

(CSS 2024)

Explain the Juvenile Delinquency. What are socio, economic, demographic and environmental factors lead to juvenile delinquency?

1/ Introduction

Juvenile Delinquency, also known as "juvenile offending" is the conduct of crime by child who has not reached age of 18 or puberty. There are few socio economic factors like poverty, lack of education, demographic factors like family condition, peer influence and environmental factors like neighborhood, exposure to violence which provide fertile land for development of juvenile delinquency. Most legal systems prescribe specific procedures for dealing with juveniles, such as juvenile detention centers, and courts.

2/ Juvenile Delinquency - defined

(2a) Literal Meaning

The term 'Juvenile' means 'child' and Delinquency, is derived from a Latin word 'Delinquere' which means 'Negligance'. So, it means an anti social misdeed in violation of law by a minor.

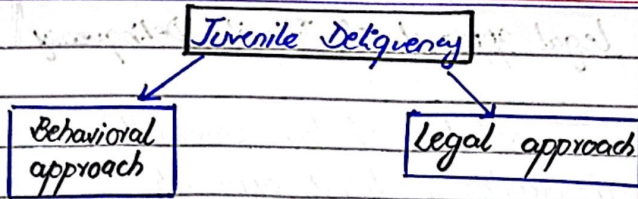
(2b) Legal Meaning

According to Black's Law Dictionary, Juvenile Delinquency is defined as:

"Antisocial behavior by a minor; especially that would be criminally punishable if actor were an adult."

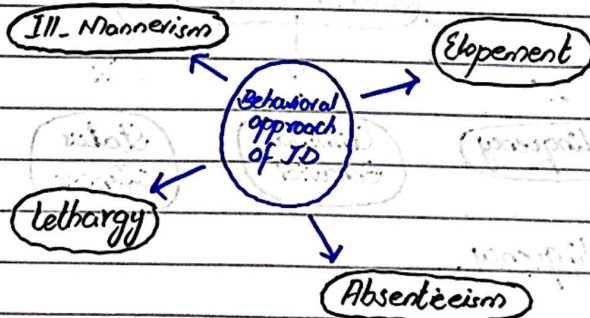
3/ Dimensions of Juvenile Delinquency

There are two dimensions of juvenile delinquency



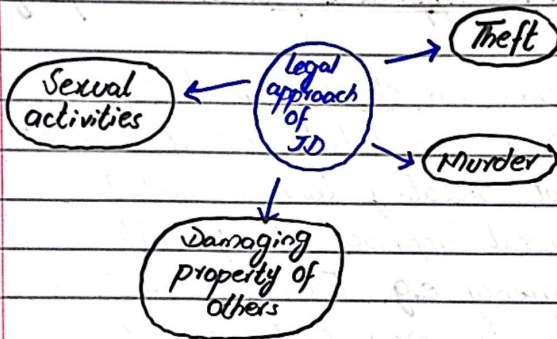
(3a) Behavioral Approach of Juvenile Delinquency

The dimension of delinquent conduct in which one violates moral conduct without violating law is called behavioral approach of juvenile delinquency e.g. Elopement, disobedience of parents may contravene the social norms but does not constitute violation of any law.

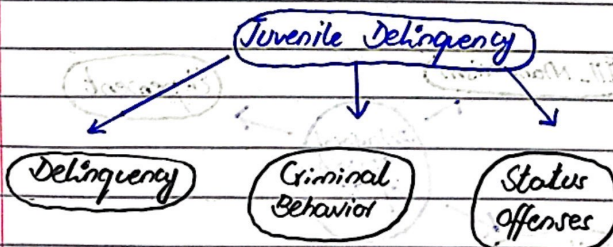


(36) Legal approach of Juvenile Delinquency

The violation of laws committed by a juvenile is legal approach of juvenile delinquency.



4) Categories of Juvenile Delinquency



(40) Delinquency

One category of juvenile delinquency is delinquency which deals with the crimes committed by minors which are

tried in juvenile courts and justice system.

(4b) Criminal Behavior

Criminal behavior include crimes dealt by the criminal justice system

(4c) Status offences

The offenses which are only classified as such because one is minor who has committed it e.g. Driving. These are also dealt within juvenile courts.

5) Factors causing Juvenile Delinquency

Juvenile delinquency is a complex phenomenon caused by variety of reasons some of major reasons for child delinquency put forth by scholars are :-

(5a) Demographic factors

(a) Family Structure

Youth from broken homes, single

parent households or households with abusive or neglectful caregivers may be more prone to delinquency due to lack of supervision and guidance.

According to Bridge

“ A child may resent the fact that he has to have foster parents, step parents, or guardians and so be marked out from the other children, which will make it difficult for these people to help in the social development.”

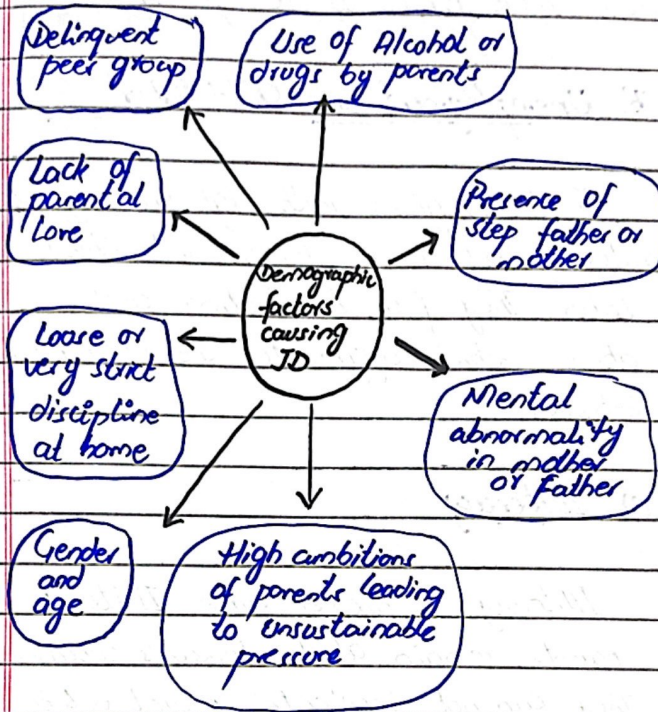
(b) Peer influence

Adolescents are often influenced by peer groups. If they associate with delinquent peers, they are most likely to engage in similar behaviors.

(c) Age and Gender

Delinquency is more common during adolescence and males are statistically more likely to be involved in criminal

activities than females



(5b) Socio Economic factors

(a) Poverty

Poverty is said to be the mother of many social ills. Children borne to poor parents are likely to remain deprived of basic necessities like schooling and adequate opportunities of upbringing.

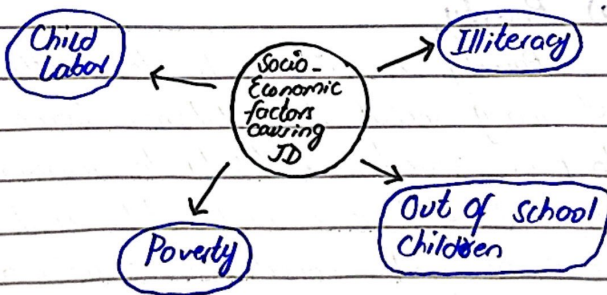
They do not learn the values and are more prone to delinquency.

(b) Unemployment and Child labor

In the regions with high unemployment rates, juveniles are forced into child labor. They face humiliation and abuse, which aggravates the delinquent behavior.

(c) Illiteracy

Illiteracy is another curse. Illiterate parents remain aloof towards education. They can not inculcate moral values among children, making children involved in immoral activities.



(5c) Environmental factors

(a) Community conditions

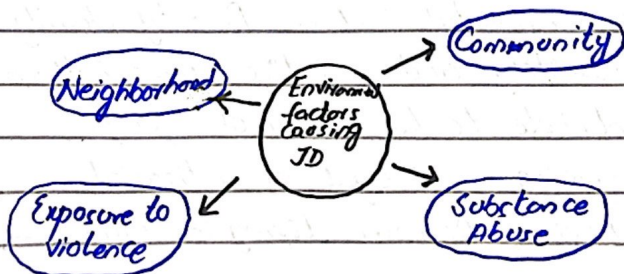
Crime and delinquency rates are highest in deteriorated inner city areas. These communities, impacted by poverty, fear, despair also maintain high level of criminal victimization.

(b) Exposure to violence

Kids living in poor neighborhoods are exposed to constant stream of antisocial behavior.

(c) Substance Abuse

Access to drugs, alcohol at young age can lead to delinquent behavior, both in terms of using substances and engaging in illegal activities to obtain them.



6/

Juvenile Justice System

Juvenile justice system encompasses the laws and institutions which deal with the children accused of committing crimes. There is a growing tendency across the globe that children committing crimes should not be treated as ordinary criminals rather they should be treated as victims who have not reached maturity. There should be separate courts, rehabilitation detention centers for juveniles.

7/

Conclusion

Juvenile delinquency is a complex issue influenced by a range of demographic, socio economic, and environmental factors. Poverty, family instability and negative peer influence contribute to likelihood of youths engaging in illegal or antisocial behavior. Moreover living in high crime

neighborhood and exposure to violence further increase the risks. Tackling juvenile delinquency requires a multifaceted approach that addresses these underlying causes, providing young people with support systems, positive role models and opportunities for education and growth.