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VARIOUS CIRCUMSTANTIAL EFFECTS OF JUVENILE CRIMES IN MORAL OBLIGATORY SOCIETY IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

The article discusses in detail the concept of juvenile delinquency. A child is not a criminal from the womb of his mother but he is forced to become one due to various factors during his life. This article enlists such factors that lead a child to become delinquent. It is in the interest of society to prevent and eliminate juvenile delinquencies because such activities not only impact the juvenile himself but also the victim, his families, community and society. A society needs to be peaceful and safe for people for their overall growth and development and incidents of juvenile delinquencies become hurdle in the normal and smooth functioning of a society.

KEYWORD: Juvenile, Criminal, Sexual, Delinquency, Education.

OVERVIEW

A juvenile is one who has not attained an age of 18 years and is not an adult. A crime committed by a juvenile is known as juvenile delinquency. It is a criminal activity that is charged upon a person who has not attained the age of 18 years. In other words, participation of a minor in an illegal activity is known as juvenile delinquency. Such activities are increasing rapidly and this is an alarming situation to try and reduce such criminal activities by juveniles. The root cause of such activities by a minor can be because of suffering through a stormy phase during adolescence. Although, this is not always the case since there can be innumerable reasons for committing a crime. The degree or the potential of committing a crime in a child remains to be unnoticed until and unless any such act is committed by the child that attracts the concern of the society. The period of adolescence is a transition period in which the body undergoes changes in physical, mental, spiritual, hormonal, and social

aspects. It is a period in which a child is emotionally unstable and frequent mood swings are observed in them. An adolescent child has to suffer anxiety, conflicts and complexities due to which they commit certain acts to fulfill or satisfy their needs and meanwhile they sometimes end up by becoming a delinquent.

A juvenile delinquent is socially deviant or handicapped. They are exceptional children who chose the path of crime in their adolescent age and therefore are punishable under legal procedure. Any violation of social norms and values is a threat to the peace of the society. The Acts done by juveniles can be mild or heinous but the fact is that they are antisocial and therefore they are considered as criminal acts. Such minors in legal terminology referred as delinquents instead of criminals. Therefore, juvenile delinquency is a legal term for any criminal act that can be of different degrees that has a social consequence. Such variation in degrees can be from merenaughtiness to major assault.

CONCEPT OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Juvenile delinquency is a term used for a minor between the ages of 10 to 17 years indulging into criminal or illegal activities. “*Delinquent*” is a legal term used for an individual who has deviated himself from the normal course of social life. When a juvenile who is under the specified age, commits such an act which is proved to be harmful to the society and the juvenile, he may be called as juvenile delinquent.

Certain acts that can be included under delinquency are:

1. Committing sexual crimes.
2. Engaged into gambling activities.
3. Using vulgar language.
4. Getting away or running from the guardian’s house without their permission.
5. Regular misbehavior by the juvenile which is beyond the control of his parents or guardians.

CAUSES OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

It is important to understand the reasons for the juvenile delinquency in order to prevent youngsters from committing such crimes that are harmful, inappropriate and illegal. A child or a youngster who is inclined towards delinquency is exposed to majorly four factors. They are: individual, family, mental health, and substance abuse.

Following can be the major causes for juvenile delinquency:

- ***Individual Factors:***

A child or a juvenile who is not properly educated or is not intelligent enough to understand the difference between right and wrong is more prone to be involved in a delinquent act. Other causes for a delinquency can be uncontrollable aggression, impulsive behavior, etc. There can be different and

various individual factors that can lead a child to become delinquent. Due to lack of love, care and attention in childhood can also be a reason for delinquency.

- ***Family Factors:***

Families play a very important role in shaping the child's future and building their behavior and character. When a child face lack of proper parental supervision or when there always exist parental conflicts in a house, children are the ones who suffer the most and this impacts their behavior. When a child feels neglected or suffers from physical, emotional or psychological abuse in the family, they often become arrogant, fearless and revengeful. Behavior of parents also causes influence in the behavior of their children and therefore if parents demonstrate themselves to be fearless and disrespectful to law and order, the children also learns the same. Also, the child who has the least or no attachment to his own family can also be a juvenile who can participate in delinquent activities.

- ***Mental Health Factors:***

Mental health conditions of a child can also lead to engaging in delinquent activities such as mental disorder or conduct disorder. Conduct disorder is a state where a lack of empathy and disrespect for social norms are observed in a person. Personality disorder is also a factor but it cannot be diagnosed in a child.

- ***Substance Abuse Factors:***

It is found that minors are consuming and getting addicted to very powerful drugs. The addiction of such drugs can make them commit any crime during intoxication. The problem is that the number of minors getting engaged into drugs are increasing and those minors are of very young ages and therefore the effect of those intoxicating substances is very high upon them. They either uses consume illegal substances or consume substances illegally. In both the situations, there are prone to commit any crime in order to extract money for more drugs or commit any such act that is harmful, destructive and a criminal conduct.

EFFECT OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

- ***Effect upon the Victim:***

It is the victim who suffers the most when a crime has occurred against him/her either of theft, vandalism, or violence. Victim has to suffer the loss as the crime has happened against the victim. It breaks them physically, mentally, emotionally and psychologically. Victim has to bear the expenses of lost wages, health, or psychological care. If there is a need for replacing certain items that have been damaged or destroyed, it is also upon the victim to get it changed or replaced. Therefore, the victim gets affected physically, monetarily, mentally and psychologically. The juvenile is not treated as criminal instead a helping hand is put forward for the juvenile but the victim has suffered as much as if the offence was committed by an adult. Thus, the victim is the sufferer of the offence and which gets affected the most from an offence. If the victim is a girl or women then she has a lot to suffer. Even her

own parents and family try to suppress the victim so that no one knows about the incident in order to safeguard their respect in the society.

- ***Effect upon the Juvenile Delinquent:***

The child committing crime has to suffer the consequences of his or her act. He has to lose his freedom by getting punished with incarceration or probation. He suffers loss in academics which impacts his or her career. Another impact upon them is that when they are in juvenile centers, they come in contact with many other delinquents which can influence them in a bad way and the juvenile instead of reforming themselves to become law abiding person, they can get inclined towards committing more dangerous and heinous crimes. When a child of above 16 age becomes repeat offender or involved in heinous crimes then he or she can be tried as an adult. The delinquency can affect the child's future life and decisions. It impacts his other career, college life and future family.

- ***Effect upon the Families:***

When any offence is committed against a person then not only that person subjected to offence is affected but also the family of the victim gets affected indirectly. They have to undergo different challenges which they have to suffer. They get affected mentally, emotionally and psychologically. In Indian society, the one who has committed the crime is not the one who has to suffer the disparity but the victim and the victim's family. Especially in cases of rape, sexual harassment, etc., the girl or woman who is the victim is subjected to torture in the society and so her family undergoes the same. The family either loses their family member or respect or both.

The family of the juvenile also has to suffer insult, monetary loss and trauma of having a child who is involved in criminal activities. They have to arrange large amounts of money to pay the lawyers to get their child out of the case. Having a child who is criminal-minded is sufficient enough to give stress to the family and relatives. They have to cope up with the needs of the child who chose the wrong path in order to bring him to the right path. They also have to face the consequences of their child's crime upon the victim which they have to indemnify. They also suffer disrespect and disparity in the society for being the family members of a juvenile delinquent.

- ***Effect on the Community:***

One juvenile delinquent in a community can be hazardous for the whole community. The community has to upgrade and increase the safety for their own families and child to not get involved in crime by getting influenced by the juvenile delinquent. A juvenile in a community is a danger for the whole community as no one is safe and neither does any other child of the community. For a peaceful and safe community it is essential that there is no such criminal-minded people in the community that can harm the peace and social norms of the community.

- ***Effect on the Society***

A juvenile is harmful not only to himself but to his family, community and a whole society. India is a country of culture, ethics, norms, and values. Children in India used to live with their parents even after attaining the age of 18 years because it is the culture of Indian society where children respect and stay with their parents. Such children who engage themselves into crime before the age of majority are threat to the future as they think that they do not have any career except crime. No matter what the reason is behind committing crime at a very young age, they affect many people, families and communities. This is a problem that is a challenge for Indian governmental agencies, educators, and NGOs.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES TOWARDS THE JUVENILES

It is very important to prevent juvenile delinquency as it is a threat to peace and safety of the society. It is also dangerous for future as the juvenile after being adult can bring more destruction if not prevented. The very first step to prevention is identification. It is very important to identify such children who can be prone to crime and therefore they need to be stopped at an early stage otherwise they can become habitual offenders. One of the best and most effective measures to prevent juvenile delinquency is to assist children and families at a very early age by initiating programs and funding that could help in creating awareness and prevention for delinquents. All those efforts that aims to prevent youth from getting involved in criminal or anti-social activities can be broadly termed as “*delinquency prevention*”. Great news is that the government has realized the importance of allocation of resources for juvenile delinquents. The services that can count under delinquency prevention are education and treatment upon substance abuse, family counseling, youth mentorship, parenting knowledge, educational facilities, and youth sheltering, etc.

There may broadly be two programs for delinquency prevention. They are:

- **Individual Program-** It includes prevention through counseling, psychotherapy, and education.
- **Environmental Program-** Involvement of certain techniques that may change the socio-economic factors that considerably promotes delinquency.

To prevent the delinquencies, these programs involve certain strategies that can be sub-headed under these programs:

INDIVIDUAL PROGRAMS

- ***Clinical Program***

It is a program that involves the assistance of psychiatrists and psychologists. Social psychologists and psychiatrists workers help juvenile delinquents understand their disorders or problems in their personalities that lead them to become a delinquent thus, helping delinquents becoming normal children and returning back to the right path. Following can be some of the functions of such clinics are:

Participate in finding pre-delinquents or delinquents at an early stage.

1. Investigating cases that have been selected for study or treatment.
2. Treatment of the delinquents themselves and if it is not possible then, transfer the case to other agencies for proper treatment.
3. Co-operate with the students interested in learning the treatment of behavioral problems.

- ***Educational Program***

Educational institutes play a very important role in defining and shaping the future of children. Therefore, they should not discriminate between children, teach them moral values, and develop an understanding of differentiating between right and wrong. Every child should be sent to schools for their basic understanding of life and values. Education institutions therefore should understand the significance and be responsible while teaching or giving knowledge to the students.

- ***Mental Hygiene***

Mental stability of a child is very important. When a child is not mentally fit, unstable or having mentality disorders, he or she should be immediately treated or helped. Mental treatment should not be over-emphasized. Mental peace and stability is essential for a good life and therefore it is essential to make sure that the child is not suffering from any mental problem. Mental hygiene is a very broad term that can be used for mental stability, peace, and proper functioning without any stress, tension, or disorder. Mental hygiene is a very helpful measure for delinquency prevention. It is important to understand that there should be a determined goal of life and all the energy of a person shall be focused in the fulfillment of that goal. For achieving any life goal, mental hygiene is must.

- ***Parent Education***

Every to-be parent should be educated as to how to raise a child in a right manner so that he does not get inclined towards any wrong path. Parent education is helpful in building happy families, good family relations, proper care of child, and preventing from raising any criminal-minded child. A child gets mostly influenced by his parents and therefore it is the responsibility to raise their child in a manner that they grow up to become good and law-abiding persons. It is usually said that children learn from what

their parents do and therefore the parents should be respectful to law and abide by rules and regulations in order to make their child understand the significance of law and its abiding nature.

- ***Recreational Programs***

Recreational activities is one of the best method of deviating a child's mind from criminal activities where they get engaged with other people, adults, and children and get connected and develop friendship with them. Good and positive friendships help them become normal, stable and get back to normal state. Such programs involve activities such as sports, dance, music, yoga, skit, trekking, art, and other such recreational activities. Such activities deviates the child and youth from delinquent activities and help prevent delinquencies. Such activities can channelize the energies of youngsters in activities such as sports, dance, singing etc. Youth organizations should take initiatives in organizing such recreational programs periodically in different communities and areas. Such activities help prevent delinquencies in a very energetic and change the negativity in positivity through different recreational activities.

- ***Removal of Inferiority Complex***

Usually when a child develops a feeling of inferiority, he or she becomes either fearful or furious. Both these situations are dangerous for child's mental health. Therefore, it is very important to make children understand that no one is inferior to the other and it is normal to be different from others and everyone in this world is different from other. It is the duty of parents to not discriminate between their children as the one who would feel less loved or under-valued, he or she can develop an inferiority complex in them that would impact their future. Same is with the educational institutes, a teacher or any faculty in the educational institute shall not discriminate between the students because that could lead in developing inferiority complex in the students. Inferiority complex, fear, lack of confidence, etc can impact their mind gravely and can be a reason for their involvement in criminal activities. A child should be encouraged and taught to be cheerful in life. He should also be educated that everyone in their life suffer from failures and bad days therefore they should not be criticized for such failures.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS

- ***Community programs***

It is a program that tries to reach such people who need help and assistance instead of just helping those who come and ask for help. In this program, local community members play a very significant role as they have more knowledge and information of people residing in that community and therefore they are very helpful in this program.

- ***Publicity***

Correct information and knowledge about juvenile delinquency should be stated in the newspapers, magazines, radio, television, etc. A juvenile shall be protected from wrong or misleading

information. Correct knowledge about delinquencies and factors of such delinquencies should be given to the society so they understand and get properly assessed.

- ***Love and Affection of Parents***

Parents are the most influential persons in the life of a child and therefore a child should be given proper love and affection. Children should not be discriminated and loved equally by their parents and if a child lacks love and affection from his or her parents then he or she may become frustrated and unsatisfied that may lead him towards crime.

- ***Family Environment***

Family is the first house of a child from where he learns and develops his basic personality behaviors. Parental supervision, parent-child relationship, siblings relations prove to be very significant in developing one's behavior and therefore a healthy and happy environment must be in the family to properly nurture the children in a family.

CONCLUSION

Juvenile delinquency is a challenge and threat to the peace and safety of a society and therefore it is very important to prevent juvenile delinquencies from the society. Every child deserves love, affection, education, food, shelter, and proper nurturing. Therefore, the governmental and different agencies working for youth should work their best for giving all these to every child in a society so that the child does not feel unloved or under-valued that leads to engaging him in criminal activities. Parents and family play a very important role in defining and shaping a child's future therefore they should be well-educated about how to raise their children correctly so that they do not grow a criminal-minded child. No child is a born criminal or delinquent, he or she chooses wrong path due to the influence of external factors. Such external forces should be eliminated from the society.

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