

The problem of Juvenile Delinquents - Preventive and Rehabilitation Approach

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ABSTRACT

The juvenile delinquents are below eighteen, who commit unlawful activities calling for official and legal actions; in case of adults they are punishable under law. The delinquents of all types are essentially maladjusted persons who create difficulties for others. Such types of delinquents are involved in antisocial activities like threatening, torturing, assaulting, stealing, intoxication, absconding and sexual abusing. The individuals are neither healthy nor happy. Delinquency is a rebellion and an act of aggression. The victims suffer from behaviour disorders like shyness, nervousness and anxiety. But behavioural symptoms like aggressiveness- physical, mental, temper tantrums have effect directly on the family members, society and the outside world. The delinquent behaviour reflects the moral deficiency of the individual which is caused by improper training in early childhood. It is one form of maladjustment and is a sign of disordered development. Delinquency is a behaviour disorder which refers to reduced functioning, particularly in academic achievement or social adjustment. It is characterized by low academic achievement in schools.

Keywords

Juvenile delinquent, delinquency, behaviour disorder

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Introduction

The world has witnessed not only rapid growth and development in the areas of science, technology, telecommunication systems etc. But all these development also leaves behind some negative effects directly or indirectly in life, life style and quality of life. The value system has been changing, eroding and in many situations, it is collapsing. The social, political and organized violence becomes a natural happening in this world. The Aggression and anti-social behaviour-terror, vandalism, mob lynching has gone a record high. Due to tension, frustration, anxiety and depression among people are rising and so rate of suicide has also increased. By and large peace and security is at risk. The minor who commits anti-social and unlawful activity is socially maladjusted. They are legally exempted from the provision of punishment under the law meant for adult criminal but punishment is given as per the provision of Juvenile law. The Indian Panel Code uses the expression, "Juvenile offence". In India there is a law known as Indian Penal Code. This law (IPC) have been passed in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharastra, Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Delhi, West Bengal, Orissa and Punjab. . As per this Act the maximum age of a juvenile delinquent is fixed at 16. These

individuals are known as young or juvenile delinquent. They are essentially minor but the offences they commit are major. A person having severe form of disorders in his or her behaviour and conduct is called delinquent. Juvenile delinquents are socially maladjusted. 'Delinquency,' as Coleman refers "to behaviour of youths under 18 years of age which is not acceptable to society and it generally regarded as calling for some kind of admonishment, punishment or corrective actions". From Lawyer's points of view, delinquency is contrary to criminal law. Know that delinquent behaviour is acquired or learned behaviour from home, school or social environment. The Indian expert Prof. Uday Shankar viewed that delinquency is not hereditary but the product of uncongenial social and economic conditions and is essentially a co-efficient of the friction between the individual and the community. The most important causes of anti-social behaviour are environmental and sociological in character. Know that a problem child and a delinquent child are not same. The delinquent act is always intentional but in problematic act the intention of child is missing.

Objectives of the study:

The specific objectives of this paper are:

1. To give a conceptual framework.

2. To analyse the approaches of treatment and rehabilitation.
3. To suggest preventive measures.

Methodology:

This research paper is basically a content analysis based on review of the relevant topics like juvenile delinquency, behaviour disorders, conduct disorders, habit disorders, emotional disorders, communication disorders, maladjusted children and children with drug addiction.

Sources of data: The sources of data are both primary and secondary. The sources was the literature - text books, reference books in the area concerned, research journals, peer reviewed and multidisciplinary journals in social sciences and humanities etc.

Tool: The researcher also followed observation technique. A ‘behaviour disordered’ case in the neighbourhood was studied by the researcher, following the observation technique.

Background and conceptual frame work

The general purpose of this paper is to develop a clear conceptual framework in the psyche of readers on the factors that causes delinquency, looking into the diagnosis process. Kvaraceus and Miller have defined delinquency as “behaviour by non-adults which violates specific legal norms or norms of a particular societal institution with sufficient frequency and/ or seriousness so as to provide a firm basis for legal action against the behaving individual or group.” Conduct disorder is a part of behaviour disorder. Kauffman (1997) was of the view that “Children with conduct disorders are social isolates, disobedient or can be

threatening or assaultive. The terms delinquency, social maladjustment and conduct disorder are used interchangeably”. Delinquents destroy such public properties as street lamps, traffic signs, public convenience as well as all forms of public properties. Firstly, the essential feature of delinquent character is that the individual lives more at the level of “pleasure principle” i.e. he lives to have momentary pleasure. Secondly the delinquent has a very poor concern with the system of social, moral, ethical and religious values. Thirdly, Delinquent act is a gang experience. Then what is called Behavioural disorder? It refers to a condition in which actions are so inappropriate, disruptive and destructive that they interfere with education and social interaction for the individual and those around him or her.

The Diagnostic and statistical Manuals of mental disorder (American mental disorder ,1994) characterises conduct disorder or social maladjustment as occurring when there is a repetitive and persistent pattern of behaviour that violates the rights of others or violates societal rules or norms that are age appropriate. Kvaraceus has listed eighteen characteristics which can be observed in schools. He calls this compilation a ‘delinquency proneness Chick list,’. This check list may be a good pointer for the researchers, parents and school teachers who are keen to develop an understanding, a conceptual framework, handling and dealing with their juvenile delinquents.

Delinquency Proneness Checklist

Sl.no.	Question	Yes	No.	Not
1.	Shows marked dislike for schools.	.....	.....	.....
2.	Resents school routine	.....	.....	.....
3.	Disinterested in school program	.....	.....	.....
4.	Is failing in a number of subjects	.....	.....	.....
5.	Has repeated one or more grades	.....	.....	.....
6.	Attends special class for retarded pupils	.....	.....	.....
7.	Has attended many different schools	.....	.....	.....
8.	Intends to leave school as soon as the law allows	.....	.....	.....
9.	Has only academic and vague academic or vocational plans	.....	.....	.....
10.	Has limited academic ability	.....	.....	.....
11.	Is a child who seriously or persistently misbehaves	.....	.....	.....
12.	Destroys school materials or property	.....	.....	.....
13.	Is cruel and bullying	.....	.....	.....

- 14. Has temper tantrums in the classroom
- 15. Wants to stop schooling at once
- 16. Truants from school
- 17. Does not participate in organised extra-curricular programs
- 18. Feel he does not “belong” in the classroom

1. Sources of check list: Samuel, Kirk. A. (1962) Educating exceptional children, “Behaviour Deviation in Children”, Houghton, Mifflin company, Boston, p. 348.

motives, repressed desires and unconscious mental contends.

5. Medical examination: the individual is required to go through medical and chemical examination to understand the complex malady.

Existing diagnostic techniques:

Diagnosis is a process of identifying the causes of particular problems as of now delinquency. The following methods or approaches usually adopted to identify the juvenile delinquency.

1. Psychoanalytic method: In this method the subconscious mind is analysed. Some other methods like dream analysis and word Association test. The motivation is submerged in the unconscious mind of the person and he adapts crime in life.
2. Intelligence and achievement Test: Intellectual ability can be determined by the administration of individual standardised intelligence test. The teacher made test and standardise test providing grade or age level score. Criterion reference test is an achievement or performance test on a specific task to compare one performance of an individual against a set standard and judging by the performance, how well the task was mastered.
3. Case history: The psychiatric social workers hold responsibility to handling this method. This method provides the first hand information about the child’s life. It is useful and relevant relating to every aspect of the personality of the child.
4. Play technique: Play way in the realm of dramatic play with real people or puppets or doll reveals many hidden

6. Personality test of various types:
 - a). Projective techniques: More useful and revealing devices are projective techniques like Rorschach Ink Blot Test, Thematic Apperception Test and Children’s Apperception Test.
 - b). Rogers test of personality is used to assess the degree of adjustment to his home, school mates or himself. There are also Wood Worth’s Psychoneurotic Inventory and Bernreuter’s personality Inventory.

Studies on juvenile delinquency- India and abroad:

Genesis of delinquency:

The psychologist and sociologist are of the view that crime is a manifestation of mental disorder. According to Cyril Burt delinquency is caused by emotional instability. Wood worth believes that 90% of delinquency is due to instability. It is the result of home environment where emotional needs are denied, where there is no love, care and attention to young children.

The psycho-analytic theory is a good conceptual approach to understand delinquent act. This theory lays stress on unconscious conflict of early childhood period find expression in criminal and antisocial behaviour. A young person who is bullied and ordered by over strict father may grow into an adult who defies all authority and takes pleasure in disobeying people in power.

Martin (1961) indicated that the feeling of un-relatedness and detachment from the family and society as a key cause of delinquency. Lacking of proper communication of children with one or both of the parent leads to gap in relationship and the children do not get education about social, moral and ethical values.

Clark (1961) stated that traumatic experiences are responsible for delinquent act in broken or

disorganised family life especially when accident like death of parent, children and husband occurred.

I.Q. of delinquents

Some recent studies assert that though the delinquents are not mental defectives they are as a group rather dull. Cyril Burt considered that the average I.Q. of delinquents was about 85. Merrill and Healy and others also give figures of the average I.Q. ranging from 80-90. A study conducted by Shankar, Uday, on 140 juvenile delinquents in Delhi. The findings of the study revealed that the average I.Q. of the group was found to be 83 ranging from 40 -122 and a large majority of delinquents fell between 70 to 90 I.Q. It can be said that all delinquents are not dull and mentally subnormal rather some of the delinquents are having superior I.Q. The bright and superior children due to adverse emotional and social conditions at home, their abilities remain unexpressed and under developed. Finding no opportunities for feeding their fertile minds and quenching their thirst for new experience, adventure and creativity, they are likely to be irritable, hostile and aggressive. But majority of them have sub-average or below average I.Q.

Academic achievements of delinquents

Kar, Chintamani (1992) stated in the book 'exceptional children', that near about 70% delinquents are educated up to the primary level, 20% of delinquents reach the middle standard and 3% are educated beyond matriculation. Uday Shankar was of the view that the prevalence of juvenile delinquency is more in the lower socio-economic groups. The reason may be that there is no effective intervention taken by the parents to keep the juveniles away from norms-violating consequences. Page;(139)

Delinquent act is a gang experience

Henry and Gold (1973) found that about 66 percent of delinquent behaviours are committed in association with other persons. Usually it is a homogenous group, so far as sex issues are concerned. Gang membership provides them a sense of status and approval and a sense of belongingness which they did not get from their family and other social agents. In a gang the responsibility or blame of threat is not shouldered by any individual member, but by the gang as a whole. Studies indicated that roughly their age group lies between 10-16 years. Healy reports that companionship was single factor causing

delinquency in 34 percent of cases, while Cyril Burt and Uday Shankar reported 18 percent and 23 percent respectively.

Punishment as a method of disciplinary action:

Bettleheim (1985), Corporal punishment is commonly used by school authority to discipline a student for breaking rules or other misbehaviour. There are legal, ethical and professional issues abound specially in using corporal punishment with the students with behaviour problems.

Wechman (1977), there is another form of punishment i.e. expulsion and suspension from school. Students with behaviour disorders are being expelled from school when student behaviour is so negative.

Wechman (1997), The council on exceptional children (USA) does not support to use corporal punishment for violating a rule. The council for children with behaviour disorders advocates the continued development and management of more positive behaviour and alternatives to corporal punishment. Harsh punishment is more danger which provokes counter aggression.

Sulzer- Azaroff & Mayer (1986) said, "The negative results of suspension include a higher risk for academic failure, reduced opportunity to learn, increased juvenile crime, and loss of opportunity for students to learn self management".

Coie & Koepfl (1990) was of the view that those students are at risk for suspension who have anxiety and depression resulted in social skill deficits, academic deficits and adjustment problems. Seriously maladjusted students are also most absent from school.

1. Treatment for rehabilitation- a review

The treatment of the young offender lies in rectifying his maladjustment which involves social adaptation under better conditions than he was met with from his early childhood. By treatment of delinquency, therefore, is meant the adaption of ways and means to change the behaviour and attitude of the offender. The rational and scientific approach to deal with juvenile delinquency, therefore, is to reform the offender, to re-educate and to rehabilitate him. There is no particular method of handling the young offenders. The treatment procedure must fit the individual offender and merely the offence and so apart from external means and administrative

efficiency, knowledge of the working of the mind of the individual offender is very essential.

There is no regular system of handling the delinquents in India although Govt. of India has established a Rehabilitation Council of India in the year in 1992 for physically and mentally disabled. The department of Education Govt. of Assam has not yet taken the responsibilities to deal the problem of juvenile delinquent. Quite often the delinquent, the destitute and the orphans are all put together and are treated alike. In the 1954 the Union Minister of education reported that there was only 171 such institutions in India. The official attitude is still harsh and autocratic, with sympathy and understanding the approach is mainly to panel and administrative rather than educational and psychological.

Sahu, B.K. (1993) stated that Treatment of delinquency is a very limited concept where only a limited number of delinquents are brought into the picture where as preventive measure is done for the mass society. Moreover, behaviour problem of delinquent is complex, the causes are multiple, the process of treatment is also long, tedious and expensive. So, treatment is not always successful.

Culatta, R.A & Tompkins, J.R.(1999) was of the view that When treatment programs are successful, children will be responsive to the therapeutic and educational interventions provided by special educators, counsellors and psychotherapists, it can be cured. As a result of this treatment programs, children give up symptomatic behaviours, change maladaptive behaviours, and become more socialized. These changes can be considered a cure.

It is reported that some cases have shown improvement under hypnosis and in some selected cases brain surgery had to be resorted to, but as a rule most criminals show considerable improvement after the age of forty. May be that their instinctive urges weaken or that their understanding into the nature of their own behaviour through experience or perhaps social pressure in life.

Any programme of treating delinquents must aim at fostering in them a sense of responsibility, emotional maturity, stability and an appreciation of moral and social values but such attitudes can be developed only under the stable and regulated influence of an institution.

Remove conditions leading to criminal behaviour. To eliminate the criminal activity there is no better way than to remove the condition that deteriorates.

Analytical discussions:

2. Preventive cum Intervention:

Prevention is better than cure, a statement quite relevant and applicable in the cases of juvenile delinquents and children with behaviour disorders. Different ways and means, techniques and approaches for prevention and intervention of behaviour disorders of delinquents has been discussed as follows.

i) Forming good habit and positive in early childhood.

Formation of good habit, good moral character and positive attitude should be taught in the family and in the school through value education. So encourage the children to form a good habit quite at early stage and then a good character.

ii) Parents and teachers as role model:

School going Children follows the parents and teachers consciously or unconsciously. Most of the Children imitate them as role model for future life. Therefore, parents and teachers may play the right role for their children.

iii) Proper communication between children and parents, are essential.

The parents have to have a good communication with their children. Good communication is a basic to problem solving. Many parents do not know how to communicate with the children. So gradually children stop trying to talk to them and communication is broken down.

iv) Mismatch between expectation and ability:

Sometimes parental expectations are too high than the real ability of their children. Many parents also push their children to unhealthy competitions. It may invite demoralization, depression and despair among children.

vi) Knowledge of child psychology, adolescent psychology, criminal psychology, abnormal psychology may help to prevent behaviour disorder.

vii) Be vigilant and cautious to the behaviour, nature of habit, conduct and character of the child. Keep your children under observations, their movement, (where he/she goes), and friend circle if it is doubtful. It will help to check behaviour disorders.

Provision of expert services, reformatory agencies or welfare councils:-

1. There is a need of special juvenile court with special trained magistrate to deal the Juvenile delinquents.
2. Trained social workers should be appointed as probation officers for taking charge of delinquent cases.
3. Help may be taken from clinical psychologist and psychiatrist for understanding the delinquent behaviour.
4. It is teachers who have the greatest opportunity and responsibility to help the young delinquents with the mental hygiene because they have daily contact with the great bulk of the children. The school is also recognizing its responsibility as a major mental hygiene agency and the teachers are important mental hygiene personnel. The schools help to prevent maladjustment. This can create situations in which children can grow to be strong individuals without anxieties and tensions.
5. Psychotherapy, a psychoanalytic technique is helpful that includes the following:
 - i). Free expression of pent up and depressed feelings through discussion. It uses Free Association Test, Psychodrama & play techniques.
 - ii). There is need to rebuild their self through Re-education. It is a method by which information is given to the patient on sex problem, family relation and morality.
 - iii). Very clear and precise suggestions and Counselling rather than a contradictory advice. Kirk, S.A.(1962) was of the view that the advice on over protection, rejection, discipline, freedom, autocratic and democratic control is not actually contradictory. Proper suggestions and counselling in appropriate manner may strengthen the 'poor ego' to 'Super- ego'.
 - iv). Improve home, school and social environment. In schools and communities, teachers should provide positive consequences for positive social as well as academic accomplishments, particularly with children and youth that misbehave frequently. The

consequences may come in many forms: Positive attention, praise, privileges, access to desirable activities, prizes and money all act as positive consequences.

v). Anti-social behaviour is learned behaviour. Therefore, it could be modified by learning principles. It employs basic reinforcement techniques to assist children's socialisation and learning.

vi). Stimulus change which refers to the technique of removing from temptation. This technique decreases delinquent behaviour.

Major findings of the study:

Preventive and intervention approaches

1. Early intervention is effective to control behaviour disorder

The intervention process begins at early stage and continues throughout the schooling period. The childhood period both early and later childhood, the puberty and adolescent each stage of growth and development is so significant from the view points of its origin. Know that a problem child and a delinquent child are not same. Problem child becomes delinquent if he or she is not cared or treated at the right time.

2. Healthy emotional development of child has positive impact to prevent juvenile delinquency.

A sound and a healthy emotional environment is a prerequisite condition for integrated personality development. Both the parents should give proper nursing and care, affection and love, acceptance and recognition and warmth protection which gives the child emotional security. This strong foundation can prevent from becoming a delinquent.

3. Child's behaviour need to be monitored in regular interval

Know where children and adolescence are, what they are doing and with whom and provide appropriate supervision. The parents need to be cautious to the nature of habit, conduct and character of the child. Children should be under observations, which will help to check behaviour disorders.

4. Limiting opportunities for misbehaviour can reduce behaviour disorder:

The communities that adopt and enforce laws restricting or banning the sale of tobacco to young people can significantly reduce the use of tobacco.

5. Parental attitude need to be Positive and child centric for healthy development of personality:

Parents should have positive and child centric attitude which may reduce the behaviour disorder. Rejection affects the normal security feelings in the child and under-mind child's self-confidence. Rejection when it takes the form of cruelty and punishment, breeds feelings of hostility towards the parents.

6. Good administrative and management approach at home and at schools may minimise the problems of behaviour disorders.

The parents, teachers, police officers and NGO's can control and minimise the delinquent act or criminal offence by adopting proper measures and vigilance among communities and sensitive zones of narcotic and drug addicted places. Good managerial assignment and efficient administrative measure can do wonder to channelize the conduct of juvenile delinquent children.

Suggestions on treatment and rehabilitation program:

The following suggestions may be helpful to meet up the situation aroused and therefore, desirable to the people who are in need.

It was found that when treatment programs are successful, children will be responsive to the therapeutic and Educational interventions provided by special educators, counsellors and psychotherapist, it can be cured. As a result of these programs, children give up symptomatic behaviours, change maladaptive behaviours, and become more socialized. These changes can be considered a cure. It is reported that some cases have shown improvement under hypnosis and in some selected cases brain surgery had to be resorted to.

The state should open and strengthen the following reformatory agencies or welfare councils to treat and rehabilitate the delinquent.

Legal rehabilitation:

1. Govt. should establish special juvenile court in all the states with special trained magistrate to deal the Juvenile delinquents.
2. There is a need to appoint trained social workers as probation officers for taking charge of delinquent cases.

Psychological rehabilitation:

1. Help from clinical psychologist and psychiatrist for understanding the delinquent behaviour. These professionals deal with delinquent children.
2. Positive consequences increase desirable behaviour. One of the best principles of learning is that appropriate, immediate positive reinforcement make behaviour more frequent. Similarly increasing positive initiative for alternatives to behaviour problem can decrease problem behaviour.
3. Clear, immediate and mild negative consequences can reduce problem behaviour. The reason is that punishment often fails to work, probably, because the punishment is too severe, too delayed and too inconsistent.
4. Remand home should be established where the Juvenile delinquents are placed when they wait for their trial or approved school placement or being given to the custody of probation officer after discharge from approved schools.
5. Mental hospital should be established in more numbers to treat mentally ill persons and juvenile delinquents.

Educational Rehabilitation:

1. Special school should be established where ever necessary with a provision for their education, correction
2. Residential schools are established for education and rehabilitation of delinquents or socially maladjusted children. The research has shown very little change in the attitude or personality of delinquent following institutional residence.
3. The school is a major mental hygiene agency that creates situations for children to grow to be strong individuals without anxieties and tensions.
4. Suggestions and Counselling: The advice should be very clear and not a contradictory advice. Proper suggestions and counselling in appropriate manner may strengthen the 'poor ego' to 'Super-ego'.
5. Build skills through practice:

Create opportunities for children to observe and practice interpersonal as well as academic skills to teach them how to interact with the peers and how

to resist peer pressure to become involved in problem behaviour.

Conclusion:

The youths are the future of a country. They are the resources of the nation. Peace and security is believed to be a prerequisite for socio-economic development. Unfortunately, a large number of youths are victims of maladaptive behaviour, socially maladjusted, disordered in behaviour-habit, conduct and character. Their behaviour is delinquent and is characterised by aggressiveness, violent and temper tantrums. The peace of the family they belong is shattered. The parents are most sufferers. They have low academic achievement and teachers have problem in dealing with them. Delinquency is hardly cured. When treatment is fit and patient is responding it can be cured. But prevention is better. The early childhood care, nursing and fulfilment of emotional and psychological needs of children must be addressed carefully and with great sincerity.

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