



## THE EFFECT OF PARENTING STYLE, BIRTH ORDER AND FAMILY STRUCTURE ON JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

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### Abstract

In today's world there is a significant rise in crimes by adolescents. The statistics released by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) revealed that 1,186 instances of horrifying crimes, including homicide and assaults, involving adolescents were accounted for in the state in 2016, against 1,098 and 1,041 cases in 2015 and 2014, respectively. There can be many reasons which incite a child to become delinquent and make him vulnerable towards this behaviour. The minimal amount of communication between parents and the child, birth order of the child and structure of the family may be some of the reasons which have an impact on child to engage in delinquent conduct. Researchers have discovered that parents directly impact their children's conduct through the child rearing strategies used. Parental support is the leading influence on encouraging behaviour change of an adolescent. Juvenile delinquency has for quite some time been related with birth order of the child. Moreover, many researchers have proposed that family structure does in reality both negatively and positively impact adolescent conduct. Considering the powerful role of these factors, this paper attempts to review the effect of parenting style, birth order and family structure on juvenile delinquency. This research in turn will help in planning intervention strategies which can help in preventing juvenile delinquency.

**Keywords:** Birth order, family structure, juvenile, parenting style

### Introduction

A child is born naive and if supported with delicate care and consideration he/she develops in positive way. Development of the child (in terms of physical, mental, moral and spiritual) makes him equipped for realizing his/her fullest potential. However, if the child's development is hampered because of factors like peer pressure, minimal amount of communication with parents or disturbed family structure, destructive environment, laxity of basic needs and other types of abuses, then this may turn a child in to a delinquent.

With changing societal trends, children now seem to have strong likes and dislikes and furthermore, expressions that demonstrate maturity at a very early age. These characteristics also make children more vulnerable to the outlines of the criminality such as abusers, peddlers, and traffickers.

The word "delinquency" is derived from the Latin word "delinquere" which means "away and linquere" which further means to leave or to abandon". Initially, the word was applied to those parents who have abandoned and neglected their children. In present day, it is applicable on all those children who are involved in illegal and harmful activities. In the year 1484, William Caxton used the word delinquent to describe a person who was found guilty. Juvenile delinquency refers to the inclusion of the teenagers in an unlawful conduct 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 approved 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.



Juvenile and minor in legitimate terms are used in different context. Juvenile is used when reference is made to a young criminal offenders and minor relates to legal capacity or majority. In India, until passing of Children Act, 1960 there was no uniformity with respect to age confinement of juvenile delinquent. Bombay Children Act 1948 defined "Child" to mean a boy who has not attained the age of sixteen years or girl who has not attained the age of eighteen years

Socially undesirable act or conduct of a juvenile is known as delinquency. Juvenile delinquency usually means the failure of children to meet certain expectation set for them by the society. The juvenile delinquent has even been defined as "a child trying to act like an adult". 1 delinquency is the involvement of a minor child, usually between the ages of 10 and 17, in illegal behaviour or activities. Juvenile delinquency is also used to refer to children who demonstrate a persistent behaviour of mischievousness or disobedience, so as to be considered out of parental control, becoming subject to legal action by the court system.

We as individuals, parents, guardians and society as a whole have a duty that children should be allowed and provided opportunity to grow up in a healthy socio-cultural environment so that they could become responsible citizens, physically fit, mentally alert and morally healthy. It is the responsibility of the State to provide equal opportunities for development to all children during the period of their growth which would reduce inequality and ensure social justice. Children are expected to be obedient, respectful and have virtues and good quality in them. However, due to a range of reasons certain percentage of children does not go after settled social and legal dictum. Such children are most often than not get involved in criminal behaviour which is known as juvenile delinquency or juvenile crime. Crime by committed by juveniles is a harsh reality in India. In recent times juveniles were found to be involved in most heinous of the

crimes such as murder and gang rape. It's a disturbing trend and society as a whole is anguished by such criminal acts by children. .

India, with 1.34 billion people is the second most crowded nation on the planet. Around 40% of the India's population constitutes of children and National Policy of India for children has declared them to be a national asset. But a large part of Indian children keeps on being in difficult conditions. India has signed the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and obligated itself to work towards ensuring all the rights enshrined therein to all its children. India has seen an expansion both in crimes committed by children and against them. Juvenile crimes have increased by over 47% in the last five years the government told Rajya Sabha. "As per data compiled by the National Crime Records Bureau, the incidents of juvenile crime have constantly increased during the last five (2010-2014) years," women and child development minister Maneka Gandhi said.

The statistics released by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) revealed that 1,186 instances of horrifying crimes, including homicide and assaults, including adolescents were accounted for in the state in 2016, against 1,098 and 1,041 cases in 2015 and 2014, respectively. The most recent information accessible on juvenile crimes demonstrates a 7% expansion in 2016 as compared to 2015, followed by a 5% expansion in brutal violations committed by minors. More than 66% of the reported crimes in 2016 were, however, connected to offenses not classified as brutal. It is relevant to say that an adolescent and five others were captured by Delhi Police for ruthlessly assaulting a 23-year-old young lady (Nirbhaya case) in the national capital on December 16, 2012. The casualty later succumbed to her injuries. In many theft cases involving juveniles, the Police sources stated that juveniles in most of the cases were part of a group where they were influenced by adults.



As for the information released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), Mumbai has been positioned second in crime by adolescents, recording absolute 946 cases a year ago (2016). The cases incorporated a few robberies, assaults and furthermore attack on ladies, other than voyeurism, sexual harassment, kidnapping and stalking. Incidences of 24 adolescents were reported for assault on ladies, 11 for sexual harassment, one for voyeurism, 15 for stalking and 18 for kidnapping and; 16 minors were captured for unnatural offenses, the information showed.

Of the aggregate number of juveniles arrested in 2011 under various segments of IPC and Special and Local Laws (SLL), 6,122 were uneducated, 12,803 were primary pass outs, 10,519 were above primary and underneath matriculation qualified and 4,443 were metric and higher secondary qualified, the information said. A sum of 27,577 adolescents, who were held for criminal acts, was living with parents, 4,386 were living with guardians and 1,924 were homeless, the information said giving subtle elements of their family foundation.

Therefore, it is crucial to understand the concept of juvenile delinquency in relation to the family structure, parenting style and birth order of the child

### **Juvenile Delinquency And Parenting Style**

A parent is a role model for the children. Research on modelling has demonstrated that when parents are held in high esteem and are the major sources for reinforcement, the children will probably display the same behaviour pattern (Simons, Whitbeck, Conger, and Conger 1991). In the event that a parent models negatively, the child will probably take their parent's negative demeanour. Moreover, children are also more likely to generalize this attitude to the rest of the society. Thus, parents have a great influence on their child's conduct. From birth, a parent will form and shape practices reasonable to the standards of society through childrearing. However, there are certain parenting techniques that have a

larger impact on a child's conduct. The biggest is parental support (Barnes et al 2006) which is reflected by praising, empowering, and giving love to the child. With such behaviour they demonstrate to the child that he or she is esteemed and cherished.

To prevent deviant behaviors from appearing, parents must use effective discipline, monitoring, and problem solving techniques (Crosswhite and Kerpelman 2008). Effective discipline means recognizing deviant behaviours and monitoring when they happen. Consistent discipline must be ensured at the sight of these practices in order to prevent the development of the misconduct. However, extreme disciplinary practices won't stop the conduct; rather it will upgrade it (Simons et al 1991). The youngster may see the discipline as unjustifiable and unreasonable and this can make them carry on with the undesirable behaviour. Monitoring includes the familiarity with where their child is, who their companions are, and what they do in their available time. In a study performed by Barnes et al in 2006, it was discovered that monitoring is a solid indicator for adolescent's deviant behaviour, after peer deviance was controlled for. This represents how imperative parents are in a child's life and how their contribution can control any kind of deviant conduct. Problem solving skills are important part in a child's development of communication (Crosswhite and Kerpelman 2008). An absence of communication can make a child defensive, dismiss their duties, and enhance their outrage. These qualities can influence delinquent behaviours and the relationship with deviant peers

Coercive parenting exacerbates the negative traits influencing delinquency. This sort of child rearing is characterized by threats that are regularly combined with little consistency or follow-through (Simons et al 1991). Parents should instead engage in positive parenting by persistently supporting their child's pro-social behaviours. Parents who do not reinforce positive behaviours and who do not adequately



punish deviance are more likely to encounter weak bonds with their child (Crosswhite and Kerpelman 2008). It is through these weak bonds that a child will probably take an interest in deviant behaviours.

Weak bonds between a parent and their child can likewise be clarified through strain hypothesis. Strain hypothesis recommends that people become deviant as a result of their failure to accomplish, "decidedly esteemed objectives" (Hollist et al 2009). The esteemed objectives for a child are the sentiment being cherished and upheld. This is their desire from the parent. At the point when the child does not encounter these desires, they are probably going to encounter outrage and dissatisfaction, which can lead into deviant behaviours.

Therefore, there needs to be a perfect balance of parenting style which is being used for child rearing practice. There are four types of parenting styles given by Baumrind-

- a) Authoritative parenting- The parent shows a responsiveness to the child's needs, is demanding (setting desires of conduct and results showing rebellious behaviour), observes of the child's conduct, gives clear standards of conduct, discipline based on reasoning rather than based on power assertion or withdrawal of love. Authoritative parents provide home situations rich with strict behavioural supervision with high degrees of enthusiastic help. In this style of child rearing, children are urged to carry on with pro-social conduct and to reason self-sufficiently about good issues, to regard grown-ups, and to figure out how to think independently.
- b) Authoritarian parenting- The parents exhibits demandingness (setting desires of conduct and outcomes for resistance), are less receptive to the child's needs, will probably utilize control assertive discipline, and may use love withdrawal to pick up consistence. Love withdrawal includes utilizing love as a reward or weapon, that is, the point at which the

youngster accomplishes something incorrectly, love and support are withheld from the child. The parent works with a "do as you are told" style of discipline and does not frequently talk about why something wasn't right nor does the parent welcome good dialogue with the child. The parent may show some level of warmth yet for the most part requests regard from the child.

- c) Permissive- indulgent parenting- The parent exhibits high degrees of responsiveness, an absence of demandingness (neglecting to set desires of conduct and outcomes for resistance), uninvolved child rearing, and negative emotionality. The parent shows little control over the child, sets negligible desires, and seldom disciplines. The parent essentially befriends their child, treating the child as though they are equals. It is more essential to this sort of parent to be loved by their youngster than to give structure as well as discipline. The parent enables the youngster to settle on their own choices, set their own guidelines (e.g., time limitation, who they date or see socially, what they eat) as opposed to giving direction and training to the child. The parent's own confidence and passionate needs are met through association with their youngster and in addition through the adult-to-adult association with their child.
- d) Uninvolved parenting- This fourth child rearing style was included by Maccoby and Martin. The parent exhibits insignificant warmth and negligible control over the child. The parent is frequently dismissing of the child and gives the youngster negligible if any consideration or nurturance. This parent is careless in their child rearing obligations. Fundamentally the parent gives a few or the greater part of the physical necessities for the child, however, has close to nothing if any association with their child.



The motto "kids ought to be seen however not heard" may apply here. Parents are busy with their own life and have very limited time for their children. The child is left fighting for themselves with little, if any, structure in the family. More often than not the child is essentially dismissed and overlooked by the parent.

As per the study conducted by Scott A Johnson (2016), few elements have been observed to be noteworthy in the forecast of criminality for juveniles and adults. These incorporate what is regularly observed in permissive and authoritarian parenting styles, which incorporate poor child rearing practices, emotional negativity, for example, hostility, rejection, inattentive monitoring, inconsistent discipline, weak parent-child bonds, and a disregard for the rights and safety of the child. Social support, caring and steady bonds with parents may help anticipate delinquency. In another research done by Thomas J. Mowen (2011), on shifting parenting styles and the effect on juvenile delinquency; a correlation with an increase in juvenile delinquency rate was found when a shift from authoritative to uninvolved or permissive parenting was shown. Moreover, correlation with a decrease in juvenile delinquency rate was seen when a shift from uninvolved parenting to authoritative parenting is shown. Schaffer et al. (2009) found that indifferent parenting styles restrain the development of empathy within adolescents and consequently contribute to antisocial behaviour. Similarly, Bamow et al. (2005) found that low parental warmth, irregularity and parental rejection can lead to antisocial behaviour of a child.

### **Birth Order and Juvenile Delinquency**

Birth order has a direct effect upon child feelings, conduct and personality development. The order in which the child is naturally introduced in a family will have a lasting impact as each birth order has its challenges to overcome.

The firstborn child basks in his/her parent's unified love and attention for a timeframe, and frequently benefits emotionally from this experience. The child can surface feeling adored with a conviction that all is good. This will help the child to go out into the world and turn into an independent individual. A large number of our leaders and heads of companies have been firstborns.

However, the child likewise faces some difficulties due to his birth order. His not so experienced, adoring parents frequently have exclusive requirements for him. Parents want their firstborn to be a winner in every aspect. Because of this desire, they frequently try to manage and scrutinize each move he makes.

A firstborn child encounters frightful sentiments of loss when the child surrenders his/her old crib to the new child, and should now share the parent's love and attention. Child feels jealous due to the exceptional care and attention his/her charming younger sibling gets; the child feels barged in for the fact that the more the younger one tends to spoil everything he/she is doing; and is angry on the grounds that he/she is for the most part required to act better and support the family. In any case, a standout amongst the best encounters he/she gets as a first born is supporting a younger sibling. This experience extends his/her capacity to love and to be delicate to other individuals' needs.

The second born child profits by more settled, more fearless parents and appreciate extraordinary consideration as the infant. He likewise has the upside of gaining from, his/her elder sibling. Thus, he might have the capacity to start certain acts at a prior age. The second born is always speeding up to draw near to the firstborn in order to feel that he is competent.

A second born child likewise feels envious in light of the fact that his/her more elder sibling is continuously getting all the new experiences, for example, performing in a play, or preparing to go to secondary school. These occasions have a tendency to consume a lot of his/her parent's chance and consideration, and the





child can remain as if invisible for his/her parents. The second born is regularly ruled by his/her elder sibling who tries to keep up his main position by reprimanding and bossing around.

Last born or youngest children are inclined to be the most free-spirited due to their parents' gradually more laissez-faire attitude towards parenting the third (or fourth, or fifth...) time around. This child of the family is fun-loving, uncomplicated, attention-seeker, outgoing and so on. As per Adler, the entry of the third sibling, however, does not significantly move the balance of power. The third kid gets comparative treatment to the second child, yet the most youthful kid is by and large more well-suited to defeat the opposition amongst siblings and to set up his or her significance in the family. There is a possibility that the third child can't contend, he or she will look for the focal point of consideration through keeping up a ruler or princess mindset.

In popular societies, juvenile delinquency has long been linked with birth order. Compared to older siblings, second-born boys are more likely to go to prison, get suspended in school and enter juvenile delinquency. A study conducted by Laurent Be'Gue and Sebastian Roche', (2004) have shown that delinquent conduct have recurrently shown that firstborn children are rarely caught up in delinquency in comparison with the middle-born children.

"In families with at least two children, second-born boys are 20 to 40 percent more vulnerable and are continually told about discipline in school because of their misconduct and enter the criminal framework contrasted with first-conceived children despite when we look at kin," as per Joseph Doyle and his colleagues (2017).

#### **Family Structure And Juvenile Delinquency**

Both the parents assume critical parts in the development and improvement of children. The number and the kind of parents (e.g., biological, step) in the family, and the

connection between the parents, are directly connected to a child's prosperity.

A number of studies have examined the effect of family structure on delinquency (Amato & Keith, 1991; Price & Kunz, 2003; Rankin, 1983). The greater part of research finds that adolescents from broken homes reports increasing levels of delinquency. For instance, in a longitudinal review of 411 boys living in South London, Juby and Farrington (2001) found that misconduct rates were higher among 75 young boys who were living in non-intact homes contrasted with young boys living in place families. In addition, Price and Kunz (2003) conducted a meta-examination including 72 that included separation and adolescent delinquency. The outcomes demonstrated that children from separated from homes have higher rates of misconduct (status offenses, crimes against person, felony, theft, general delinquency, tobacco and drug use) contrasted with youngsters from who were at home, except for alcohol use.

While past research has shown that children brought up in traditional, two-parent families encounter a lower danger of delinquency than children from other types of families (Free, 1991; Rankin, 1983), the comprehension of whether this impact is universal remains blemished (Kierkus and Hewitt, 2009).

Recent reports illustrated that youngsters living in stepfamilies homes were equally at risk for indulging in deviant behavior as those in a single parent setting (Society for Researching in Child Development, 1987). Children who live in homes with only one parent or in which marital relationships have been disrupted by divorce or separation are more likely to display a range of behavioral problems including delinquency, than children who are from two parent families (Thornberry et al. 1999)

#### **Findings And Conclusions**

The review of various studies clearly point out that family structure and environment, along with birth order of the child and the parenting



style (which in part, is influenced by the birth order of the child and the structure of the family) have a direct effect on the adolescents' deviant behaviours. Permissive and authoritarian parenting style is associated with the juvenile delinquency, as these parents exhibit the following behaviour: hostility, rejection, inattentive monitoring, inconsistent discipline, weak parent-child bonds, and a disregard for the rights and safety of the child. In a nutshell, the child rearing practices have a deeper impact on the personality of the children (wherein, their attitudes, feelings of warmth, care, concern for others; or disregard of others' feelings, sadistic attitude, involvement in minor / major thefts, crimes against women, and the like) and should be the focus of attention, as they have a forbearing impact, not just on the child but the society at large. The increasing number of adolescent involved in juvenile delinquency is a significant reason for concern and attention should be paid to tap their youthful energies in the right direction. Parents can play an important role in this by explaining their children the outcomes of violating laws; and this is possible only when they share a good bond with the child. An early intervention involving, focus on child rearing practices, improving the parent – child bond, broken homes, channelizing the adolescent energies in a positive direction, youth development programmes (wherein special care is given to classroom and behaviour management programs, bullying prevention programs, mentoring programs) etc. can play a pivotal role in not just preventing the youth from going astray, but also benefit the society at large, by producing more responsible and mature adults.

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