

Understanding Juvenile Delinquency in India: Exploring Causes, Trends and Suggestion for Reform

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ABSTRACT

A juvenile delinquent is a person who committed criminal behaviour / illegal behaviour, which is not acceptable to the public or society, whose age lies between 10 to 17 years. This paper is a conceptual paper which is related to the increasing rate of juvenile delinquents in India according to NCRB report. This paper analyse the different ways and various activities adopted by the juvenile by which they become juvenile delinquents and also analyse the reason behind the increasing rate of juvenile delinquents in India, and also incorporated some suggested solutions to prevent them from socially unexpectable behaviour.

With this paper, the authors wants to spread awareness to juveniles and society so that juveniles can be secure from illegal activities and illegal behaviour. This paper will be beneficial to all the educational stakeholders like parents, teachers, children, regular schools, educational administration, and society etc.

KEYWORDS: juvenile, juvenile delinquent, NCRB report, illegal behaviour, illegal activities

INTRODUCTION

Etymologically, the term ‘delinquency’ has been derived from the Latin word delinquer which means ‘to omit’. The Romans used the term to refer to the failure of a person to perform the assigned task or duty. It was William Coxson who used the term ‘delinquent’ to describe a person found guilty of customary offence. The word also found a place in Shakespearean famous play ‘Macbeth’ in 1605. In simpler words, it may be said that delinquency is a form of behaviour or rather a misbehaviour or deviation from the generally accepted norms of conduct in society.

Sociologists view the concept more broadly, believing that it covers a multitude of different violations of legal and social norms, from minor offences to serious crimes, committed by juveniles. Included under the umbrella of juvenile delinquency are status offences, so-called because they are closely connected with the age status of an offender; a particular action or behaviour is considered a violation of the law only if it is committed by a juvenile (examples include truancy and running away). In an attempt to explain the theoretical underpinnings of delinquency, sociologists associate the specifics of youth behaviour with the home, family, neighbourhood, peers and many other variables that together or separately influence the formation of young people’s social environment.

Any young person involved is characterized by antisocial behaviour that is beyond parental control and subject to legal action. In layman words “A child who breaks the law”.

In India, there are 4 ways of juvenile delinquency:

- 1 Individual - The child commits the crime on their own.
- 2 Group support- Multi children attempt crime together.
- 3 Organised- when someone prepares them to commit a crime and gives a reward in return for the crime.
- 4 Situational- The person acts crime impulsively or in illegal action in one thought.

As we know, nowadays juveniles adopting such activities frequently such as consuming tobacco, drinking or possessing alcohol, running away from home, driving under eighteen, do not attending schools and violating curfews etc. All these activities are considered as anti-social activities and illegal which are beyond parental control.

Some cases of juvenile delinquency which were happened recently-

- On Mar 29, 2025, arrested a minor who carried out theft at Riddhi Siddhi Colony.(13)
- On October 12, 2024, a 16-year-old girl was allegedly gang-raped by her boyfriend and three of his juvenile friends.(10)
- On January 5, 2024, three juveniles were apprehended for attempting murder and extort money from a businessman in Delhi's Welcome area.(11)
- On 28 Feb 2023, a 7-year-old Boy's face was burnt with a cigarette by a cousin in Delhi.(1)
- On 1st March 2023, Two teenagers robbed a shopkeeper in Delhi, perm Nagar.(2)
- On 17th February 2023, 12:33 pm IST, 2 juveniles break the BJP lawmaker's office in Delhi.(3)
- On 11th October 2022: The victim had gone to coaching class and then had gone missing on October 11. It later came to light that he was invited by one of the accused to his birthday party, where he was recovered from River Ken with bruises on the head.(11)
- On 9th September 2021, A 11th standard student took his friends for dinner and when they came back from dinner, he hit a 23-year-old food delivery partner who died soon.(5)
- On 28, October 2020, The minor boys, ages 9 and 12, Raped 4 year old girl in UP (Hathras).(4)

So, through all the real-life examples we can see that nowadays, there are different ways adopted by juveniles. Sometimes crime is done intentionally and sometimes it happens accidentally.

INCREASING RATE OF JUVENILE DELINQUENTS IN INDIA

According to the National Crime Report Bureau (NCRB) report-

It is observed that there were 31,170 cases registered against juveniles in (2021) which shows that there is an increment of 4.7% over 2020. In (2020) crime rate increases from 6.7 to 7.0 in (2021). (6)

A total of 37,444 juveniles were apprehended in 31,170 cases, out of which 32, 654 juveniles were apprehended under the case of Indian penal code (IPC) and 4790 juveniles were apprehended under the cases of special and local law (SLL).

Census population (2011) put the child population of the country at 4441.5 lacs which means 7 out of 100 juveniles in the country were involved in some criminal activities.

Comparision of Juvenile delinquency in education sector according to NCRB report - maximum number of juveniles attempt crime up to the secondary level then the primary level and then higher secondary level education in (2020).

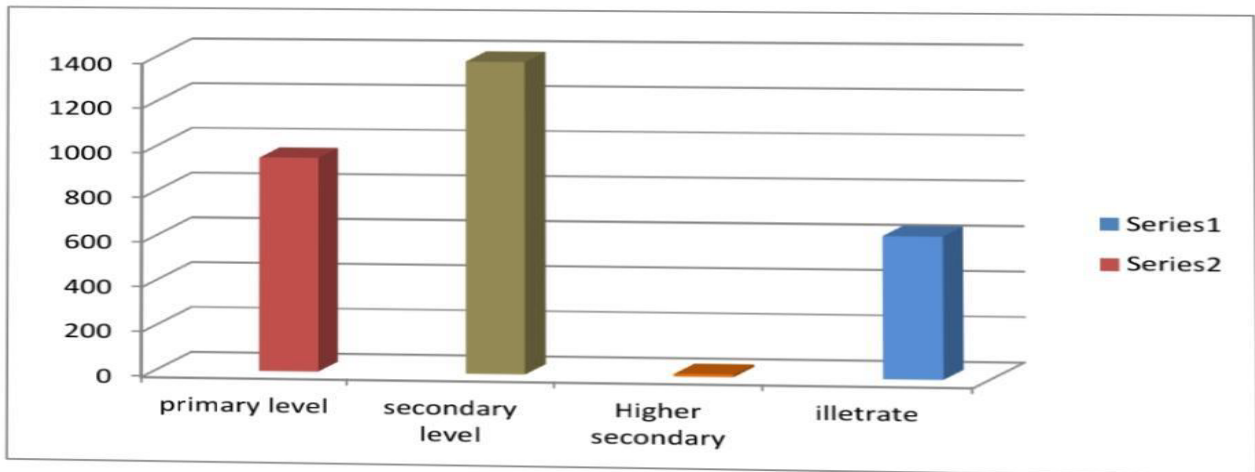


Fig 1. Comparison of Juvenile delinquency in education sector

The rate of total crime among juveniles was found to be highest in MP and lowest in Jharkhand. The total number of crimes committed by juveniles was 28392 in 2018, 29022 in 2019 and 26988 in 2020 among all the 29 states of India and the total number of crimes by juveniles was found to be 6.2.(7) In the year 2022 alone, 37,780 juveniles were apprehended in India. Of these, 7,844 children were apprehended for cognisable crimes committed under the Indian Penal Code. There is an upward trend in the reported juvenile crime rate from 0.9% in 2000 to 6.9% in 2022.(12) Previous articles revealed a stark rise in crimes against children from 2014 to 2022, with reported cases increasing from 89,423 to 162,449, marking an 81% increase

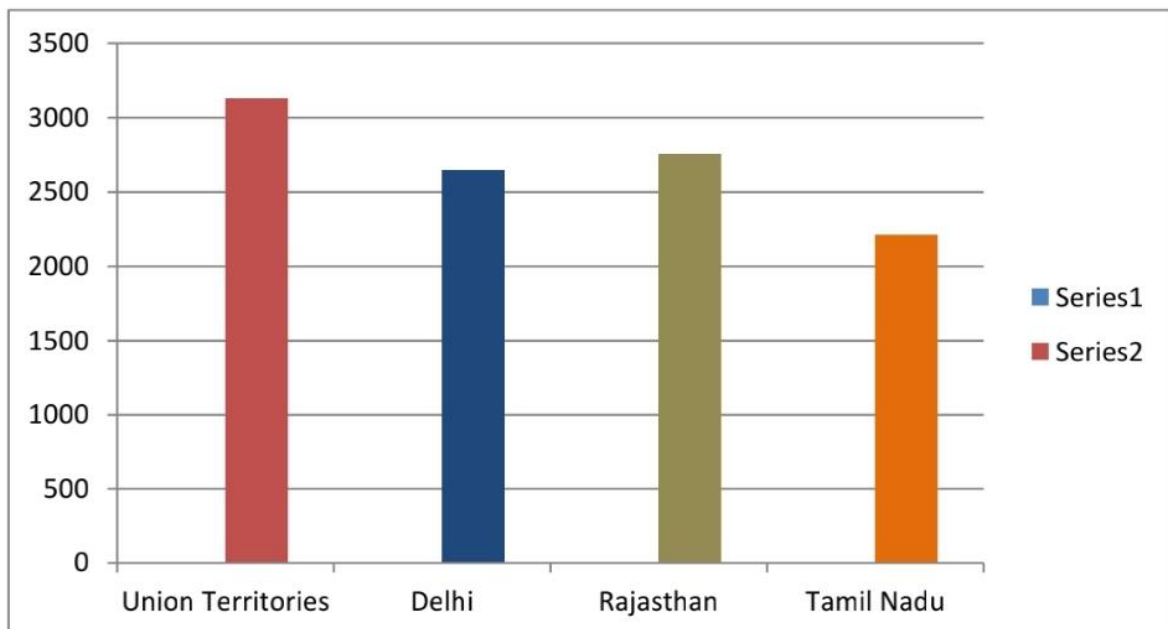


Fig 2. Rate of juvenile delinquency in UT, Delhi, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu in 2021

JUVENILE DELIQUENT CASES IN DELHI

Delhi is black spotted in 2021 according to the NCRB report “Crime in India 2021”. Delhi seems to have major juveniles who break the law. It means the juvenile delinquency rate in Delhi decrease but ag-

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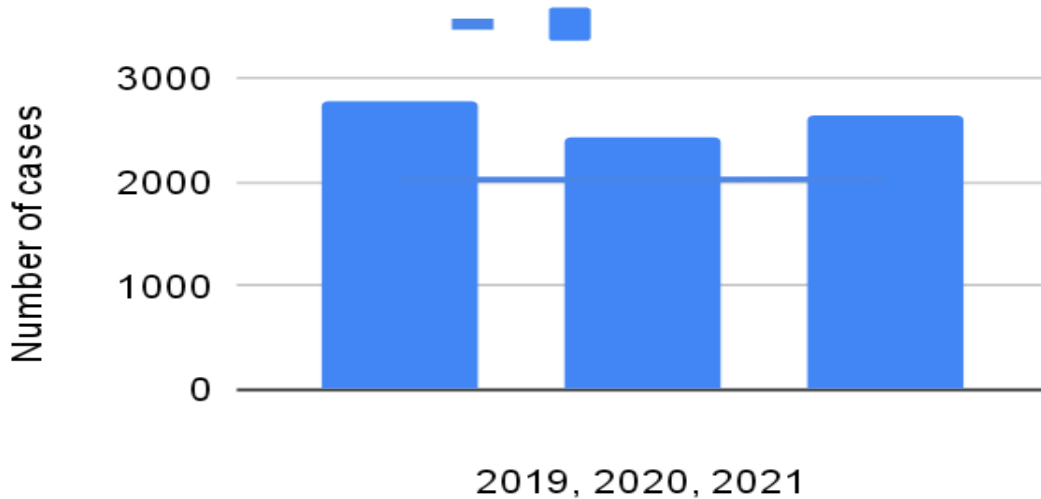


Table 1. Number of juvenile delinquency cases in Delhi in 2021

Number of juvenile delinquents involve in various offenses in 2021

Offense	Number of juvenile delinquents.
Murder	78
Causing hurt	227
Assault on women with the intent to outrage their modest	103
Kidnapping and abduction	17
Rape	68
Theft	1069
Offences against property	1510
Information technology.	13

Source: NCRB report Juveniles in Conflict with law, (2021)

CAUSES OF INCREASE IN JUVENILE DELINQUENTS IN INDIA

- Illiteracy is one of the major problems of our country. Here the large number of the population is illiterate, and because of Illiteracy, there is an absence of behaviour which is acceptable by the society's norms They do not know the pros and cons of this behaviour.
- Parental guidance is a very important part of the children's lives as we say that parents and home are the first agents of socialization. A child who does not have parents could be drive from parental guidance and attempt crime.
- Lack of more guidance and moral support can be the reason of an increase in juvenile delinquency, which plays an important role.

- If the child is hyperactive he cannot be stable, his mind runs fast and cannot stay silent and do not have patience. In difficult situations, they do not take time to make decisions and act impulsively and impulsive relationships are always wrong.
- Sometimes mental issues is noticed in juvenile delinquency. Children's do crimes in feeling of insecurity and jealousy of their colleague.
- A child is abused in his past, so this could be the reason behind adopting criminal behaviour, his frustration and aggression come out in this way.
- Lack of finance, and money to fulfil needs.
- Bully from schoolmates and classmates develop the feeling of hardness with our surroundings and aggression.
- Use of substance abuse also plays a vital in an increase in juvenile delinquents in India. With the use of substance abuse a person cannot live in his / her senses and lives in an imaginary world. In that situation, they do not know about his behaviours and adopts the criminal behaviour unconsciously although using substance abuse in itself is an illegal behaviour.
- Lack of attention gain from teachers and students in school.
- With the Influence of action movies, children sometimes learn bad things from movies.
- Bad family relationships affect the child from inside and outside. It demonization the child, in this situation children adopt illegal behaviour or wrong behaviour.

CONSEQUENCES OF JUVENIL DELINQUENCY

Juvenile delinquency does not only affect the victim or Juvenile but affects the families of the victims. It affects the peace of the juvenile's family. Juvenile delinquency affects the juvenile's mental health, drop out of school, destroying the future of juveniles, their careers, etc. It increases the criminal rate in India. It destroys the peace of the society and It affects the culture also.

SUGGESTIONS TO REDUCE THE JUVENILE DELINQUENCY IN INDIA

- Provide a healthy social environment to juveniles.
- Spread awareness about Juvenile delinquency to the parents, teachers and communities so that they can give proper knowledge to children about what is right and what is wrong.
- Tell the pros and cons of their behaviour at an early age.
- Should give rewards for the good behaviour of the child so that he can be motivated towards the good behaviour.
- All the schools should have compulsion of moral science books in the curriculum till class 8th .
- Schools should focus on Value-based Education which would help in the development of values among children. It reduces the juvenile Delinquency.
- Guidance and counselling programmes must be run in schools.
- Parents should focus on what they are watching on TV and social media, children should avoid any kind of action movies and adult shows.
- The government can conduct workshops related to juvenile delinquency acts and juvenile Justice system in schools for parents children and teachers.
- Parents should try to provide a happy and healthy family environment, they must give the right parental guidance and moral guidance to their child.

- Parents should not abuse their child, should appreciate/ motivate and behave politely in front of their children.
- The best way to develop moral values and social values in children is to live in joint families. In a joint family children learn sharing, caring and healthy socialization are possible from early age.
- Develop feelings of nationality, integrity and unity and learn the brotherhood.
- Provide an educational / Literate environment to the child.
- Avoided contact with substance abuse.
- Restricted environment in school to some extent like prohibited bully activities on school campus.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PAPER

- It helps the community to focus on the burning issues of the increasing rate of juvenile delinquency cases.
- It helps in reducing juvenile delinquents in India.
- It helps the teachers and schools to focus on the curriculum and value-based education to avoid juvenile delinquency.
- It also encourages the development of social, moral, ethical, spiritual, educational and professional values among juveniles.
- It will avoid destroying the culture, and reduce the criminality of the country.
- It will help in increase the unity, brotherhood and feeling of nationality.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, researchers try to highlight on the severe problems of the country, Which could ruin the future of the country, as we can see how Juvenile delinquents are increasing day by day which affects the nation not only children. It also affects their families and destroy their future. Authors analyse the data of recent years of juvenile delinquency and find out some root cause of juvenile attention in criminal behaviour /illegal behaviour. So that society can be aware of these causes and can focus on their children.

In this paper, researchers also try to give some suggestions to the community, schools, parents and administration to avoid the increasing rate of juvenile Delinquency cases in India.

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