



# Juvenile Delinquency Prevention: A Pedagogical Approach

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## **Abstract:**

Juvenile delinquency is a grave offense, and it is detrimental to the social order in any country. There is a trend of increase in juvenile crimes worldwide, with more and more immersion of the youth in violent crimes. India shows similar trends of increasing rates of violent crimes committed by juveniles. Over the years, research has been conducted to coin a suitable intervention strategy and models to reduce delinquent behavior and encourage pro-social development. Practical techniques are mandatory to resolve their behavioral health issues and address their mental health problems. The current study examines the behavioral problems of juvenile delinquents in India and assesses the application and effectiveness of intervention provided to them through alternative education. The purpose of this study was to address the gaps in the literature by discovering the effects of alternative education factors on altering the life course of juvenile delinquents.

**Index Terms:** Juvenile Delinquency, Pedagogical, Alternative education, Work-study, Reformatory

## **1 Introduction:**

Delinquency is a worldwide problem without exceptions to specific cultures or religions. Generally, delinquency refers to illegal acts, whether criminal or not, committed by youth under 18. The term juvenile delinquency was legitimately developed in the United States in 1899 when the first juvenile delinquency code was endorsed in Chicago, Illinois (Shoemaker, 2005). Juvenile delinquency is a massive problem in India by which most of the youth ruin their lives. Due to juvenile crime and related problems, youth, their families, and the entire society suffer multiple consequences. The most obvious people affected by juvenile delinquency are the victims. The deepest consequence of crimes committed by juveniles carries due to socio-economic and psychological problems which reflect on their family members and society (Chandolu, 2015)

Juvenile crimes have become such a common phenomenon that they raise serious concern in any nation. In common terminology, a juvenile is a child who has not attained a certain age at which he can think rationally and often understand the consequences of his/ her act. Hence, the juvenile can't be held liable for his/her criminal acts. A juvenile delinquent may be regarded as a child who has purportedly committed /violated some law under which his/her act of commission or omission becomes a crime (Singh& Bhadra, 2014). Alternative educational methods have been suggested to prevent or reduce juvenile delinquency. Most alternative education programs that have been developed in this country have certain essentials designed to address the causes of students' school problems. These include individualized Education, reward systems, goal-oriented work, small student populations, low teacher-student ratio, caring, skilled teachers, and strong, supportive administrators. Thus, the researcher highlights a few more approaches to the education of juvenile delinquents(Priya, 2023).

## 2 Review of Literature:

Poduthase, (2012) perceives that there are more than 140 million adolescents (ages 13- 19) in India according to the 2001 census (Census of India, 2001). The rates of crime are high, with stated cognizable crimes of 6,750,748 in 2010 under the Indian Penal Code and Special and Local Laws (India Crime Statistics, 2010). In India, crimes are generally classified into two categories: crimes that fall under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and crimes that fall under Special and Local Laws (SLL).

BegmatovR. (2023), in his work 'Pedagogical approaches to preventing juvenile delinquency among Unsupervised youth explores the pedagogical prospects for preventing juvenile delinquency among unsupervised youth. Juvenile delinquency among unsupervised minors presents serious challenges globally, highlighting substantial social issues.

## 3Research Questions:

The research focuses on the following questions:

- What are the significant influencing factors of Juvenile Delinquents?
- What are the educational approaches to prevent the Juvenile Delinquency?

## 4 Research Objectives:

The study concentrates on the following objectives:

- To examine the significant factors influencing Juvenile delinquents
- To understand and analyze the different educational approaches to prevent Juvenile Delinquency

## 5 Theoretical Framework:

Hirschi's (2015) *social control theory* states that social bonds and attachments are more vital protection against delinquency than other personality characteristics. Hirschi hypothesized social bonds between individuals and society as having four components: attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief. Social control theory grants the opportunity to govern whether the bonds of attachment, involvement, and school and community measures explain serious delinquency and dangerous behavior (Poduthase, 2012)

*General strain theory* maintains that people commit crimes because of pressure or strain. Agnew argued that strain comes from diverse sources as opposed to a single factor such as economic strain (Agnew & Brezina 2019). Agnew presented three types of strain that can lead to crime: (1) the inability to achieve a goal, (2) the removal of positive stimuli or losing something that is valued, and (3) the presentation of negative stimuli. These negative stimuli, or the loss of positive stimuli, may lead to negative affective states, such as anger, fear, frustration, or depression, which in turn may lead to crime (Agnew, 2001, 2006).

## 6 Discussion and Findings:

### 6.1 Significant influencing factors of Juvenile Delinquents:

Social factors such as poverty and low education are responsible for juvenile delinquency (Ombato, et al., 2013). Habits of substance abuse also make the youth vulnerable to offending. Fragmented families are directly related to higher rates of delinquency. The harmful role of family has also been highlighted in other studies (World Youth Report, 2003). The report indicates that juveniles who obtain less familial supervision or who live in dysfunctional family settings or underprivileged families have more chances of getting involved in delinquent behavior (Priya, 2023).

David Brandt (2006) has widely talked about the social and psychological factors responsible for delinquency in India. There are psychological descriptions of delinquency, which can be well understood through Freudian concepts of id, ego, and super-ego. When the id (the instinctive element of an individual's personality) becomes too strong, and the super-ego becomes weak (the socially taught element of personality) the ego develops into an anti-social person (Williams, 2012). Sometimes when the self-control and social control through primary groups becomes weak, the juveniles develop delinquent tendencies. The breakdown of social institutions has also been associated with deviance and delinquency (Chris and Dana, 2005). There can be a strong link between the psychological state of the youth and delinquent tendencies.

The biological explanations propose that individuals are influenced by their biological/ genetic makeup. They are not precisely captives of biological design, but it does render these individuals inclined toward delinquent tendencies. The hormonal changes in the body of the juveniles are responsible for their impulsive and rebellious behavior. Ecological/ environmental and economic parameters also play important trigger points in the lives of the juveniles. But usually, the combination of these factors creates a situation of juvenile delinquency (Agarwal, 2018).

There are various other factors causing delinquency, for example, inhabitant vs. immigrants factors, family influence, sibling position, joint and nuclear family, interpersonal relationship, step-parents, corporal punishment, quarrel, parental exploitations, peer group, economic factors including poverty and unemployment, geographic factors, educational pressure, societal issues, the influence of mass media, etc. The majority of offenders belong to the extremely poor families (57%). The same report further says that lack of education is one more significant issue and over 55% of juveniles are from incomplete primary education and from broken families, which lead them to commit crimes as per the report (Nanjunda, 2019).

## **6.2 Various Educational Approaches to Prevent the Juvenile Delinquency:**

Education is no longer limited to schools, and it is a method that lasts for life-long learning. Educational activities are provided for individuals to gain personal, social, or vocational skills in various institutions or environments other than in the school. The primary goal of these activities is to attempt to incarcerate young delinquents (convicted of various crimes) by the community and help them turn into individuals at peace with themselves and the rest of society. Education allows an individual to make rational choices, critically examine situations, and interpret between right and wrong (Tajalli& Garba,2014).

### ***Alternative Educational Approach***

Alternative education settings attempt to teach the required curriculum and address areas where students are struggling. Often, alternative education programs are implemented for students with behavioral problems. The goal of alternative education is to continue to meet the student's educational needs and help the student correct behavior and ultimately return to the "home school" setting. Alternative education schools provide a necessary service to students with critical needs in the educational system. Alternative education approaches appear most promising for preventing problem behaviors (Prior, 2010).

The primary purpose of the academic, vocational, or social classes held for juvenile delinquents is the incarceration of them by the community. Individuals who have committed crimes are given a chance for resocialization and are trained to solve their problems without using violence. Without a doubt, these young people should be supported by their families, friends, the rest of society, employers, and educational institutions working in co-operation with each other so that reoffending by these young people can be prohibited and they can positively join in social life (Aron, 2006).

Many alternative education programs have been established to handle difficulties created by youth falling behind academically and/or being already disruptive or troublesome. Students are usually referred to these alternative education programs as a result of their problem behaviors. Suppose alternative education programs serve only students who have already manifested problem behaviors. In that case, they are not likely to prevent the development of problem behaviors among new cohorts of students entering conventional schools, nor are they likely to lower the rates of problem behaviors among other students in these schools (Quinn& Poirier,2007).

***Socio-Educational Approach:***

Early social-educational intervention is one of the possible ways to approach juvenile delinquency. The underlying philosophy is that society is both the cause and victim of crime and delinquency. Therefore, society has both the right and the responsibility to intervene as soon as minor deviance appears, even if it does not break the criminal law. Society should apply its most efficacious treatment while the offender is young and the offense is trivial. Moreover, early intervention at the pre-delinquent stage can be therapeutic because the youth at risk of becoming juvenile offenders can receive the help and education they need so that they become law-abiding adults (Price,2009). Social-educational intervention aims to restore juvenile offenders' self-respect by showing love and concern for them and educating and helping them reform with the patience of doctors taking care of their patients. Early intervention, which is not restricted to overt behavior but also targets covert thoughts, is considered to be proactive rather than reactive in that it would not wait for criminal behavior to occur but look for incorrect ideas. Therefore, all social forces must make joint efforts to help and educate juveniles at the first sign of trouble and not wait until they break the law. This is expected to nip crime in the bud (Shailja et al., 2022).

***Work-Study School Approach***

Work-study education is only a specific form of ordinary education that offers a part-work and part-study curriculum that brings about individual behavioral changes. Compared to regular schools, work-study schools are relatively small and have a much higher faculty-to-student ratio (Zhou, 1988). The staff of work-study schools try to create an environment to help students reintegrate morally into society and provide them with vocational training. The curriculum of work-study schools, intended to transform delinquent youths into useful members of society, is premised on combining ideological and academic Education with vocational training. Therefore, the regime of work-study schools combines closely supervised middle-school level academic education and light labor to inculcate social values and teach self-discipline (Wilson, 1987).

***Reformatory Educational Approach:***

The purpose of the reformatory is to reform inmates mainly through labor and education and make them become "new people", rather than simply punish inmates and make them pay for their crimes. This goal is based on a strong belief that successful rehabilitation potentially leads to restoring harmony in the social order. Generally, due to the emphasis on rehabilitation in the cases of juvenile offenders, the sentence length is shorter in the juvenile justice context than it is for adult offenders, with harsh measures generally avoided. Reformatories fulfill their correctional functions in three ways: ( 1 ) the traditional function of control of young offenders through incarceration; (2) the function of education or political socialization; and (3) discipline through hard labor. Turning delinquents into "new people" leads to reduced recidivism (Moitra et al., 2018).

**Technical Educational Approach:**

Technical education aims to produce good work habits and help acquire useful skills. Therefore, this education is closely related to the state of being rehabilitated and contributing to society. All reformatories have their farmlands or workshops where inmates can work and require skills. Through hard labor, the inmates learn the values of constructive effort and acquire work habits, skills, and experience to pursue a productive societal role (Singh & Bhadra, 2016).

**Value-Based Educational Approach:**

Value-based education imparts social, moral, integrity, character, spirituality, and many more. It builds the students' humility, strength, and honesty. VBE become better citizens of a country. Students with high ethical values will never cheat others. Students are taught to cooperate. They make their life happier and work hard to make others happy. An effective value-based education system promotes broader capabilities, attitudes, and skills among juveniles. Educating through VBE induces critical and effective thinking, rational choice, and responsible behavior in juveniles. The relationship between co-curricular activities and VBE also improves the values among juveniles. Co-curricular activities help juveniles gain self-confidence, eliminate shyness and inferiority complexes, and enhance their potential abilities and skills. Engagement in co-curricular activities and VBE at the school level develops the capacity for freedom of self-expression, self-confidence, cooperation, and universal brotherhood. Teachers' aptitude regarding VBE is an essential factor in changing the behaviors of juveniles. Teachers serve as role models to students in school and play a significant role in teaching ethical behavior among students (Singh & Punia, 2018).

**6 Implications of the finding:**

Juvenile delinquency has been increasing in the capital city, Delhi, and other places in India at an alarming rate. The involvement of juveniles in severe offenses like murder, attempt to murder, kidnapping and abduction has raised concerns in the nation. After the December 2012 Gang rape in Delhi (or the Nirbhaya case, as it was commonly called), many debates and discussions pointed to the softer approach of the Juvenile Justice System to serious offenses (Vennila & Kiruba, 2020). It has been found that youngsters can be as brutal as adults, which forced people to reanalyze the definition and approach to juvenile delinquents in India. Due to access to the internet, psychiatrists feel that the aspirations of adolescents and adults are becoming at par (Ghosh, 2013). Creating a supportive learning environment, implementing innovative teaching methods, and providing broad social and emotional education in schools can empower vulnerable youth, enhance their resilience, and guide them away from the path of delinquency (Singh & Bhadra, 2014).

**7 Conclusion:**

In recent years, juvenile delinquency has gradually developed into a young age and a malignant one. Attention must be paid to educating people to prevent juvenile delinquency. School education plays a significant role in reducing the crime rate of juveniles. It shapes the behavior of the juveniles through different types of co-curricular activities. Some recreation programs; sports, dancing, drama, Karate, bowling,

climbing, and art for juveniles, are organized by the school timely. The effective engagement and involvement of juveniles in these activities help reduce juvenile crime rates. The participation of juveniles in the community-based program provides an opportunity to interact in a safe social environment. Through this study, it is suggested that strong steps be taken to effectively implement the laws about juvenile delinquency so that we can deal with the problem holistically.

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