



DELINQUENCY CASES: JUVENILES IN INDIA

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The young generation of our nation is being misled. Delinquency cases are being filed against them. Delinquency cases involve juveniles who have violated the law and order. They are usually between the age of twelve and seventeen. They receive the same penalties as the adults do but with different names. They are treated under the juvenile delinquency. Juveniles who commit serious harm or threat to others or the harm caused follows devastating consequences are prosecuted as the youthful offenders. All these cases regarding juveniles begin with their improper behavior which is criminal in nature. If they are left unattended, for example robbing a store or failing to pay an amount within its due date, will lead to several other crimes. These are the ones that are left unconsidered or negligently ignored what the law requires. These cases also focus on its origin and background. A juvenile is considered as an adult depending on the crime committed. The primary goals of the juvenile justice system are to maintain public safety, skill development, habilitation, rehabilitation, addressing treatment needs, and reintegration of youth into the community.

A large number of individual qualities and characteristics also develop delinquent behavior. His interaction within the social groups or a person's actions and experience must be well understood. A slight change in his character doesn't mean, he is attempting to a crime. While dealing with the youth

group, it must not be negligently dealt with. The risk factors include individually, social level and community level.

In 2016, 17% of all delinquency cases (147,600 cases) were dismissed at intake, generally for lack of legal sufficiency. An additional 26% (223,300 cases) were handled informally, with the juvenile agreeing to some sort of voluntary sanction. Each year approximately 2.1 million youth are being arrested under the age of 18 in the United States. Though the rates of these crimes are decreasing gradually, 1.7 million cases are reported in juvenile courts annually. The most common is theft-larceny, which showed an arrest rate of 401.3 per 100,000 youths in 2016. The second most common is simple assault, with an arrest rate of 382.3 per 100,000 youths. Third is Drug abuse violations, at 295.6 arrests per 100,000 youths. Overall 25 percent of all serious crime involves a single juvenile offender. Juveniles constitute 1,200 of the 1.5 million people housed in federal and state prisons in this country, and nearly 200,000 youth enter the adult criminal-justice system each year, most for non-violent crimes. On any given day, 10,000 juveniles are housed in adult prisons and jails. Social research has shown a strong association between childhood abuse and neglect and delinquent behavior. A National Institute of Justice study showed that a history of child abuse and neglect increased the likelihood of juvenile arrest by 59 percent, adult arrest by 27 percent and violent crime by 29 percent. Other studies have shown that violence begets more violence. One study showed that children who were victims of violence were 24 percent more likely to report engaging in violence. One-third of the victims of child abuse or neglect are likely to subject their own children to abuse. In cases of extreme



exposure to violence, children may develop post-traumatic stress syndrome, which makes it more difficult to form appropriate relationships, cause an increased tolerance for violence and lead to difficulty learning new information.

Causes:

1. School problems:

Many different schooling problems force a child into a criminal activity. Truancy is one of the main reasons for this. When a child fails to attend the classes often, they cannot gain the benefits of education and also will not understand the discipline of attending school every day.

When a child has no interest in the study or when his/her parents are not interested in knowing if the child attends school regularly. This leads the child to end up in situations leading to criminal activities. This problem can be investigated and eventually, the child can be left crime-free.

2. Economic problems:

Lack of necessities such as food, clothing, and shelter is another major reason for child involvement in criminal activities. A child starts to steal when he has no food to eat. If a minor has no means to satisfy their basic needs, there is a high possibility that the child will indulge in criminal activities.

3. Substance abuse - home:

When there is an act of substance abuse within a home, there is a high chance of criminal activity involvement by a minor in such a home. The child involves in criminal activities for necessities that are not provided to them or they involve in criminal acts because they have to help the elders support their activities. A parent if they involve in substance abuse then there is a lack of guidance for the child too.

4. Substance abuse - personal:

This is one of the major reasons for juvenile delinquency. When a minor has the habit of drugs, then there is a high risk of him/her indulging in criminal activities. There are two reasons for them committing criminal activities. One is to support their habit. The second is that they have poor decision-making skills due to drug usage and hence involve in activities they are not supposed to do.

It is much easier to instigate a person to commit a crime when they are under the influence of mind-altering substances because they have the absence of the thought process to make the right choice.

5. Physical abuse at home:

When a minor is physically abused at home, then there is no surprise that they will act out when away from home. This will generally in the form of deliberate destruction against people or property. Assaults of all kinds of destructions are a result of physical abuse the minor experiences at home.

6. Lack of adult interaction:

Children are influenced by the people around them. This is natural. Children who have no adult influence in their life to teach them right or wrong, to follow the law or just be a part of their life are more easily prone to indulge in criminal activities. An adult makes the child take correct decisions in life and the absence of such a person also leads the child to indulge in criminal activities.

7. Peer pressure - neighborhood influence:

The people to whom the minorS are associated will have a large impact on their choices when the minor is away from his/her home. Peer pressure is a very real thing and a minor will act out in front of his/her friends so that he/she feel accepted and are a part of



a group and this is one important reason for juvenile delinquency.

In more dangerous neighborhoods one may also see children acting out in fear of gang activity. Minor make decisions to defend themselves or to impress the gang members to protect their safety. Peer influence and protection of the safety of oneself may lead any minor to a life of crime.

There are also other conditions that also cause juvenile delinquency.

they are

- physical factors
- mental factors
- home conditions
- school conditions
- neighborhood conditions
- occupational conditions

1. Physical factors:

i. Malnutrition caused by improperly selected foods in which there is a disproportion of essential elements.

Ii. Lack of sleep may not only cause drowsiness and inertia but also irritability, excitability, and nervousness. The child may suffer from mental conflict as a result of this and they seek refuge in delinquency. He/she may exhibit bad behavior due to easily stimulated impulse hard to control because of hyperexcitability.

Iii. Defective eyesight or hearing or any defect in the body will make the child be at a disadvantage when there is competition with others. Hence they try to restore self-confidence and a sense of superiority by indulging in delinquency.

2. Mental factors:

Mental defect, superior intelligence, emotional instability, obsessive imagination, mental conflicts, inferiority complex these factors lead a minor into delinquency.

3. Home conditions:

These reduce the child's physical health directly and mental health indirectly. They reduce his/her vitality and the ability to decide.

I. Lack of proper clothes, pocket money, toys, pay facilities all these conditions make a child feel inferior and hence they find an undesirable way to compensate.

Ii. Poverty and unemployment are also the main reason for delinquency. The jealous desire for some of the life luxuries makes the child indulge in criminal activities to fulfill the desires.

Iii. When either of the parents is dead, ill-treatment by foster parents, lack of parental care and affection, misdirected discipline by the family, unhappy relationship with siblings, and various other factors leads to delinquency.

Not only the physical and mental health of the person leads to delinquency but also his past and present environments. Sad happenings and unhappy childhood also may lead a minor to engage in criminal activities.

Probably, it cannot be said completely that the above-said factors are the only cause of delinquencies. None of them alone can produce delinquency. They are a combination of two or three factors that results in the cause.

Prevention of delinquency:

Early intervention and preventing a minor from delinquent 3ounselli can distract the minor from the adverse effects of delinquency 3ounselli. Many risk factors may lead a minor to perform delinquent activities. Like that, several preventive factors are identified to prevent a minor from indulging in criminal activities. The risk factors include individuals, family, society and school environment. The protective factors include well-maintained school



attendance, positive social involvement and the opportunity to discuss the problem of a minor with his/her parent. These protective factors seem to reduce the adverse effect of indulging in delinquent activities.

Prevention of delinquency involves primarily identifying the factors that lead to delinquency, focusing on those factors early and working on preventive factors to prevent risks. Though at first, delinquency was prevention activities were focused on middle-aged school-going youth but the modern delinquency prevention activity focuses on childbirth to adolescence and their growing environment.

For juvenile delinquency prevention, we have to deal with not only children and youth involved in criminal activities but also children who are going against the school rules and streets though not violating any law. Prevention is a must for them too. Because if not prevented, they would end up as habitual offender. They perform mistakes and get thrilled and fail to act according to lawful expectations. First, such juveniles must be spotted and provided with proper treatment. They may turn into habitual offender if not identified timely. The most effective way is proper counselling and guidance to the juvenile and his/her families at an early stage. These days, the government has identified the importance of juvenile delinquency prevention and has started allocating funds for it. As states also cannot provide the required resources for prevention, all communities, organizations, and governments are working together to prevent delinquency.

There are two types of programs for preventing delinquency. First is an **individual program** that involves

prevention through counselling, psychotherapy, and proper education. The second is an **environmental program** that involves prevention by changing the socio environment leading to delinquency.

Preventive measures can be done efficiently through school education and activities. Teachers should also actively participate in this and should adopt certain measures that include, they will not discriminate among students; they will be treated equally and teach them morals and social norms which will be useful for the student's life goals. Parental education is an important aspect of delinquency prevention. The parents must educate their children to keep themselves away from delinquent activities and also not to get indulged in criminal activities. In every society, it should be ensured that the parents are taught to improve the family relationship and to guide their children to follow good and moral norms. Children always need parental care, love, and affection. They may feel frustrated and disappointed due to ignorance of parental care which may lead them to commit a crime. Hence parental care and affection is an important factor to prevent the child from indulging in crime. The children should be helped to come out of their inferiority complex because they try to prove themselves by indulging in criminal activities when they have an inferiority complex.

Family factors like lack of parent supervision, disciplining, a difference of opinion between parents, parent separation and the unhealthy parent-child relationship are also contributing factors that lead the child to engage in criminal activities. A child without parent support and control are more likely to indulge in criminal activities. There is a link between a lack of supervision and



offense. When persons fail to know where their children are, or what they are doing, or who are they friends with, have a higher possibility of becoming friends with delinquent juveniles and may indulge in criminal activity. Hence the parent has to guide their children and look into matters where their presence is needed to prevent the child from engaging in criminal activities.

The society involvement through a variety of services and programs on juvenile delinquency prevention, adopting techniques for constructively reducing the chances to commit delinquent crimes, government making policies that are conducive to help grow the kids in a settled environment, providing positive emotional support to children, creating child guidance clinics to provide treatment to the disturbed and maladjusted minors, these all factors are to be implemented to prevent a child from performing criminal activities.

Quality early child care and education provide the bases for healthy growth and development, which includes physical well-being and structured early learning and educational opportunities. Nutrition, health care, parental involvement and interaction, and quality pre-school experiences also contribute. Positive early child care includes adequate staff qualifications and training, low staff-to-child ratios, adequate staff compensation, and developmental curriculum. If the above factors are considered, the decline in the delinquency cases can be expected.
