



JUVENILES DELINQUENCY AS A SOCIAL PROBLEM

Akhil Kumar Saxena

Assistant Professor, Deptt. of Sociology, National P.G. College, Bhongaon, Mainpuri, (U.P.) India

Received- 13.11.2019, Revised- 18.11.2019, Accepted - 22.11.2019 E-mail: drskpal.bog@gmail.com

Abstract: *In the modern times it has become increasingly evident that all over the world, juvenile delinquency has become one of the major problems facing mankind. The process of social change has been accelerated as a result of other processes such as industrialisation, Urbanisation and modernisation. The second world war and its aftermath have further served to give a push to the magnitude of the problem. Except a few sociologists, psychologists and criminologists, everybody is bewildered and perturbed by ever increasing problem of juvenile delinquency. The old idea that poverty is the only factor in creating juvenile delinquency has been completely refuted by the facts and figures of Juvenile delinquency in a rich and affluent country like America. Even in a rich country, Juvenile delinquency has increased and it is borne by the fact that the maturing of unregenerated delinquents later on leads to chronic adult criminals.*

Key Words: modern times, increasingly, juvenile delinquency, facing mankind, accelerated, processes.

Since India has attained freedom, the pace of industrialisation, urbanisation and westernisation has been increasing. There has been widespread social change throughout the country affecting even the isolated village communities. Social change is making its impact on every individual; infant, child or adult; male or female; rich or poor; educated or uneducated. The deviant youngsters have also fallen a prey to the changing social and cultural milieu as well as the emotional stress and strain of the changing society.

DELINQUENCY- AS A SOCIAL PROBLEM- Juvenile delinquency is a social problem and, as such, has to be studied in the context of the social and economic status, home and family and community conditions of the delinquents and the emotional stresses of the present-day age. Indian society has become more complex and social change has accelerated. New forms of social control have not kept pace with the changing situation, and no strong consistent public opinion has been developed favourable to law enforcement and the observance at all times. Sutherland, who so ably described the historical background of present-day delinquency and crime in terms of social process by which criminality developed, summarizes the matter by

Corresponding Author

stating that industrial and democratic revolutions started social processes that produced criminality in at least three ways. First, the need for social control was increased because the area of social interaction was widened from the local community to the entire earth, people were driven by the community to the entire earth, people were driven by the pressure of competition and ambition for luxury and easy money, and a competitive ideology of individual rights and privileges rather than duties and social welfare provided a background for the offender. Second, the old agencies of control in the local community were weakened. Third, law as an agency of control in the wider area was kept relatively weak by certain groups who emphasized that the least government was the best, or who restored to direct bribery. Delinquency is not an isolated problem and cannot be understood without consideration of the background of the current social problems. The basic conditions of delinquent behaviour are an integral part of the fabric of the entire social order and involve the numerous social changes that have grown out of the past. The social problems of contemporary society have their roots in the past and their consequences in the present and future, according to Sumitra Pathak, changes also took place in the



past, but the pace was relatively slow and man adjusted himself to new conditions. But in recent years, the pace of change has been surprisingly quick and it has been difficult for human beings to adjust themselves to this ever-changing situation. This has resulted in an uprooting of the present generation from its old standards and values.

Defining concept of a social problem, Weaver holds that, "A social problem is any condition that causes strain, tension, conflict or frustration with the fulfilment of a need. The dimensions of social problem, are (psychological) in the sense of emotional or intellectual disturbances and (material) in the sense of extent incidence or distribution. Strain or anxiety is a dynamic element in the problem. A problem situation compels those affected, to seek a solution. It calls for relief through modification of the environment through social change in the situation."

THE MEANING AND NATURE OF DELINQUENCY-The term Juvenile Delinquency has, for long, been quite loosely used to explain juvenile and youthful offences and aberrations of all types. It has different connotation in the minds of different people. Judges, teachers, parents, social scientists, social workers, administrators and the community, view the problem from different standpoints. Each of these, appearing partly reasonable, offers his own explanation of the juvenile deviant behaviour and in doing so tends to transfer the blame on to others and confuses and confounds the explanation and solution of the problem. Truly speaking, the juvenile offender and the young criminal both properly fall within the category of disorganised youth and may be considered as part and parcel of the disturbing problems of adolescence. Both may be defined as young persons whose anti-social conduct is in direct opposition to existing law and ordinances. Statutes dealing with juvenile delinquents are generally limited to delinquents under sixteen, although several studies extend the jurisdiction of the juvenile court to cases under twenty-one.

According to Encyclopaedia of Social

Sciences, Juvenile Delinquency is that behaviour on the part of children which may, under the law, subject those children to the Juvenile Court. As such it is a very new and legal term for a very old phenomenon. Similar is the opinion of Dr. Sethna, according to him, "Juvenile Delinquency involves wrong doings by a child or a young person who is under an age specified by the law, (for the time being in force) of the place concerned."

While analysing delinquency definitions, P.N. Sati categorized them into three broad headings, as follows: -

- 1- The Role Definitions,
- 2- The Configurational or Syndrome Definitions, and
- 3- Typological Definitions.

According to him the most popular definitions of delinquency among terrorists are the 'role' definitions. As configurational or syndrome definition he defines delinquency, by a peculiar configuration of delinquent acts. "It is not the first act, or the third, that defines a boy as 'delinquent' but it is some often ineffable combination of acts that distinguishes the 'true' delinquent from the 'Pseudo' delinquent and 'true' non-delinquent." Further he says that, "both the 'role' and 'syndrome' definitions of delinquency are compatible with and, indeed, seem to foster the view that it is illegitimate to consider delinquency as a homogenous or unidimensional phenomenon. Just as it is illegitimate to trust all diseases as one, so it is illegitimate to treat all delinquent acts as delinquency."

In the opinion of Paul W. Tappan, "delinquency is any act, course of conduct or situation which might be brought before a court and adjudicated, whether the fact it comes to be treated there or some other resources or indeed remain untreated. To ordinary man all legal transgression are delinquencies."

Lawell J. Carr, presents a diagram of concentric circles to illustrate possible meanings which he designates, "A target for consistent reference." The inner circle (7) adjudged delinquents,



that is, all court antisocial deviants who have been found guilty, (6) Alleged delinquents-all apprehended anti-social deviants brought to court, (5) Agency delinquents-all detected anti-social deviants reaching any agency, (4) Detected delinquents-all anti-social deviants detected, (3) Legal Delinquents all deviants committing anti-social act as defined by the law, (2) Juvenile deviants-all children showing deviant behaviour, and (1) the outer circle includes the total juvenile population in a given area, below a given age as specified by law. This picture shows how confusing our definitions of delinquency are, and how difficult it is to determine as to who actually is delinquent.

According to Gillin and Gillin, "Sociologically either a criminal or a juvenile delinquent is one who is guilty of an act believed, by a group that has the power to enforce its belief, to be injurious to society and therefore prohibited."

Sossaman presents a summary list of Acts or conditions included in delinquency definition or description, tabulated in decreasing order of frequency, and he indicated the items included in the laws of the various states and territories. Stated briefly, these acts and conditions are-

(1) Violates any law or ordinances; (2) habitually truant; (3) (Knowingly) associates with thieves, vicious or immoral persons (4) incorrigible; (5) beyond control or parent or guardian; (6) growing up in idleness or crime; (7) so deports self as to injure or endanger self or others; (8) absents self from home without just cause and without consent; (9) immoral and indecent conduct; (10) (habitually) uses vice, obscene or vulgar language (in public places); (11) knowingly enters, visits house of ill repute; (12) patronizes, visits policy shop or gambling place; (13) (habitually) wanders about rail-road yards and tracks; (14) jumps from train or enters car or engines without authority; (15) patronizes saloon or dram house where intoxicating liquor is sold; (17) patronizes public pool-room or bucket shop; (18) immoral conduct around school (or in public place); (19) engages in illegal occupation; (20) in occupation

or situation dangerous or injurious to self or others; (21) smokes cognates (or uses tobacco in any form); (22) frequents place whose existence violates law; (23) is found in place for permitting which adult may be published; (24) addicted to drugs; (25) disorderly; (26) begging; (27) uses intoxicating liquor; (28) makes indecent proposals; (29) loiters, sleep in alleys, vagrant; (30) runs away from state or charity institutions; (31) found on premises occupied or used for illegal purposes; (32) operate motor vehicle dangerously while under the influence of liquor; (33) attempts to marry without consent, in violation of law; and (34) given to sexual irregularities.

JUSTIFICATION- During the last few years juvenile Delinquency has been on the increase in India, and is now appearing in youngsters who are hitherto mostly unaffected by this malady.

The existence of a number of children in homes as well as in schools, who are a problem to the parents and teachers in home and school respectively, cannot be denied. They create a number of problems in relation to society.

The age of adolescents is very sensitive. The children are seriously affected by their physical, emotional and social undesirable pattern of behaviour and they create disturbances. Such maladjusted children not only create serious deterioration in their own achievement; but also, are bound to affect seriously the other children in many other important aspects. The proper handling of these children will affect an improvement in the falling standards and values of society.

This has resulted in various behavioural problems which confront society. Delinquent behaviour is manifested through a number of anti-social acts which harm not only the young offenders, but all those who came under their influence and also the institutions like family, school and society of which they are an integral part. school and society of which they are an integral part. Now the question arises as to why do children adopt these anti-social patterns of behaviour and whether their personality profile differs from those of the normal children. A



lot of research has been carried out in western countries in this field but compared to this very little work has been done in our country, hence the need for the proposed research project.

Modern era is supposed to be that of science, but there is a parallel movement also, that is, science in the service of man. This view point has led to a widespread interest in man and his behaviour pattern. The sociologists, psychologist all have emphasized this human factor and different and varied aspect of man and his behaviour pattern has been investigated in the light of multifarious environmental and emotional conditions.

India has gained her freedom very recently and this has given rise to varied and sometimes contradictory problems. This has influenced the Indian society as a whole, particularly personality traits and behaviour patterns of its inhabitants. These contradictory problems have given, also, extra strains and consequently the problem of adjustment before the children of present-day society. Maladjustment seems to be the inevitable consequences of rapid and sudden emergence of new factors in social change. Juveniles, in particular, seems to be affected in an unusual way by these changing conditions. These all-new factors have affected the behaviour pattern, mode of thinking, etc. and the modern generation has been put to a great strain. The younger generation has to adjust to different and contradictory demands of society.

In view of the above reasons, it has become necessary that the factors and forces which are affecting the personality traits consequently the behaviour pattern of the younger generation may be assessed. It is clear, that there is no single factor, responsible for juvenile delinquency.

Therefore, the research design of the present study is based on such a logical examination, which may itself prove the necessity and validity of the study. The reluctant postulates of the present study are to follow scientific mechanical investigations with a view to find out those factors which are responsible for Juvenile delinquency in

particular on society in general.

SAMPLING DESIGN- The sample of the present study was drawn from one of the important industrial city of U.P.-Agra. This town generally represent all the sections of society. The sample of this study represents different communities and reflect the true nature of causes of various delinquent behaviour of children.

The sample of the present study in view of the fact that the population of India is approximately 613 million, is rather limited i.e. 250. The reason for this limitation is rather obvious. However, it has been attempted to make the sample as much representative as possible of the population for this reason sample was taken from out of the institutionalized and non-institutionalized delinquents. Thus, it can be safely claimed that the sample has a fairly satisfactory representation.

BREAK OF THE SAMPLE- (According to Age) Cases selected for the study range from 7 to 21 years of age. The following table show numbers of delinquents in various age groups.

TABLE NO. 1.1.
BREAK UP OF THE SAMPLE
(According to Age)

Age Group	No.	Percent
7-12 years	21	8.4
12-16 years	61	24.4
16-18 years	106	42.4
18-21 years	62	24.8

The above clearly indicate that most of the delinquents were from the age group of 16-18 years and the minimum number of the delinquents from 7-12 years age group.

TABLE NO. 1.2.
BREAK UP OF THE SAMPLE
(According to Education)

Educational Level	No.	Percent
Illiterate	90	36.0
Literate		
(1) Primary level	67	26.8
(2) Middle level	82	32.8
(3) High school & above	11	4.4
	250	100.0



The above table show unsatisfactory educational of the delinquents taken as sample. 36.0 delinquents had no schooling at all. While most of the delinquents were educated up to milled level. Only 4.4 percent delinquents had schooling up to High School and above.

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