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Socio-Economic Factors Affecting Juvenile Delinquency: A Study In Borstal Jails, Punjab

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Abstract

Juvenile Delinquency refers to criminal acts committed by children or teenagers, particularly anyone below the age of eighteen. Juvenile delinquency known as juvenile offending or youth crime is participation in illegal behavior by minors (juveniles) individuals younger than the statutory age of majority. Present study explored the juvenile delinquents and their main socio-economic factors and causes while committing the crime. Present study was conducted at Faisalabad and Bahawalpur districts in Punjab province, where two borstal institutions and juvenile jails are located for juvenile's rehabilitation. The respondents were male, a group of delinquents between ages of 13-18 years living in the said universe. 140 respondents (70 from each jail) were selected by using simple random sampling technique. Data were collected with the help of a well-designed interview schedule. Data were analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics. It was found the delinquency a legal term for criminal behavior carried out by a juvenile is often the result of escalating problematic behavior. Biological factors, such as being male, having low intelligence and short time horizon, are accurate predictors of crime. Family background factors, such as erratic parental discipline, lack of adequate supervision, and maternal rejection, are strongly linked with later criminal involvement. Social factors, such as income inequality, also exert significant influence on delinquent behavior among youths. It was found highly-significant association was found between family structure and the juvenile delinquency. A non-significant association was found between family environment and juvenile delinquency It was recommended that the conflict between parents is a strong variable for juvenile delinquency. Therefore, parents should avoid conflicting attitude in front of their offspring. There is also a need for social therapy for such parents through media, counseling and peer pressure.

Keywords: Social Behaviour, Criminology, Juvenile Deliquency, Social Crime, Sociology

Introduction

The juvenile delinquency among the teen-agers can be classified in the following three categories: the delinquents who commit crimes inflicting pain and misery on the people no matter consciously or unconsciously are dealt by the criminal courts in which the offenders are executed, released on parole and probation and imprisoned in the long run so that they may have the lessons from the spheres of life. The second category of the offenders is treated by the elders of the society giving them suitable atmosphere of learning and education in order to reshape their character and moral. The third category is treated badly by the courts because of the severity of their crimes. They may even be executed in the long run owning to the parricide, matricide, patricide and other allied crimes (Siegel, 2011).

It has already been stated that a juvenile offender is a person under the age of eighteen years old and cannot be treated by the courts of the ordinary nature such as Cession Courts, High Courts and Supreme Court. Special courts have been formulated in order to treat such type of the juvenile offenders and these courts are called juvenile courts. Mostly the juvenile offenders are released on bail, parole and probation. It all depends upon the severity of the crimes committed by the juvenile offenders. In the legal system of every country it has been observed that they have developed a separate legal procedure for the juvenile offenders (Siegel, 2011).

It has been mentioned by the statistics that 15-20% of the juveniles committed crimes due to the mental illness. They claimed that they were not cured by the problems they were facing. Proper attention has not been given to them regarding their problems. 20-90 % of the convicted juveniles committed crimes due to the prolonged neural illness. Most of the sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists and criminologists believed that the environment plays a very crucial role in the habit, personality and character building. The better the environment, the better will be the character and personality formation and vice versa. The broken, divorced and extremely poor families provide their children to be involved in the criminal activities. The ambitious attitude on the part of the people may lead them to the adoption of the criminal carrier and with the

passage of time they becomes professional (OJJDP, 2010).

In the recent years the average age for first arrest has dropped significantly and younger boys and girls are committing crimes. Between 60-80% of adolescent and preadolescents engage in some form of juvenile offense. These can range from status offence (such as underage smoking) to property crimes and violent crimes. The percent of teens who offend is so high that it would seem to be a cause for worry. However, juvenile offending can be considered normative adolescent behavior. (Steinberg, 2008).

In order to prevent the juvenile delinquency it is the need of the hour to establish social reforms. The poor and neglected children need more attention as compared to the children of the aristocratic class. Family background is very essential for the understanding of the delinquent behavior. The children of the fatherless families show more signs of delinquency due to the absence of the proper moral conduct. They develop their relations with the people of the criminal families. In this way they march to the road of the destruction and damnation. It is very necessary for the survival of the society to reform such types of the individuals. It is well known proverb that a bad fish spoil the whole broth (Mahmood and Cheema, 2004).

We are aware of the fact that family is the unit of society. So, attention should be given to the well-being of the family. The problems which are being faced by the Pakistani families such as mass un-employment, load shedding, absence of the provision of the basic needs and other factors related to their problems should be avoided. It is the need of the hour to eliminate all these above mentioned problems so that the parents may be able to provide their children a better future full of facilities and concern (Robert, 2002).

The influence of the peer group is of primary consideration. A child has to spend a lot of time with his fellows. In school, in the playground, on the tours either educational or re-creational, and in the involvement of different allied activities; the child has to spend a major portion of his time in the company of his fellow beings. Their influence is multi-dimensional from all respects. Sometimes the children adopt the juvenile delinquent behavior on the instigation of the friends involved in this matter (Egley and Ritz, 2006).

Objectives

- To find out the background characteristics of the Juveniles.
- To know the extent of involvement in juvenile offense.
- To suggest measures to reduce juvenile delinquency in the society.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Area

Present study will be conducted at Faisalabad and Bahawalpur Districts in PunjabProvince, where two borstal institutions and juvenile jails are located for juvenile's rehabilitation.

Sample Size

Sample can be defined as accurate envoy of the population, which has all the characteristics of preferred population. 140 respondents (70 from each jail) were selected by using simple random sampling technique.

Data collection

Construction of data collection tool

Social science deals with human nature, Feelings, emotions and minds of human being. To study all these factors it was compulsory that data collection tool was very accurate and reliable. Interview schedule was prepared with open and close ended questions to collect the data from respondents. It was structured to get all the required information from the respondents.

Interviewing the respondents

Interview was conducted from respondents to collect facts. The investigator himself interviewed each respondent to make sure unbiased response and then rechecked each questionnaire for accuracy and uniformity because it was very difficult to approach the same respondent at any subsequent stage.

Analyzing of data

Collected data were analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics.. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations, were used to summarize different variables. Data was interpreted with the help of a computer software i.e. statistical package for social sciences.

Results and Discussions

Table 1

Distribution of the respondents according to their monthly family income

Monthly family income (Rs.)	Frequency	Percentage
5000-15000	91	65.0
15000-30000	42	30.0
Above 30000	7	5.0
Total	140	100.0

Table 1 indicates that a large majority i.e. 65.0 percent of the respondents had Rs. 5001-15000 monthly family income, 30.0 percent of them had Rs. 15001-30000 and remaining 5.0 percent of them had above Rs. 30000 monthly family incomes. So majority of the criminals belonged to low economic class.

Graphical presentation of the respondents according to their monthly income from all sources is given below:

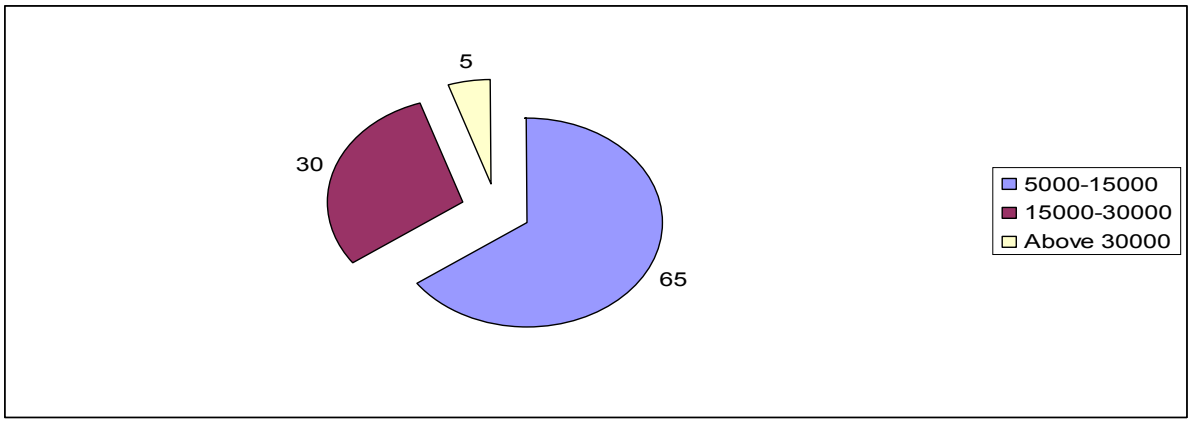

Fig. 1:Graphical presentation of the respondents according to their monthly family income

Table 2

Distribution of the respondents according to the type of crime which they committed

Type of crime	Frequency	Percentage
Murder	48	34.3
Theft	18	12.9
Dacoity	23	16.4
Pickpocket	2	1.4
Kidnapping	5	3.6
Prohibition abduction &	17	12.1

rape		
Narcotics	8	5.7
Any other	19	13.6
Total	140	100.0

Table 2 presents the type of crime which they committed. About one-third i.e. 34.3 percent of the respondents were involved in Murder case, while 12.9 percent of them told that they committed murder and 16.4 percent of them said that they involved in Dacoity. About 1.4 percent of the respondents of the respondents involved in pickpocket, 3.6 percent of them committed kidnapping, 12.1 percent of them involved in prohibition abduction and rape, 5.7 percent of them were involved in narcotics and 13.6 percent of them were involved in any others.

Graphical presentation of the respondents according to the type of crime which they committed are given below.

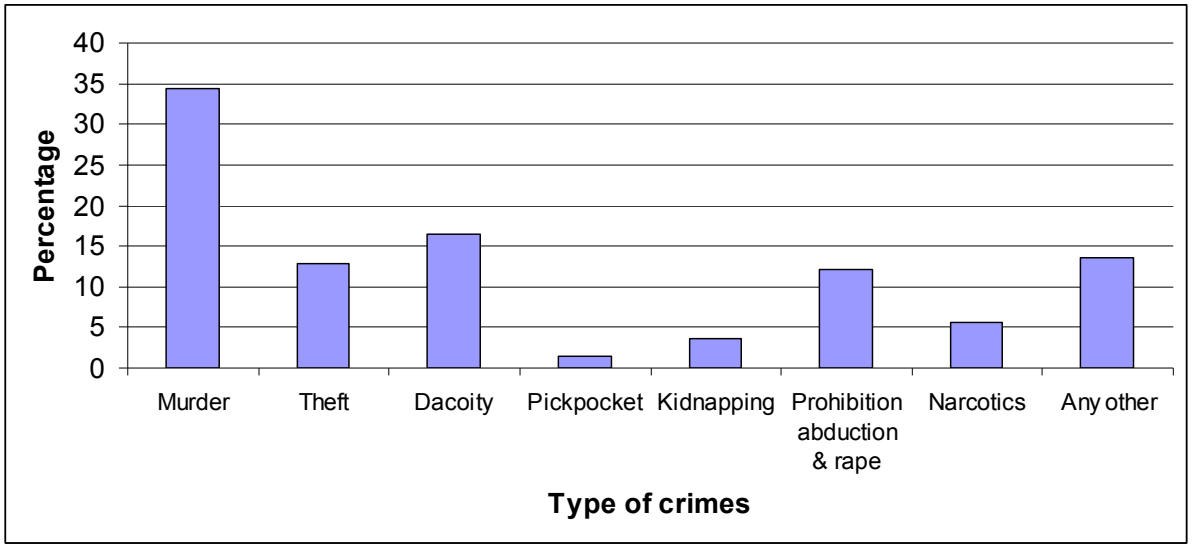

Fig. 2:Graphical presentation of the respondents according to the type of crime which they committed

Table 3

Distribution of the respondents according to their opinion about the impact of family structure on juvenile delinquency.

N = 140

Family structure	Strongly agree		Agree		Somewhat		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	F.	%	F.	%	F.	%	F.	%	F.	%
I feel that traditional	18	12.9	32	22.9	1	0.7	0	0.0	89	63.6

way of family control has decreased these days.										
You think that lack of parental control is responsible for juvenile delinquency.	12	8.6	28	20.0	3	2.1	0	0.0	97	69.3
A poor economical situation is major cause of delinquency.	23	16.4	24	17.1	4	2.9	0	0.0	87	62.1
The lack of efficient link/communication among family members cause of delinquency.	10	7.1	17	12.1	3	2.1	2	1.4	108	77.1
I think that improper socialization is responsible for juvenile delinquency.	19	13.6	17	12.1	1	0.7	0	0.0	103	73.6
I feel that lack of supervision of parents become the cause of delinquency.	16	11.4	23	16.4	1	0.7	0	0.0	100	71.4
I feel that disorganization in the family system is making youth delinquent.	23	16.4	43	30.7	2	1.4	0	0.0	77	55.0
I agree that criminal family background also effect on children's socialization.	30	21.4	10	7.1	7	5.0	0	0.0	93	66.4

Table 3 present the respondents' opinion about the family structure. Almost 13 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and 22.9 percent of them were agreed that they felt that traditional way of family control has decreased these days, while a majority i.e. 63.6 percent of them was strongly disagreed with this opinion.

Table4

Distribution of the respondents according to their opinion about the impact of family behaviour on juvenile deliquency

N = 140

Family behaviour	Strongly agree		Agree		Somewhat		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	F.	%	F.	%	F.	%	F.	%	F.	%
You feel free and comfortable talking to your parent/guardian about anything.	5	3.6	25	17.9	4	2.9	0	0.0	106	75.7
You ever experience violence in your home.	38	27.1	44	31.4	14	10.0	0	0.0	44	31.4
You obey the orders passed by your parents related to several issues of life.	4	2.9	69	49.3	16	11.4	7	5.0	44	31.4
I feel that conflict between the parents is the cause of delinquency.	5	3.6	64	45.7	1	0.7	0	0.0	70	50.0
You think that your parents are satisfied your everyday activities.	5	3.6	82	58.6	5	3.6	0	0.0	48	34.3
Your father gives you clear direction for your behavior.	101	72.1	32	22.9	2	1.4	0	0.0	5	3.6

Table 4 present the respondents' opinion about the family behaviour. Only 3.6 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and 17.9 percent of them were agreed that they felt free and comfortable talking to their parents/guardian about anything, while 2.9 percent of them were somewhat agreed and a huge majority i.e. 75.7 percent of them were strongly disagreed with this opinion.

More than one-fourth i.e. 27.1 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and 31.4 percent of them were agreed that they ever experience violence in their home, while 10.0 percent of them were somewhat agreed and 31.4 percent of them were strongly disagreed with this opinion.

Only 2.9 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and about a half i.e. 49.3 percent of them were agreed that they obey the orders passed by their parents related to several issues of life, while 11.4 percent of them were somewhat agreed and 5.0 percent

of them were disagreed and 31.4 percent of them were strongly agreed with this opinion.

Only 3.6 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and a major proportion i.e. 45.7 percent of them were agreed that they felt that conflict between the parents is the cause of delinquency, while 0.7 percent of them were somewhat agreed and 50.0 percent of them were strongly disagreed with this opinion.

Only 3.6 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and a majority i.e. 58.6 percent of them were agreed with the thinking that their parents are satisfied with their everyday activities, while 3.6 percent of them were somewhat agreed and 34.3 percent of them were strongly disagreed with this opinion.

A vast majority i.e. 72.1 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and 22.9 percent of them were agreed with the thinking that their father gives them clear direction for their behaviour, while 1.4 percent of them were somewhat agreed and 3.6 percent of them were strongly disagreed with this opinion.

Table 5

Distribution of the respondents according to their opinion about their family environment

N = 140

Family environment	Strongly agree		Agree		Somewhat		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	F.	%	F.	%	F.	%	F.	%	F.	%
Your parents know about your friends.	11	7.9	71	50.7	9	6.4	3	2.1	46	32.9
Your parents check your daily activities.	10	7.1	89	63.6	2	1.4	3	2.1	36	25.7
You think that friendly environment of family have positive impact on your behavior.	124	88.6	7	5.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	6.4
Your parents support you for getting education.	133	95.0	5	3.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	1.4

Table 5 present the respondents' opinion about the family environment. Almost 8 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and about a half i.e. 50.7 percent of them were agreed that

their parents know about their friends, while 6.4 percent of them were somewhat agreed, 2.1 percent of them were disagreed and about one-third i.e. 32.9 percent of them were strongly disagreed with this opinion.

Almost 7 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and about a majority i.e. 63.6 percent of them were agreed that their parents had checking of their daily activities, while 1.4 percent of them were somewhat agreed, 2.1 percent of them were disagreed and about one-third i.e. 25.7 percent of them were strongly disagreed with this opinion.

A huge majority i.e. 88.6 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and 5.0 percent of them were agreed with the thinking that friendly environment of family have positive impact on their behaviour, while 6.4 percent of them were strongly disagreed with this opinion.

A huge majority i.e. 95.0 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and 3.6 percent of them were agreed with the thinking that their parents support them for getting education, while only 1.4 percent of them were strongly disagreed with this opinion.

Table 6

Distribution of the respondents according to their opinion about juvenile delinquency

N = 140

Juvenile delinquency	Strongly agree		Agree		Somewhat		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	F.	%	F.	%	F.	%	F.	%	F.	%
You destroy family property for purpose	43	30.7	22	15.7	0	0.0	1	0.7	74	52.9
Purposely damaged or destroyed property belonging to a school.	32	22.9	17	12.1	1	0.7	0	0.0	90	64.3
You tried to steal a motor vehicle, such as a car or motorcycle.	14	10.0	5	3.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	121	86.4
Stolen money or other things from your parents or other members of your Family	39	27.9	6	4.3	0	0.0	1	0.7	94	67.1
You Hit (or threatened to hit) one of your parents.	4	2.9	1	0.7	0	0.0	1	0.7	134	95.7

Had (or tried to have) sexual relations with someone against their will.	13	9.3	36	25.7	5	3.6	1	0.7	85	60.7
Used force (strong-arm methods) to get money or things from a teacher or other adult at school.	13	9.3	4	2.9	0	0.0	1	0.7	122	87.1
You destroy any public property	19	13.6	18	12.9	2	1.4	0	0.0	101	72.1
Been suspended from school.	35	25.0	23	16.4	2	1.4	0	0.0	80	57.1
Made obscene telephone calls, such as calling someone and saying dirty Things.	37	26.4	17	12.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	86	61.4
Commit the crime due to poverty	33	23.6	9	6.4	0	0.0	1	0.7	97	69.3
Was that an accidental incident/act done by you?	76	54.3	1	0.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	63	45.0
You commit this crime just to fulfill your own need	82	58.6	4	2.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	54	38.6

Table 6 present the respondents' opinion about the juvenile delinquency. About 30.7 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and 15.7 percent of them were agreed that they destroy family property for purpose, while only one respondent was disagreed and little more than a half i.e. 52.9 percent of them were strongly disagreed with this opinion.

Less than one-fourth i.e. 22.9 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and 12.1 percent of them were agreed with the opinion "purposely damage or destroyed property belonging to a school", while only one respondent was somewhat agreed and a majority i.e. 64.3 percent of them were strongly disagreed with this opinion.

About 10.0 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and 3.6 percent of them were agreed that "they tried to steal a motor vehicle, such as a car or motorcycle", while a huge majority i.e. 86.4 percent of them were strongly disagreed with this opinion.

Almost 28 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and 4.3 percent of them were agreed with the statement "stolen money or other things from their parents or other members of their family", while one respondent was disagreed and a majority i.e. 67.1 percent of them were strongly disagreed with this opinion.

Almost 3 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and only one respondent was agreed with the statement "they hit (or threatened to hit) one of their parents", while one respondent was disagreed and a huge majority i.e. 95.7 percent of them were strongly disagreed with this opinion. So majority of the respondents never hit their parents.

About 9.3 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and about one-fourth i.e. 25.7 percent of the respondents were agreed that they had (or tried to have) sexual relations with someone against their will, while one respondent was disagreed and majority i.e. 60.7 percent of them were strongly disagreed with this opinion. So majority of the respondents never tried to have sexual relations with someone against their will

About 9.3 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and 2.9 percent of the respondents were agreed that they used force (strong-arm methods) to get money or things from a teacher or other adult at school, while 1.4 percent of them were somewhat agreed and vast majority i.e. 87.1 percent of them were strongly disagreed with this opinion.

About 13.6 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and 12.9 percent of the respondents were agreed that they destroy public property, while 1.4 percent of them were somewhat agreed and large majority i.e. 72.1 percent of them were strongly disagreed with this opinion.

About one-fourth i.e. 25.0 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and 16.4 percent of the respondents were agreed that they been suspended from school, while 1.4 percent of them were somewhat agreed and a majority i.e. 57.1 percent of them were strongly disagreed with this opinion.

About one-fourth i.e. 26.4 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and 12.1 percent of the respondents were agreed that they made absence telephone calls, such as calling someone and saying dirty things, while a majority i.e. 61.4 percent of them were strongly disagreed with this opinion.

Little less than one-fourth i.e. 23.6 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and 6.4 percent of the respondents were agreed that they committed the crime due to poverty, while only

one respondent was disagreed and a large majority i.e. 69.3 percent of them were strongly disagreed with this opinion.

More than a half i.e. 54.3 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and only one respondent was disagreed that they were an accidental/act done by them and 45.0 percent of them were strongly disagreed with this statement.

A majority i.e. 58.6 percent of the respondents were strongly agreed and 2.9 percent of them were disagreed that they commit this crime just to fulfill their own need and 38.6 percent of them were strongly disagreed with this statement.

Table 7

Hypothesis 1: Family structure will influence the juvenile delinquency

Table 7:Association between family structure and juvenile delinquency

Family structure	Juvenile delinquency			Total
	Low	Medium	High	
Low	3	4	14	21
	14.3%	19.1%	66.7%	100.0%
Medium	5	24	17	46
	10.7%	52.2%	36.9%	100.0%
High	18	50	5	73
	24.7%	68.5%	6.8%	100.0%
Total	26	78	36	140
	18.6%	55.7%	25.7%	100.0%

Chi-square = 18.85 d.f. = 4 Significance = .006** Gamma = -.396
**= Highly-Significant

Table 7 presents the association between family structure and juvenile delinquency. Chi-square value shows a highly-significant association between family structure and the juvenile delinquency. Gamma value shows a negative relationship between the variables. It means poor family structure had more influence on the juvenile delinquency as compared to high family structure. So the hypothesis "Family structure will influence the juvenile delinquency" is accepted.

Conclusions

It was found the delinquency a legal term for criminal behavior carried out by a juvenile is

often the result of escalating problematic behavior. Biological factors, such as being male, having low intelligence and short time horizon, are accurate predictors of crime. Family background factors, such as erratic parental discipline, lack of adequate supervision, and maternal rejection, are strongly linked with later criminal involvement. Social factors, such as income inequality, also exert significant influence on delinquent behavior among youths. It was found highly-significant association was found between family structure and the juvenile delinquency. A non-significant association was found between family environment and juvenile delinquency and a highly-significant association was found between peer group and the juvenile delinquency. It was recommended that the conflict between parents is a strong variable for juvenile delinquency.A highly-significant association was found between family structure and the juvenile delinquency. Therefore, parents should avoid conflicting attitude in front of their offsprings. There is also a need for social therapy for such parents through media, counseling and peer pressure. Father's nagging attitude and mother fixation effect the child behavior, thus both father and mother raise their children in friendly and loving atmosphere not withstanding the negative and unscrupulous attitude of their offspring. The father's attitude should not be corrective and coercive rather it should be loving and encouraging. Mother's education matters a lot in tending and mending the child behaviour in a positive manner, therefore, it is emphasized to encourage female education. It is common saying that the best school for a child is the lap of a mother. The age of adolescent is a very critical stage where new emotions, strong feelings, explosive ideas and hormonal changes spring up, therefore, these highly inflammable traits which need a correct direction in order to avoid juvenile delinquency. Here, again the role of parents has a paramount importance to watch their children and provide them needed direction and support.

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