

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AS A SOCIAL PROBLEM IN PAKISTAN

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INTRODUCTION

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 relatively new and legal term for a very old phenomenon.

The term has both precise and diffuse referents. When a child is designated a juvenile delinquent by the court. This is a precise definition of his legal status. He is by this act a ward of the court subject to its discretion. By contrast except in a strictly legal sense, the term refers only vaguely to actual behaviour. Since what is delinquent varies greatly over time and from one part of the world to another.

Many youngster part in activities defined by the statutes as delinquent but are not detected or if detected are not brought to the attention of legal authorities and some of these youngsters who have not been legally designated as delinquent are defined as delinquent by others significant to the community and to themselves. For purposes of scientific inquiry delinquency may be *defined as behaviours that is specified by law as grounds for an adjudication of delinquency and delinquents as those young people who engage in such behaviour.*

THE DATA OF DELINQUENCY

Official courts of delinquents, or "offences known" are limited in the extent to which they can contribute to knowledge concerning the extent and nature of delinquency or of the processes involved in becoming delinquent. They represent the activities of the officials rather than of young people and legal rather than scientific concepts of behaviours. They provide little information about the characteristics of offenders or their behaviour.

The very flexibility of legal processes concerned with juveniles call into question the comparability of official data

from one jurisdiction to another. Despite these limitations for some purposes official data are useful, and they are in any case the only data available for describing certain characteristics of the phenomenon. They are particularly useful as reflection of official concern with juvenile delinquency over time within and between societies. Certainly variations in official handling of offenders by age, sex and other theoretically meaningful categories reflected varying degrees of social concern with the behaviour of young people. In addition they may provide crude indexes of the behaviour of children which are reliable perhaps only with respect to the most serious types of behaviour for these will most consistently be officially recorded.

Because of limited usefulness of official data of treatment and illogical purposes agencies and projects devoted to these ends also generate large bodies of data concerning delinquents. These take three principal forms in clinical reports. Public attention on juvenile delinquency and provided additional impetus for large scale social action and research programme directed at the acquisition of new knowledge concerning J.D. and its control.

AGE AND SEX DIFFERENCES

Throughout the world juvenile court cases tend to be in older age categories specified by law official cases of delinquency thus tend to be a phenomenon of adolescence and young adulthood rather than of childhood. In countries that have experienced increases in delinquency however the average age of court appearance has tended to decrease.

Boys and girls are not equally involved in delinquency and sex ratios are not the same for all types of delinquency. The ratio of boys to girls appearing before juvenile courts is very much related to the over all social structure of a society as well as to variations within it. As the social status of woman approaches that of men and women gain greater freedom to participate in the affairs of the larger society socialization patterns in the family and other.

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If we trace our history we will find a very low ratio of

juvenile delinquents in the beginning years of Pakistan. But as the time passed this trend of juvenile delinquency followed the upward path due to many changes which occurred in our society. In the past few decades this type of crime has gained momentum and has upset our socio-cultural setup to a great extent. Undoubtedly it is not a healthy trend in any respect. Now a days every family is seen crying that their child or children are not obedient and they do not pay much attention so far as their studies are concerned. Every now and then we can come across so many events, incidents and accidents in which youngsters are involved. They don't feel hesitation in cheating, looting and stealing. Nor they are ashamed of what they do. It is really a prime time for all of us to feel, think and act towards this direction. Our youth is our future. We should not keep our eyes closed on what is happening around us. If we remain indifferent to these changes which are taking place in our society, then sorry to say that it would be a great catastrophe for all of us so the seriousness of this problem must be realized before it is too late. Let us then have a cursory sight of our society in which we are all living. It will certainly come to our attention that our society is disintegrating and losing the ground on which our socio-cultural structure is based. We have lost our values, manners and norms. Moreover our social institutions are not performing their roles properly. They are ignoring many things. They are becoming disorganized. With the result their effectiveness has become very weak and they have lost complete control over our youth. Due to the economic upheaval things have taken a bad shape. Now every "man and woman" as seen running after jobs in order to maintain their status in the society. Joint family system has become a talk of the old fashion single family is becoming popular day by day. So it is very much obvious that due to these factors the socialization and basic training of children has lost its importance. Children are being ignored on one pretext or another. Schools Colleges and Universities once used to be the centres of learning where students were taught different trades and brought up as model human beings full of generosity obedience, discipline and learning. It was simply because of the so-

cial control and teacher-taught relationship. Now a day teachers do not pay individual attention towards their students nor the hell are they caring about their daily activities. Teachers ignore their students and in return they ignore their teachers. Reasons are many but the main reason to me is that "sanctity of education" has disappeared. Students have lost the craze for learning and the teachers have lost the inner spirit to impart education. Result is before every body. Education has been commercialized. It has lost its effectiveness and a charm to attract others. Education for knowledge has become a saying of the past and education for the sake of degree is a very popular maximum.

Apart for this, politics has entered in our educational institutions. This dirty politics has spoiled the minds of our children. They are being attracted by the charming slogans raised by the different political groups or parties. These innocent children are becoming an easy victim to the politicians who for their vested interests use them and spoil them completely. Instead of seeking knowledge they are seen involved in drug abuse looting and juvenile delinquency. They are turning disrespectful and even do not hesitate in insulting their parents and teachers. This trend among the youngsters is an eye-opener for all of us. Mass medias such as Films, T.V.Dish Antina, V.C.R. and obscene literature has played a major role in diverting our youth towards juvenile delinquency. Diffusion of western culture has also played an havoc in our society we feel proud and modern while using western dress and style. Due to their inexperience and less education our children are lost soon in the dazzling lights of western culture. It is wonder-struck that in most of our major cities such as Karachi, Lahore and Hyderabad "slums areas" are expanding at a very high speed. An organized crime develop in such areas. For example only in Karachi and Hyderabad more than 33% areas are "Kacha-based areas" where there is no sanitation, no health unit, no school, no play ground, no pacca houses, no electricity, no water supply and nothing of this sort. Now we can very well imagine that what would have been the condition of the poor people in this dirty situation. Do we think, that good and law-abiding citizens will come up

from these areas? The answer is simple- never- never.

When children don't find healthy activities to follow due to the lack of play grounds, parks and places of recreation they easily turn towards unhealthy activities such as fighting, stealing and becoming juvenile delinquents. In our society more marriages are a symbol of manhood. So we marry more women. It means more children and more children means more problems. Which only raise the ratio of crime in society. It is very much unfortunate that we do not give much importance to human psychology. Without studying human psychology we can not understand each other in the real sense of the term. Psychology deals with our actions and reactions motives emotions and passions attitudes and aptitudes human behaviour and group behaviour and personality as a whole. In short this subject deals with everything relating to human being within this shortest span of life so importance of this subject can neither minimized nor ignored. The only problems is that "we do ignore it without knowing it". I am pretty sure that if we use psychology properly: we would of course be in a position to solve most of our problems easily.

SUGGESTIONS AS WELL AS REMEDIES

1. We can control over population by increasing our income and popularizing population planning in our society. It is very much unfortunate that inspite of our best efforts we have not been able to have substantial results of population planning. This system is unique and it can work very well as it has very successfully been executed in our brother muslim country Indonesia so fault is in between the lines. We should try to find out the weak point of this system. I am sure that must be in the implementation and not in the system by it self. Once the trends is set then the problems of over population can be solved easily.

2. Politics and especially party-politics in educational institutions have given a great damage to all the us. Students instead of seeking knowledge turn to the vested interests of politicians and ruin themselves. Students must be kept away from the active politics. This would enable us to keep them on the right track.

3. Films, T.V., V.C.R., Radio, Magazines, Journals and Press can play a dominating role in revolutionizing the society and easily bring about a very healthy change soon. These are very powerful medias and have a far reaching influence over the public.

4. Child-labour must be prohibited by the state very strictly. Child-labour is one of the factors which ultimately lead them to juvenile delinquency. State should take the responsibility of lodgings and boarding of the orphans so that they may not indulge in this evil.

5. Such customs, tradition which are in no way useful for the society must be discouraged and cutdown. It should also be the prime duty of the parents that they should not impose their will on their children unnecessarily. Rather the will of the children if correct must be respected.

6. Play and play-grounds must be increased in almost all the big cities of Pakistan so as to make our youth sound and healthy. Today in the whole of world games have taken a shape of modern science and no country can think of avoiding it.

7. Psychology is that branch of science which deals with mental problems of human beings. Both here in Pakistan we have not given this subject its proper place. Thus we are unable to understand the inner problems of a child. Children at various stages need psychotherapy. We can learn all this when we study psychology in detail.

8. In our country there is a lack of marital adjustment. It will not be out of point here that at least 50% marriages which take place are without mutual consent or even mutual understanding. With the result they fail very soon and create many problems for their innocent children. There is no doubt in it that it all happens due to the lack of information and uneducation. More over the people of the rural areas are still under the yoke of old customs and traditions which add more to their problems.

9. It is the utmost duty of the government to provide basic facilities of life to the "Karachi Abadies" so as to make their living convenient for them. This would certainly curtail the rapid growth of juvenile delinquents in such areas.

10. Finally I may request those parents, who for the sake of earning more money leave their families behind in lurch and go abroad while doing so they actually loose their families permanently. Their children feel unprotected and unchecked. They become an easy prey to the evils of society. Our younger generation is our future. Are we ready to sacrifice our future just for the sake of few chips? This question needs your attention.

TABLE 8 - 1

A summary of individual treatment methods for delinquents.

Treatment Method: Intervention used to promote change.

Psychotherapy: Conversation and the rapist-client relationship leading to changes in values, attitudes, and feelings.

Social Casework: Social work concerned with environmental change and individual change to promote personality development.

Reality Therapy: Conversation to help the delinquent act responsibly.

Transactional Analysis: Conversation to point out various games the client plays and to strengthen the adult part of the personality.

Vocational Counselling: Education regarding career choices, job specifications, qualifications & training needs.

Vocational Guidance: Encouragement to acquire vocational goals and skill.

Behaviour Therapy: Rewards and punishments to change behaviour.

Behaviour Contracts: Agreements about expectations: rewards and punishments for specific behaviour

Crisis Intervention: Resolution of a current crisis in order to resolve old problems.

Counselling: Support and re-education.

TABLE 8-2

A summary of group treatment methods for delinquents.

Treatment Method: Intervention used to promote change.

Group Counselling: Group discussions to solve problems.

Social Group Work: Assisting each group member to function effectively as a group member.

Group Psychotherapy: Discussion to develop deep insight leading to personality restructuring and good reality testing.

Activity Therapy: Play used to teach problem solving, self-control, and social responsibility.

Guided Group Interaction: Discussion and analysis of group members problems and their roles and relationships in the group.

Milieu Therapy: Establishment of a total, 24 hour environment to bring about change, growth, and adjustment.

Intervention with Families: Training parents to deal with their children behaviour problems.

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