

A Study of Juvenile Delinquents and their Social context in Observation home among Surat

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Introduction

The term juvenile delinquency is not much hereditary as it is an acquired trait in a wrong environment in which children are left to grow without proper care. After independence the issue of juvenile delinquency is enlightened by Rabindra Nath Tagore “The children need more attention than the other section of the society. But only after First World War this section has been privileged to secure their future and because of the acts and policies are enacted with few amendments”.

The problem of juvenile delinquency is one of the complex social problems with which all societies are confronted. Its magnitude in modern times has been consistently on increase in developed as well as developing societies. This is largely due to the fact that the forces of rapid social change in human in modern times have shaken the very fundamental basis of social order. Even a well-knit compact and cozy family unit is believed to be shaken by these forces. These forces have also threatened this process led to increasing deviations and abnormalities in individual behavior giving rise to criminality in adult and delinquency in the juveniles.

India is a country inhabited by people, who live in poverty stricken conditions in villages and background areas in the cities. More than half of the populations are still below poverty line where malnutrition, under nourishment poor care and attention of the child and child abuse is common situations. There is no wonder if the number of juvenile delinquents, destitute, children following anti social trends and having uncontrollable behavior goes on increasing in the poverty, stricken area of the society. The undreamed or the juvenile is characterized by low level of maturity both in physical and mental capacities, which as a major factor

distinguish them from an adult. They are therefore, highly vulnerable groups to fall a prey to temptation, inducement and by vested groups to embark on a path of criminality. Crimes committed by the juvenile may range from petty ones to heinous ones. The nature of juvenile sensitivity is such that it necessitates treatment or dealing apart by way of counseling, special care and rehabilitation through special legal provisions. Childhood experience affects a lot to the personality of the person. And that is why the significance of child and his welfare is emphasized heavily by one and all in every society. The seed sown in the childhood will grow up in the latter part of life. For this achievement of this resource of childhood, we must provide those good homes and healthy atmosphere for their proper development, because the future of the nation depends on the type of men and women who grow out of the children of today. The philosophy of child welfare in India emphasizes upon the fact that the children are the weaker section of the society for they are most vulnerable group exposed to condition that leads to problems.

Children, the principal assets of any country, are as important as the development of material resources. India has the highest number of children in the world. With the fast-paced development in our country, we notice lots of changes appearing in the climate, environment, society, educational system, and the behavior of our children.

Juvenile Delinquency

The word juvenile has been derived from the Latin term juvenis, which means young and etymologically, and the word delinquency has been derived from the Latin word delinquer which means to omit. In the year 1484, William Coxtton used the word delinquent to describe a person who was found guilty. Juvenile delinquency refers to the involvement by the teenagers in an unlawful behaviour who is usually under the age of 18 and commits an act which would be considered as a crime. A child is known as a delinquent when he/she commits a mistake which is against the law and which is not accepted by the society. Thus a “juvenile” or “child” means a person who has not completed eighteenth years of age and violates the law and commits an offence under the legal age of maturity.

Children who create a problem or indulge themselves in bad habits, crimes or mal-activities are called juvenile delinquents. In other-words, they are called problematic children. The word ‘juvenile’ has been derived from the Latin word ‘juvenis’ meaning young. The word ‘delinquency’ has been derived from ‘delinquere’ do away from and ‘liqueur’ to leave. The Children Act, 1960, in India defines delinquent as ‘a child who has committed an offence.’

Juvenile means a boy who has not attained the age of 16 years and a girl who has not attained the age of 18 years. Delinquency is not merely “juvenile crime.” It embraces all deviations from normal youthful behavior and includes the incorrigible, ungovernable, habitually disobedient and those who desert their homes and mix with immoral people, those with behavioral problems and indulge in anti-social practices.

Observation Home

Observation Home is intended for the temporary reception of any juvenile in conflict with law during the pendency of any inquiry against him / her. The children who are under the age of 18 years are admitted in this home by the police. The state government provides various types of services in the Observation Home for the rehabilitation and social integration of these juveniles. A child who has committed a crime or an offence and is not placed under the charge of guardian or a parent then he/she is initially sent to an Observation Home where they are kept and are provided with proper mental and physical care according to their different age groups. The main aim of the Observation Home is to bring the best interest of the child i.e. right to education, right to protection, right to survival, and right to participation.

Scope of the study

This study would lead to the understanding of various needs, the background and causes of juvenile delinquents and role of education. Earlier, there was not much impact of media such as television and internet on the young minds. The massive use of mobile phones among youths was also a rarity. But with changing times and technological advances, children are more prone to exposure to sensitive materials. Changing patterns of familial relationships owing to fast and stressful lifestyle also add to the risk of delinquent behaviour. This study would help in gaining socio-economic background of the juvenile delinquents and varies needs insight into the problems faced by the offenders both before and during their stay in the Observation Home. The study would also help in suggesting the measures for the improvement of the conditions of the inmates at Observation Home.

Methodology

The sample design was concerned with two aspects. Firstly the number of respondents was selected & secondly how were those respondents through sampling methods. The researcher

utilized probability sampling method. I took a sample of 50 male juvenile delinquents in zonal observation home Surat.

Objectives of the Study

- To understand socio-economic background of the juvenile delinquents in observation homes.
- To understand the causes of juvenile delinquency.
- To assess various needs of the children and role of education.

Tools of data collection

The major tool of primary data collection was Interview method, by using the questionnaire and observation. In questions focusing on the Personal, Academic, Social Profile, Economical profile, and Facilities in observation home. I used SPSS for data analysis.

Limitation of the Study

There was a lack of permission of using electronic gadgets like camera, tape recorder etc, which would have helped in collection of data.

The long official procedure got difficulty because it has taken too much time period.

When I was interacted with juveniles in observation home, the juveniles thought that this is an official procedure by judge or through government so sometimes they hidden and hesitate to share some facts with me.

Findings

- The analysis reveals 69% juvenile indulged in deviant acts in age between 16-17 years of age. 22% offence acts indulged in age between 14 to 15 years and 9% offence act indulged in age between 13 to 12 and less than 11.
- 32% of the juveniles committed to offence of Half Murder, 19.5% of the juveniles committed to offence of theft, 16.5 % of the juveniles committed to offence of murder, 14% of the juveniles committed to offence of drug smuggling, 11% of the

juveniles committed to offence of kidnapping, 7% of the juveniles committed to offence of Rape.

- 48% of the juveniles dropout their education in 1st to 7th standard, 20.5 % of the juvenile dropout their education in 8th to 10th standard, 20 % of the juveniles are Illiterate, 7% of the juveniles dropout their education in 11th and 12th standard, 4.5% of the juveniles dropout their education in college.
- 74% of the juvenile's residence in Urban area and 26% of the juvenile's residence in Rural area. 56% of the juveniles live in rented house, 21.5% of the juveniles live in kaccha house, 13% of the juvenile lives in their own house, and 9.5 % of the juvenile lives others in which includes live with their relatives, lives on footpath etc.
- 71% of the juveniles doing job and 29% of the juveniles do not doing job.
- 69% of the juveniles are belonging to nuclear family, 21.5% of the juveniles belonging joint family, 9.5% of the juveniles belonging to broken family.
- The study found that in many cases the influence of the peer group was highly responsible to work as stimuli for the juvenile to commit a crime. Around 48.5 % of the juveniles were involved in crime along with their friends. 39 % of the juveniles reported that they were not affected by the peer group and committed offence singly as individual. 9.5% of the children committed the offence by joining with unknown persons.
- 69% of the juveniles can drive two wheeler, 7.5 % of the juvenile can drive four wheeler and 23.5% of the juvenile cannot drive any vehicle. 100% of the juvenile have no moped license to drive; underage driving is a big serious problem.
- 77% of the juveniles in the observation home are life as usual. They do not see much difference between life at home and observation home. 22% of the juveniles admitted the life as miserable in the observation home.
- 100% of the juvenile reported that facilities of entertaining like T.V/tape/radio/recorder in observation home.
- 62% of the juveniles respond reported that they don't get sufficient food and 38% of the juveniles respond reported that they get sufficient food.
- 75.5% of the juveniles believed that they have learning something good from the observation home, and 24.5% of the juvenile believed that they have nothing to learning which is benefit for future from observation home.

- 96% of the juveniles regretted for their offence and 4% of the juveniles have no regretted for their offence.

Suggestions and conclusion

- This study reflects that due to poor surroundings, strained family relations and their strong bonding with the peer mates tends them to commit such offences.
- The economic profile of these children in conflict with law shows that it has a significant impact over these children.
- More number of teachers should be appoint in the observation home so that it will be possible to provide teaching to the different age group of delinquents.
- More number of security guard should be appointing in observation home.
- School drop outs should be handled properly to ensure that they are not becoming antisocial.
- Proper counseling sessions at regular intervals is highly essential for these juveniles.
- Delinquents should be dealt in a sensitive manner .Proper training should be given to the authority and caretakers in these homes.
- Education should be an integral part of the positive development of these children in Conflict with law.
- Proper socialization from the childhood is a key requirement. More parental focus towards their children is needed for their proper development.
- Government should appoint at least one doctor for 24 hours in observation home.
- Government should maintain vocational and academic programs, juvenile justice practitioners must provide youth with awareness.
- Parents should resist to their children to drive under age of 18 year.

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