer and educational failure can be seen as some of the crucial attributes which can lead a child to the path

of criminality. The three main attributes of juvenile delinquents discussed in NCRB reports are family background (living status of children), education of the juveniles and economic status of the juvenile's family. These three attributes are discussed below to show its probable influence in development of deviancy in children.

Family :

Analysis of the data collected from NCRB from the year 2006- 2016 shows that children residing with parents have committed more crime than children who are homeless and living with guardian. Researcher found that lack of parental supervision, parental rejection, absence of parental involvement, parent's marital relation and criminality of parents in a family can lead to development of criminality in the child (Wright and Wright, 1994). Inept socialization of the children by the parents can lead to the development of some kind of criminality in the children. Lack of socialization along with further lack in social skills can lead to the rejection of children by his/her peers and other skilled person. This rejection of the children leads the child to develop association with children with similar anti-social behaviour (Synder and Patterson, 1987; Wright and Wright, 1994). Lack of parental control along with antisocial behaviour of parents can also lead to development of criminality in the child (Henggler, 1989; Wright and Wright, 1994). Low income is another factor that causes depression in parents who have children dependent on them. This leads to lack of tolerance and patience in parents' towards the child's misbehaviour and the parents use highly authoritarian power (Weatherburn *et al.*, 1997) and sometimes also beat and abuse their children.

Economic Background :

It is seen from the data that most of the children belong to family whose annual income is less than 25,000 rupees. This shows that majority of the juveniles present in the system belong to poverty stricken families. It is generally seen that children belonging to low income and delinquent areas (slums of megacities) become delinquents very quickly than other children. Extreme economic deprivation can put extra pressure on neighbourhood disorganization and academic failure. Thus, increasing the problems in areas which have extreme poverty and greater unemployment (Farrington, 1991). Children who live in economically deprived communities and have anti-social and problematic behaviour develop problems like school dropouts, teen pregnancy, alcohol drinking, substance abuse and adult criminal behaviour in future (Hawkins *et al.*, 1992). It is also seen that children belonging to low socio-economic status residing in low socio- economic neighbourhood are more likely to become criminally linked. Low socio-economic neighbourhood has higher number of delinquent population and thus leading to production of more juvenile delinquents by the process of interaction with them (Weatherburn *et al.*, 1997).

Educational Failure :

The data shows that majority of the juveniles delinquents have attended school till primary level. Less number of juvenile delinquents are found to be illiterate. It is evident from Table 11 that children who have completed 10th standard have committed less crime. The increase in crime rate among primary school goers can be attributed to their failure in school. Failure in school leads to disinterest in learning, thus, their commitment to come to school. A student's feeling of isolation and perception of not receiving enough emotional support can lead to delinquency or aggressive behaviour (Gottfredson, 1997). To compensate the feeling of failure and isolation children usually develop friendship with delinquent peers. These involvement with bad peers gives them a sense of self

worthiness and belongingness. Therefore to prove their affiliation to their peers, children usually commit deviant behaviour. It is also seen that poor performance in school can lead to commitment of serious violent crimes (Hawkins *et al.*, 1998) by children.

Lack of parental guidance, love and care for the children, low income of the family and failure in school puts a great deal of stress on a child. The feeling of stress and anxiety by a child can lead to development of certain behavioural changes which can be further aggravated by certain factors like bad peer influence, bad neighbourhood, abuse in the family etc. When all these factors are combined together they make it very conducive for creating juvenile delinquents. Certain steps can be taken to reduce the involvement of children in deviancy.

Recommendations :

The study shows that juvenile delinquency has an exponential growth over the past decade. To control this malaise, certain necessary steps need to be taken up further. Therefore, the recommendations provided for reducing juvenile delinquency might help the professionals working with juvenile delinquents and the Government to take some preventive steps towards betterment of children's living, educational and their economic conditions. The recommendations are:

1) Since lack of educational support from parents and teachers and companionship of bad and dishonest peer's lead to delinquency, emotionally supportive educational system is along with impartial teachers with high moral standards are highly necessary for preventing and controlling delinquency.

2) It has been found that bad companions are considered as one of the basic cause of delinquency. Therefore, parents need to be careful and supervise the activities of their children meticulously and continuously.

3) Children must be made aware of the problems they will face in future due to commission of crime. To make them law abiding citizens, proper information should be provided to children as well as to their families about the possible negative outcomes like imprisonment, fine etc.

4) Recreational and developmental activities for young masses should be provided to the children to vent out their pent up physical and emotional energies.

5) Skill development programs should be provided for income generation, thereby giving the unskilled adolescents an opportunity for earning their livelihood through professional training programs. Government should organize such initiatives.

6) With the help of competent professionals psychological help and support should be provided by the Government to the children in the system for their better mental health and growth.

Conclusion :

Cases of juvenile delinquency has been increasing at a startling rate, with the growth in population and changing life style in India. Fast growing states like Delhi, Maharashtra, and UP etc. are faced with a gruelling challenge of controlling juvenile crime. This increase in juvenile crime is basically seen on the children in the age of 16-18 years *i.e.*, those who are in their adolescence phase of life. The juveniles in this age category are highly involved in crime like theft, burglar, riot, hurt and rape cases. All these crimes committed by juveniles can be broadly attributed to family, failure in education, low income of the family, bad peer influence, bad neighbourhood etc. Therefore, it is very much essential to help children with their moral and intellectual development. Children learn morals and values from their family and from the environment they grow in. When children are not provided with proper socialization to demarcate right from wrong, they consequently, get involved in adverse

situations. Thus, they become the victims of their bad environment. Lack of proper socializations from family and friends leads to development of antisocial and behavioural problems in children. Poverty, parental ignorance, lack of supervision, failure in school, apathy from society etc. can be termed as some of the major factors influencing juvenile offences.

Socially and legally sanctioned preventive measures need to be taken up to control juvenile delinquency as delinquency is essentially believed to be a product of individual environment. It is also absolutely necessary to protect the rights and well-being of the juvenile delinquent at the same time. Rather than labelling the juveniles as criminals, thereby making their chances of reintegration into the society impossible, rehabilitative, reformatory and re-integrative measures should be adopted to bring juvenile delinquents into the mainstream. Therefore, family and community should be included in mitigating the problem of juvenile delinquency.

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