



CAUSATION FACTORS OF CRIME AMONG CHILDREN

^[1]Sonam Sanger, ^[2]Dr. Priyanka Kacker

^[1] PhD Scholar ^[2] Associate Professor, School of Behavioral Forensics, National Forensic Sciences University, Gandhinagar, India

^[1] School of Behavioral Forensics, National Forensic Sciences University, Gandhinagar, India

Abstract-

Juvenile delinquency is a very serious concern for any society especially with the modernization and everything being accessible with just one click at our smart devices it is being difficult to keep up with pace of crime committed by juveniles and factors contributing to these crime. With the rising trend of juvenile delinquency from 7.2% in 2013 to 7.8% in 2014 to 8% in 2015 (NCRB), dealing with it has become a major concern for India. There can be various studies that have tried to understand different factors that play an important role in the delinquent acts of a child for e.g. family environment, school, peers, culture, social bond, economic condition, geographical location etc. Investigating the root cause of a problem makes it easier to solve the problem efficiently. This article aims to review and understand various predisposing factors which drive a juvenile toward the delinquent behaviour and different rehabilitative and preventive measure that are being used to deal with juvenile delinquency. This will include the suggestion about various rehabilitation and preventive measures that can be incorporated in the policies to effectively deal with the problem of delinquency.

Keywords- **Juvenile delinquency, causation factors, crime.**

I. Introduction-

Juvenile is a person who is minor and below the age of 18. "A child who has not been a certain age at which he, like an adult person under the law of the land, can be held liable for his criminal acts can be defined as a Juvenile" { JJ Act (2015) (2k) } . Various theories like Skyes and Matza's (1957) "Neutralization and Drift theory of juvenile delinquency", Cohen's (1955) "delinquent subculture theory", Cloward and Ohlin's (1960) "differential opportunity theory", Hirschi's (1969) "Social Bond theory", Herbert Blumer's (1969) "symbolic interactionism theory" etc. are some which have tried to explain the juvenile delinquency and the factors that contribute to juvenile delinquency. But almost all of them focus on one aspect in order to explain juvenile delinquency and forgetting the other factors that could also be responsible for the problem. Not only they focused on one aspect but also the observation made and researches that were done were before the modernization; when so much of information and access to resources to commit crime were not so easily available and most of the crimes committed by juveniles were traditional or status offenses. But the paradigm has shifted, not only the juveniles who can't achieve their goals because of their background or lack of resources are committing crimes but juvenile who belong to a well socioeconomic family and have better education opportunities are also involve in criminal activities. Another thing to look at is the nature of crime committed by juveniles which are more heinous than before. This research aims to understand those factors that are responsible for juvenile delinquency and making so much change in a juvenile's life that they are opting for criminal activities.

Predisposing Factors-

Understanding the definition of predisposing factors is important in terms of treating them. Predisposing factors are the factors that put a person in danger of developing a condition and that condition can be disorder, condition of

distress, and in this case delinquent behavior. These factors if present have the potential of making a person more prone to develop delinquent behavior for example- genetic conditions, social factors, family problem, school, peer relations etc. Juveniles (7-18 years of age) are still at the stage of developing their personality and behavior which is shaped by the environment around them and their genetic predisposing conditions. A child living in a broken family, or is associated with delinquent peers or is living a society where disruptive behavior is accepted or normalized, they are more prone to commit delinquent acts than the child who is living in a harmonious family, associating with peers who are good in grades, behavior and peaceful and reasonable in their actions and where the social control are exercise to control and punish the delinquent behavior.

There has been an extensive study on such predisposing factors which can be responsible to develop delinquent behavior and make the juvenile commit crime. Such as criminal behavior of parents, lack of parental guidance, abandoned by parents, cultural values, geographical conditions, societal reaction toward the deviant behavior as well as the deviant, school's reaction towards the child's need, effect of school discipline, increasing gap of financial problem due to capitalization. There are so many factors which persisted throughout a child life and drive a child toward the criminal activities. Many juveniles are now prone to commit crime of heinous nature for example, sexual offenses, murder, riots, gang violence, cyber offenses, fraud, arson activities, voyeurism etc. Some of the factors such as issues in rehabilitative measure and preventive measures can also become predisposing factors of crime among juvenile delinquents.

Rehabilitative measures-

Rehabilitative measure can be defined as the intervention strategies that are designed to address the specific issue to function with optimum capacity and reduce the unwanted condition or behavior of individuals in daily functioning and while interacting with environment. Some of the rehabilitative measures which are in used ti address the issue of juvenile delinquency to optimize the norm bounded behavior of the juvenile and reduce the delinquent behavior are community services, vocational training, recreational measures, Behavioral therapies, physical activities, group therapies and educational intervention.

The aim of rehabilitative measures is to prepare the child to become a law-abiding citizen of the society and to reintegrate them back into the society. It is done by addressing the needs of the juvenile and making the rehabilitation plan accordingly to correct the offending behavior into non offending behavior. Another purpose of the rehabilitation is to ensure the protection of child from the social stigma of being deviant.

Preventive measures-

Preventive measures are the intervention that are provided to prevent the unwanted behavior which in this case is juvenile delinquency. Preventive measures are applied to prevent a) before committing the criminal act b) to reduce the recidivism. Preventive measures are provided to both the potential juvenile who if continue to face the condition driving him to callous path without preventive measures is prone to commit crime and to those juveniles who has become delinquents and might commit crime if not provided with proper preventive measures.

The difference between rehabilitative measures and preventive measures lies in the fact that rehabilitative measures are provided when the unwanted conditions has already occurred and interventions are being provided to restore the previous wanted/healthy condition. On the other hand, preventive measures are provided in before the unwanted condition has occurred to prevent in from not occurring in first place and also provide after restoration to prevent it from happening again.

There are various preventive measures such as Scared Straight, family counselling, substance abuse education, treatment, youth mentoring, parenting education, educational support and youth sheltering for abandoned and truant child, foster care,

Review of Literature-

There have been various factors which have been identified by various scholars on national and international levels which are considered to be attributing in delinquent behaviour of a child.

Some factors like parental guidance, crowded family, parental lifestyle , thrown away children whose parents have abandoned their parental rights (Browning, Porter & Thornberry, 1999; Montgomery, Thompson & Barczyk, 2011), insufficient parental control and social control (Tas, Ribeaud & Cruyff, 2004; Ozen, Ece , Oto, Tirasci , & Goren, 2005), neighbourhood resources such as higher organization concentration and more engagement in services, social

control, culturally determined differences, family based social control (Molnar, Cerda, Roberts & Buka, 2008; Tas, Ribeaud & Cruyff, 2004), education level, low-economic conditions, poverty and drug use, education level, education and occupation of mothers, family addiction, history of offenses in family (Mazinani, Mazinani & Jafari, 2015; Ozen, Ece, Oto, Tirasci, & Goren, 2005; Omboto, Ondiek, Odera, & Ayugi, 2013), individual factors such as smoking habits, difficulty in school, poor academic performances, truancy, aggression etc. (Ozen, Ece, Oto, Tirasci, & Goren, 2005; Boakye, 2013), neurological and physiological conditions and mental status (Lewis, 1990) and repeated victimization (Chang, Chen, & Brownson, 2003) were found to be significantly associated with the delinquent behavior in juveniles.

Delinquents and nondelinquents are distinct from each other in the way of their perception of the risk of committing crime (Claster, 1967). The perception of risk of commission of crime lies in various factors and among them one is the immunity from the law which also translates to the leniency of law toward the juvenile. Delinquents are said to differ from nondelinquents in the sense of their perception of being arrested and being convicted after arrest (Claster, 1967). The reason behind the delinquent's perception of being immune from the law could also lie in the fact of investigation techniques being used on a juvenile delinquent. One might try to find the absolute reason behind putting a child to the polygraph or any other investigation techniques. It might not have been an absolute necessity in the past but today the nature of crime being committed by the juveniles are getting heinous day by day for example juveniles committing sexual crime.

Some of the national studies also identified factors that have an impact on the delinquent behavior of juveniles such as influence of peer pressure, individual characteristics such as aggression and emotional instability, personality, low social-economic background, family background such as abusive behavior of parents, addiction behavior of parents, lack of parental guidance and care, parental rejection, lack of emotional support from parents, poor school performance or disinterest in school, education level of parents (Surong & Lyngdoh, 2020; Mishra & Biswal, 2020; Rathinabalan & Naaraayan, 2017; Mishra, 2018; Sahmey, 2013). Truancy, indulging with peer who are older in age than the child involved in smoking, drinking alcohol, inhaling, ganja, street fights, thefts, don't attend school, impact of movies and phones (Vemuri, Rao, Roohen, & Kiranmayee, 2019), Broken homes i.e. single parent, divorced parents, mental deficiency and problem in emotional adjustments (Kohli & Mittal, 2015), socio-educational profile such as rural and urban area and education level (Chattopadhyay & Chatterjee, 2018), effect of heredity, impact of media and environment, poor school performance (Chakrabarty, 2020), and cohesion conflict and control in families and desired aspect of self-esteem (Sharma, 2012).

Rehabilitation programs deal effectively when implied with proper care. Rehabilitation program with holistic approach proved to be of great importance when dealing with juvenile delinquency. The important factor in rehabilitative treatment is motivation for the treatment. A significant positive relationship was found between treatment motivation and its effect (Harder, Knorth, & Kalverboer, 2012; Rosenkranz, Henderson, Muller, & Goodman, 2012). Treatment motivation plays a moderating role in addressing the issues in juvenile delinquents (Stouwe, Asscher, Hoeve, Laan & Stams, 2016). Several rehabilitative models such as Cognitive behavior therapy (Koehler, Losel, Akoensi, & Humphreys, 2013; Lipsey, 2009), Vocational training are found to be effective in reducing the juvenile delinquency (Bradshaw & Roseborough, 2005). Modeling the behavior by imitating the model and structured discussion with the model about the roles even without imitating the model proved to be effective in attitudes, behavior change in the juvenile as well as reduction in the recidivism rate (Sarason & Ganzere, 1973).

Family functioning is an important element that contributes to the delinquent and antisocial behavior of the juvenile (Loeber & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1986; Patterson, 1982). Involvement of parents in managing the behavior of the child (Hawkins, Peterson, Schweid, & Bijou, 1966) is important in preventing the delinquent behavior. Intervention programs such as Interpersonal cognitive problem solving and Behavioral social skills training proved to be effective when addressing the psychological issues of the juveniles. The focus of Interpersonal cognitive problem-solving program is the interpretation and evaluation of thinking to produce constructive alternate solutions to the problem (Shure & Spivack, 1988). Family-focused interventions have become popular and effective with delinquent and drug abusing adolescents (Gordon & Arbuthnot, 1987). Conduct of school and behavior of teachers play an important role in the development of a child. Hawkins and colleague in University of Washington conducted a Social Development Project. It involved the training of teachers (N=15) of 7th grade. In 54 classes which were the part of experimental classes a proactive classroom management, interactive method of teaching and learning through cooperative strategies were applied after completing one year of the study results of these strategies showed positive relationship between the behavior of the teachers and adolescent relationship with the school environment (Hawkins, Doueck, & Lishner, 1988; Hawkins & Lishner, 1987).

Suggestions

Studies conducted till now have tried to explained the causation factors in one or other way. Looking at the rehabilitative measure and preventive measures one can see that there is no structured way of analysing and classifying the juveniles on the basis of their need for one particular program or the combination of programs suitable and structured as per the need of the individual. The main issue that has arose is in addressing the juvenile irrespective of if the juvenile is already a delinquent or is the potential delinquent with predisposed factors. Here are some suggestions on how juveniles can be addressed on the basis of their need for rehabilitation and prevention-

A) Preventive measures-

1. Setting up a child friendly committee in different geographical locations to monitor those children who are predisposed to delinquency.
2. Awareness programs about different alternatives activities should be conducted on regular bases in order to familiarize juveniles with different productive activities they can engage in and divert them from predisposed factors.
3. Family interventions can be done to those family who have juveniles with disruptive behavior and training them on how they can interact and manage their child in a constructive way. Family Therapies can also be included as a part of this intervention.
4. Awareness in schools about delinquency should be made compulsory and teachers and school authorities should also be trained in a manner to deal effectively with the disruptive behavior of the students. Along with this there should be a mandate to employ a psychologist in each and every school who can start an early intervention if found the troublesome students. Mental health evaluation of all the students should be a mandatory process in schools on a regular basis.
5. For those children who are not able to attend school for various reasons in such cases the child friendly committee should arrange the meeting of those children with the mental health care workers as well as some means of basic education for them. Some kind of alternative activities should be arranged for children who are not academically smart but can excel in different areas for example sports, cooking, painting, dancing, singing, designing, gymnastics etc.
6. Awareness program on different type of crime and the nature and consequences of those crime should be conducted to let the children know about the meaning of their action and consequences of those actions.
7. Community training for moral values and community services should be made compulsory for all the children between the age of 12-18 in order to socialize them within the community, make them adhere to the community values and developing the attachment with people.

B) Rehabilitative measures

The rehabilitation should be employed on the principle of individualization. Each and every juvenile is different hence an individual plan of rehabilitation should be employed for each one of them. The rehabilitative plan should address all the need of juvenile delinquents i.e. psychological, physical, vocational and educational.

1. Rehabilitation of juvenile should start ever since the child has entered into the observation home. Along with physical evaluation, a proper psychological evaluation should be done that will include the state of mind of the child, personality trait, competency of the child etc.
2. Alternative methods of punishment should be employed where ever they can for the juveniles for example- diversion program, probation, community services etc.
3. All the juveniles who have been awarded with either traditional or alternative punishment Along with group therapies and recreational therapies counselling sessions should be made compulsory.
4. The focus of rehabilitation should be to reintegrate them in society with constructive thinking not just with vocational training.
5. The juveniles should be evaluated on the bases of their interest before assigning any vocational training. Doing things with interest makes the work enjoyable and constructive.

6. For those who wants to continue their education should be made available with the study materials and means by which they can study. Open school or distance learning should be made available to them

7. Monitoring the rehabilitation plan made for the juvenile should be done on regular bases and if the current rehabilitation plan is not proven to be effective it should be rectified as per the need of the juvenile and implemented with care.

8. After care program when the juvenile is leaving the special home and is ready to be the part of society again, he should not be left alone on his own. Juvenile should be assigned with one after care officer who can help him in reintegration in the society by means of psychological help, as a guardian or as a mentor. They should not be left alone to feel alienated and go back to the path of disruptive behavior.

Conclusion

Predisposing factors have a well-established relationship with the juvenile delinquency. Various rehabilitative measures have been employed and laws has also been amended but still the increase in rate of juvenile crimes cannot be explained. The nature and types of crime been committed by juveniles has also changed rapidly over the time period. The policies on preventing the delinquency are still proven to be ineffective in the current scenario. The unexplained trends left us with one possible conclusion that the current rehabilitative and preventive policies are not effective enough to deal with problem of delinquency and need to be evaluated again and come up with new modules of rehabilitation and preventive measure.

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Declaration of interest statement

The authors showed no conflict of interest in the topic of review.

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