Module 5 Crime, Criminal, Criminology and Juvenile Delinquency

Lecture 31

Juvenile Delinquency: Nature and Characteristics

As per the current definition, the term ‘Juvenile Delinquents’ or 'Children in Conflict with the Law' refers to any person below the age of 18 who has come in contact with the justice system as a result of committing a crime or being suspected of committing a crime. It may be kept in mind that, the figures for juvenile delinquency till 2000 were collected as per the definition of Juvenile justice Act, 1986. Male below the age of 16 years and female below the age of 18 years were considered as Juveniles in this Act. The Act was amended in 2000 according to which, the age of juvenile male and females was brought at par as below the age of 18 years.

Incidence and Rate of Juvenile Delinquency

The increasing trend in incidence of Juvenile Crimes (under IPC) is a matter of grave concern, though the percentage of juvenile crimes to total crimes is around 1% during 2001 to 2011 (National Crime Record Bureau, 2011).

Share of Juvenile Crime: Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Special Local Laws (SLL):

The juvenile IPC crimes in 2011 have increased by 10.5% over 2010 as 22,740 IPC crimes by juveniles were registered during 2010 which increased to 25,125 cases in 2011. Major Juvenile crimes were under ‘Theft’ (21.17%), Hurt (16.3%) and Burglary (10.38%) in 2011. The highest decrease in Juvenile delinquency was observed under the crime head 'Preparation & Assembly for Dacoity' (35.3%), 'Death due to negligence' (25.6%) and 'Criminal breach of trust' (14.0%) in 2011 over 2010. The highest increase in the incidence of juvenile crimes was observed under the heads 'Counterfeiting' (81.8%), 'Dowry deaths' (63.2%), 'Arson' (57.6%) and 'Kidnapping & abduction of women & girls' (53.5%). Juvenile delinquency under SLL crimes has increased by 10.9% in 2011 as compared to 2010 as 2,558 cases of juvenile delinquency under SLL were reported in 2010 which increased to 2,837 in 2011, while there was substantial decrease
of 40.8% in 2010 as compared to 2009. A large number of Juvenile crimes (SLL) were reported under Gambling Act (14.77%) followed by Prohibition Act (10.7%). Cases under 'Indian Passport Act' and 'Forest Act' have registered a sharp decline of 66.7% each, while cases under ‘Prohibition of Child Marriage Act’ and 'Immoral Traffic (P) Act' registered sharp increase of 200% and 50% respectively. (Children in India-2012, A Statistical Appraisal, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, 2012 and National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB), 2011)

**State-wise Distribution of Juvenile Delinquency: Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Special Local Laws (SLL):**

The States of Madhya Pradesh (19.9%), Maharashtra (19%), Chhattisgarh (8.7%), Andhra Pradesh (7.3%), Rajasthan (7.3%) and Gujarat (6.4%) have reported high incidence of juvenile crimes under IPC. Out of the total 888 juvenile murder cases reported in the Country in 2011, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh reported 16.3% and 12.6% cases. The highest incidence of the juvenile rape cases in the country was reported from Madhya Pradesh (23.6%) followed by Uttar Pradesh (12.7%) and Maharashtra (10.9%) in the country. The highest incidence of the juvenile theft in the country was reported from Maharashtra (23.6%). The highest number of juvenile delinquency cases under Special and Local Laws was reported from Tamil Nadu (672) which accounted for 23.7% of total juvenile crimes under SLL followed by Chhattisgarh (514 cases, 18.1%), Gujarat (464 cases, 16.4%), Maharashtra (296 cases, 10.4%) and Madhya Pradesh (276 cases, 9.7%). These five States taken together have accounted for 78.3% of total juvenile delinquency cases under SLL reported in the country. Out of 424 cases reported in the country under ‘Gambling Act’ against juveniles, 33.0% cases were reported from Madhya Pradesh followed by Chhattisgarh (29%). Gujarat reported 215 (68.7%) cases under 'Prohibition Act' followed by Maharashtra 92 (29.4%) and both states accounted for 98.1%. (National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB), 2011).
**Juveniles Apprehended**

A total of 33,887 juveniles were apprehended during 2011 out of which 31,909 were boys and 1,978 were girls. The percentage of girls to total juveniles is 5.84% in 2011 whereas the percentage share relating to 2010 was 5.1%. Out of total 33,887 juveniles arrested, 30,766 (90.7%) were arrested under IPC crimes while 3,121 (9.3%) were arrested for committing SLL crimes. Out of the total 33,887 juveniles apprehended, 1,211 juveniles are in the age-group of 7-12 years, 11,019 juveniles are in the age-group of 12-16 years during 2011 whereas bulk of juveniles (21,657) were arrested under the age-group 16-18 years. The percentage shares of juveniles apprehended under these age groups are 3.3%, 32.5% and 63.9% respectively. An increase has been observed in number of juveniles apprehended in all these age groups and it is shocking to note that in 2011 over 2010, highest percentage increase was for 7-12 age group (30.6%) whereas the rise in crimes in 12-16 years and 16-18 years were 8.9% and 12.5% respectively. The overall increase in juveniles apprehended at the national level is 11.8% in 2011 as compared to 2010. Maharashtra has reported the highest number of juveniles arrested (6,417, 20.9%) under IPC crimes followed by Madhya Pradesh (5,495, 17.9%), Rajasthan (2,445, 7.9%), Andhra Pradesh (2,424, 7.9%), Chhatisgarh (2,178, 7.1%), and Gujarat (1,968, 6.4%). Maharashtra has reported the highest number of juveniles arrested for Murder (201), Attempt to Murder (180), Dacoity (67), Preparation and Assembly for Dacoity (17), Robbery (218), Burglary (838), Theft (1,673), Riots (736), Cheating (35), Hurt (1,331) and Cruelty by Husband and Relatives (128). Madhya Pradesh led in apprehending the juveniles for Rape (281), Arson (14), Kidnapping (110) and Molestation (173). Among UTs, Delhi UT alone has apprehended 934 (77.3%) juveniles under different crime heads during the year. The highest number of juveniles under SLL were apprehended in Tamil Nadu (683, 21.9%) followed by Gujarat (542, 17.4%), Chhatisgarh (514, 16.5%) and Maharashtra (353, 11.31%). These four states have accounted for 67% of total juveniles apprehended under SLL crimes. (National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB), 2011).
Classification of Juveniles by Attributes

It is highly disturbing to observe that, out of the total juveniles involved in various crimes, 81.4% are children living with parents, whereas the share of homeless children involved in various crimes are 5.7% and the remaining are children living with guardians. Out of the total juveniles involved in various crimes 6,122 (18.1%) are illiterate and 12,803 (37.8%) had education up to primary level. 31 % juveniles belonged to the education level of above primary but below secondary category and 13.11% are with secondary/ higher secondary & above education. A large chunk of juveniles (57%) belonged to the poor families whose annual income was up to Rs. 25,000/. The share of juveniles from families with income between 25,000/- and 50,000/- was 27%. The share of juveniles hailing from middle income group (50,000-2,00,000) was 11%. (National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB), 2011).

References


