CHAPTER IV

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

4.1 Chapter Overview

Deviant behavior can be defined as action or behaviour that violates widely-accepted cultural norms including formally-enacted rules as well as informal violations of social norms. For example, theft is a common instance of deviant behavior which violates the social norms and could be said to have been driven by sociological pressures such as poverty. Homicide is a form of extreme deviant behavior which violates the cultural norm which states that it is unacceptable to kill another human being. Several psychological, biological and sociological issues can play a role in deviant behavior of children.

This chapter focused the phenomenon of deviant behaviour of children and how this is influenced by family combinations both in Indian and global context. There is analysis of deviant behaviour, intact family, broken homes with child left with father or mother only, step parent influence to juvenile deviant behaviour and situation where a child has lived in a children’s home and finally with a grandparent. During the last several decades, a good number of research studies were published on various aspects of family-child relationship. An attempt is made here to present a detailed review of research works that have direct and indirect relation to the research problem. These studies are collected from various professionally referred journals, from commercial database of journal publications such as EBSCO, ProQuest, JSTOR and repository of
theses and dissertations available web portals like Shodhganga. Further, these research studies are delineated according to the variables studied for readers’ ease.

### 4.2 Family Unit Structure

A family may influence a person’s behaviour either negatively or positively both at childhood and adulthood. An intact family can be said to be a functioning union between a mother and a father, so when a break up exist, the turmoil may affect a child to a greater extent. A functioning family is beneficial to a child than a dysfunctional one. Family separation was a great contributor of child neglect which generally leads to child deviant behaviour. For example, leaving homes and addicted to vices and the like from parental and family neglect, lack of supervision and guidance.

Many family characteristics and family environments influence juvenile deviant behaviour such as the number of people in a family, inconsistent parenting, family problems, child neglect and children’s attachment to parents.\(^{180}\)

If violence encompasses all emotional environmental aspects of a juvenile’s life, he is more likely to engage in delinquent activities.\(^ {181}\) In a study by H. Juby and D. Farrington,\(^ {182}\) delinquency rates were found to be higher among the children who live in permanently disrupted families compared to those living in intact families. The same

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\(^ {180}\) Ibid. 10, p 7.


pattern was found in case of intact but high-conflict families. Cohesiveness of the family successfully predicts the frequency of delinquent acts for non-traditional families.\textsuperscript{183}

The lack of supervision and the absence of close relationships between the teenager and his or her parents are factors that influence delinquency.\textsuperscript{184} A. Mullens\textsuperscript{185} found that children from biologically intact homes have a lower incidence of illegal behaviour that is paralleled by their lower rate of susceptibility to peer pressure to commit deviant acts. The study suggests that there is a link between juvenile deviance and family structure. The study also suggests that juveniles who are charged with more serious acts of delinquency are from incomplete homes than juveniles charged with lesser acts of misconduct.

A broken home is a factor in personality mal-adjustment. For males, the largest proportion of crimes brought to the attention of the court was the petty theft offenses. The female delinquents were referred for running away from home and involved in some type of sexual deviancy. Certain types of delinquency are related to broken homes (e.g. runaway, truancy and fighting). Juveniles from broken homes according to A. Mullens\textsuperscript{186} are 2.7 times more likely to run away from their family than children living in intact homes. The core belief is that a broken home has an imbalance and as a result is detrimental to a child’s socialization and personality adjustment. As a result, a child may be more susceptible to negative peer pressure and may ultimately commit acts of

\textsuperscript{185} Ibid. 13, p 8.
\textsuperscript{186} Ibid.
delinquency not committed by children from intact homes where there is a balanced structure of man and women who act as good role models in child acquiring proper roles.

While examining the relationship between family structure and juvenile delinquency, it was found that proportionately more juvenile offenders come from family arrangements other than the two-parent family home.\(^{187}\)

M. Mugo and K. Kamau\(^{188}\) say that various reasons such as poor marriages, lack of parental controls, ineffective parental behaviour and failure to provide a natural and loving environment attribute to the rise in delinquency. A family has a greater effect on individual’s trait acquisition and development.

I. Ngale\(^{189}\) explored the relationship between family structure and juvenile delinquency. The analysis revealed the following significant relationships: the moral education of juvenile delinquents is undertaken more by others than their biological parents; most delinquent children come from the lowest socio-economic stratum of society; about two-thirds of the juvenile delinquents come from homes where 7 persons and above live under the same roof; most parents of our respondents have low paid jobs which keep them for long periods away from their children. A growing number of parents need additional socioeconomic support, development of vital skills of responsible parenting, in order to adequately manage periods of rapid social change and simultaneous multi dimensional challenges.


\(^{188}\) Ibid. 14, p 8.

A.K. Kimani\textsuperscript{190} investigated the causative relationship between family unit structure and juvenile delinquency. The research revealed that there was a strong correlation between murder and a child having come from an intact family. For a single parent family parenthood, there was a strong correlation between street life, sex and defilement offences. Children brought up in a step parent home had a strong inclination towards substance abuse but the correlation was even greater for stealing and refusing school. For children having come from a children’s home, they had a strong correlation towards substance abuse and street life but showed a negative strong correlation with refusing school. For children brought up in a grandparent family structure, the correlation was strong for substance abuse and the highest for stealing. Murder was the least committed offence while refusing school and street life were the most dominant. This research concludes that single parenthood families were the most significant for all offences in the study except murder.

In another study by K. Sanni and others,\textsuperscript{191} the results indicated that three family variables namely: family stability, family cohesiveness and family adaptability impact strongly on juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in Nigeria. J. Fry\textsuperscript{192} examined the effects over time of changes in the family structure and juvenile delinquency. Although mixed, the research has shown that increase in divorce, female-headed households and working mothers can increase the likelihood of juvenile


delinquency. Specifically, this study looked at the annual variation in juvenile violent crime rates and its relationship with changes in the family structure.

E. Obioha and M. Nthabi\textsuperscript{193} investigated the social background patterns of juvenile delinquents to ascertain their contributions to juvenile delinquencies in Lesotho. The results in the main corroborated what exists in literature that most delinquents come from broken homes; most delinquents are males; delinquency is at a higher rate in urban areas compared to the rural areas and that most delinquents are part of peer groups who engage in delinquent behaviours. The most committed offence across the country was robbery.

\textbf{5.3 Influence of Parenting Practices}

K.N. Wright and K.E. Wright\textsuperscript{194} suggest positive parenting practices during the early years and later in adolescence appear to act as buffers preventing delinquent behaviour and assisting adolescents involved in such behaviour to desist from delinquency. Research indicates that various exposures to violence are important sources of early adolescent role exits, which means that not only can a juvenile witness violence within the family but on the outside as well.

D. Gorman-Smith and P. Tolan\textsuperscript{195} found that parental conflict and parental aggressiveness predicted violent offending; whereas, lack of maternal affection and paternal criminality predicted involvement in property crimes. Familial characteristics

\textsuperscript{193} Ibid. 16, p 9
suggesting familial antisocial behaviour or values such as family history of criminal behaviour, harsh parental discipline, and family conflict have been among the most consistently linked.

D.G. Myers\textsuperscript{196} identified one reason why people believe so strongly in the nurture assumption is that they can see parents influencing their children. They observe the child of permissive parents being obnoxious and the child of abusive parents looking cowed and fearful, in the presence of their parents. The fundamental attribution error causes observers to assume that these children will be obnoxious or fearful in other social contexts too. In another study conducted by D. Gorman-Smith and her colleagues\textsuperscript{197}, data show that children are more likely to resort to violence if there is violence within relationships that they may share with their family.

Another study links parental care with high levels of psychological distress, which leads to delinquency. J. Chambers and others\textsuperscript{198} found that high parental control, such as in an authoritarian parenting style, leads to a faster first arrest. They also discovered that low parenting care, such as in a permissive parenting style, is related to high levels of distress in adolescents. These finding would also indicate harmful results from being reared in a permissive or authoritarian home.

A study by M. Wittenborn\(^\text{199}\) evaluated the relation between parenting styles and juvenile delinquency. The results revealed that there were no significant relations between permissive and authoritarian parenting styles and rate of delinquency but there was a significant inverse relation between authoritative parenting style and delinquency.

G. Okorodudu\(^\text{200}\) investigated the influence of parenting styles on adolescents’ delinquency. Parents who are positively oriented in their styles will make their adolescents socially competent and goal directed. Parents who exerted control and monitored adolescent activities and promoted self-autonomy were found to have the most positive effects on adolescents’ behaviour. Uninvolving parents and also non responsive to adolescents needs had negative impacts on their behaviour.

### 4.4 Influence of Single Parent

The major area within juvenile delinquency and families is single parent households versus two parent households. K. Klein and R. Forehand\(^\text{201}\) suggest that the prediction of juvenile delinquency in early childhood depends on the type of maternal parenting skills that are imposed upon the child during early adolescence.

J. Millar and T. Ridge\(^\text{202}\) found single parent families are at a higher risk of poverty than couple families and on average single mothers have poorer health than


couple mothers. M. Rickard\textsuperscript{203} and R. Mackay\textsuperscript{204} opined many factors influence how children develop in single-parent families: the parent's age, education level and occupation; the family's income and the family's support network of friends and extended family members. Disadvantages in these factors that often accompany single parenting appear to cause most of this association rather than single parenting itself.

B. Muehlenberg\textsuperscript{205} poses the question of how do children from single parent family homes fare educationally compared to children from intact two parent families. A number of studies have been undertaken which show a very real connection between delinquent and/or criminal behaviour and single parent families. K.N. Wright and K.E. Wright’s\textsuperscript{206} research shows that single parent families and in particular mother-only families, produce more delinquent children than two parent families.

A Swedish study by the journal, The Lancet\textsuperscript{207} stated that those living with a single parent were about three times more likely to kill themselves or end up in the hospital after an attempted suicide by the age of 26 than children living with two parents, however this only happened to 2.2 percent of girls and 1 percent of boys.


\textsuperscript{206} Ibid. 194, p 151

A variety of viewpoints do exist, with different readings of the research possible. The Institute for the Study of Civil Society\textsuperscript{208} reports that children of single parents, after controlling for other variables like family income, are more likely to have problems. There are impacts of sole parenting on children, however the weight of the evidence it is suggested, do not appear to support a view that sole parents are a major cause of societal ills and are doing irreparable damage to their children.

4.5 Effects of Maternal Employment

The strongest research examining the psychosocial outcomes of children of mothers with borderline personality disorder is a small pilot study conducted by M. Weiss and others\textsuperscript{209}. They confirmed that children of mothers with BPD, compared to children with mothers without BPD, had a significantly higher number of psychiatric diagnoses and scored higher on a global rating of impairment. The authors demonstrated that children of mothers with BPD are at an increased risk for developing impulse control disorders and borderline tendencies of their own. Even when childhood trauma was controlled for, significant group differences in functioning between children of mothers with and without BPD were found; approximately 20\% of the variation in child functioning and 8\% of the variation in borderline pathology was accounted for by maternal diagnosis alone. The findings provide a little but good insight into the development of children of mothers with BPD.


The children of mothers who return to work full time in the years before they start school have slower emotional development and score less well in reading and maths tests. The disadvantage starts in primary school and persists into early adulthood, with lower educational attainment, higher unemployment and greater likelihood of childbearing early in life. An early return to work by the mother reduces the child's chances of progressing to A-level from 60% to 50%. The employment patterns of the father have little effect. They said the consequences were less severe for children of better-educated mothers. And the positive effects of higher household income brought about by the mother returning to work went some way to compensate for the negative effect of reduced contact in early years.  

J. Hill and others demonstrated small but significant negative effects of maternal employment on children’s cognitive outcomes for full-time employment in the 1st year post birth as compared with employment postponed until after the 1st year. Multiple imputation yields noticeably different estimates as compared with a complete case approach for many measures. Differences between results from propensity score approaches and regression modeling are often minimal. Dysfunctional attitudes were found to have an effect on coping style. The results of a study indicate some possibilities for explanation how fragile self-image, dysfunctional attitudes and self-punishing coping patterns may develop as a possible effect of mother-child interaction dynamics.

Children's temperament was related to the frequency and quality of conflict, that is, children who were highly active and who had problems controlling their behaviour had more conflict with mothers than less active children and children who did not have trouble controlling their behaviour.\textsuperscript{213}

In addition, highly active children and children who frequently and intensely experienced negative emotions had less constructive conflict with their mothers, involving less resolution, more aggravation and less justification, than children who did not have these qualities. Attachment security was not related to the frequency of conflict between mothers and their children, but to the quality, the study found. Mothers and children who had secure relationships had constructive conflict involving high levels of resolution, compromise and justification. In sum, both the quality of children's relationships with their mothers and children's personality types were found to shape the nature of conflict between mothers and their children at age two. A 2008 study by UNICEF\textsuperscript{214} claimed that mothers who went back to work less than a year after giving birth were gambling with their children’s development.

In a study by Columbia University,\textsuperscript{215} findings are in stark contrast to previous research which has suggested that mothers who return to work put their children at risk of a barrage of ill effects. Working mothers had better mental health, were able to build


healthier relationships within the family and boosted the household income, all of which aided the child’s development. Children whose mothers worked were also likely to benefit from higher-quality childcare outside the home, because their parents could afford to shop around for the best nannies and nursery places. Though babies suffered some ill effects when their mothers returned to work within a year such as spending less time interacting with a parent, the researchers found that the net effect on their cognitive and social development over time was neutral.

A study by H. Liua and others\textsuperscript{216} analysed the roles of and inter relationships among school inputs and parental inputs in affecting child development through the specification and estimation of a behavioural model of household migration and maternal employment decisions. The study found that the impact of our school quality measures diminishes by factors of 2 to 4 after accounting for the fact that families may choose where to live in part based on school characteristics and labour market opportunities. The positive statistical relationship between child outcomes and maternal employment reverses sign and remains statistically significant after controlling for its possible endogeneity. The estimates implied that when parental responses are taken into account, policy changes in school quality end up having only minor impacts on child test scores.

### 4.6 The Role of father

Fathers are a significant contributor to offspring development and a capability in adapting to society. The presence of a functioning father in the home is associated with positive adjustment in children. Among the cross-sectional group studies, children who

are living with their natural fathers show significantly fewer incidences of fighting, delusions-hallucinations, delinquency, isolation and benefit from living in an intact home. An intact home enjoys the socialisation roles of both mother and father.

Over the past 30 years, father involvement research has advanced dramatically. There is now a substantial literature that establishes a number of important trends in the way that men approach parenting and the effects that their involvement has on their children’s development.

Children of involved fathers are more likely to demonstrate more cognitive competence on standardised intellectual assessments\textsuperscript{217} and have higher IQ’s. Children of involved fathers are more likely to enjoy school, have better attitudes toward school, participate in extracurricular activities and graduate. They are also less likely to fail a grade, have poor attendance, or have behaviour problems at school\textsuperscript{218}.

Children of involved fathers are more likely to become educationally mobile young adults with higher levels of economic and educational achievement, career success, occupational competency and psychological well being\textsuperscript{219}. Infants whose fathers are involved in their care are more likely to be securely attached to them, be more curious and eager to explore the environment, relate more maturely to strangers, react more


competently to complex and novel stimuli and be more trusting in branching out in their explorations.\textsuperscript{220}

Father involvement is positively correlated with children experiencing overall life satisfaction, less depression,\textsuperscript{221} less emotional distress and fewer expressions of negative emotionality such as fear and guilt.\textsuperscript{222}

Children of involved fathers are more likely to demonstrate a greater tolerance for stress and frustration, have superior problem solving and adaptive skills,\textsuperscript{223} be more playful, resourceful, skilful and attentive when presented with a problem and are better able to manage their emotions and impulses in an adaptive manner.

Children of involved fathers are more likely to demonstrate a greater internal locus of control, have a greater ability to take initiative, use self direction and control and display less impulsivity.\textsuperscript{224}

Father involvement is positively correlated with children’s overall social competence, maturity and capacity for relatedness with others.\textsuperscript{225} Children of involved fathers are more likely to have positive peer relations and be popular and well liked.

Their peer relations are typified by less negativity, less aggression, less conflict, more reciprocity, more generosity and more positive friendship qualities.\footnote{Lieberman, M., Doyle, A., and Markiewicz, D. (1999), ‘Developmental patterns in security of attachment to mother and father in late childhood and early adolescence: Associations with peer relations’, \textit{Child Development}, Vol. 70, No. 1, pp 202-213.}

Children of involved fathers are more likely to have pro social sibling interactions,\footnote{Volling, B. and Belsky, J. (1992), ‘The contribution of mother-child and father-child relationships to the quality of sibling interaction: A longitudinal study’, \textit{Child Development}, Vol. 63, pp 1209-1222.} show fewer negative emotional reactions during play with peers, experience less tension in their interactions with other children, and solve conflicts by themselves rather than seeking the teacher’s. Children who have involved fathers are more likely to grow up to be tolerant and understanding, be well socialised and successful adults, have long term, successful marriages, have supportive social networks consisting of long-term close friendships.

The strongest predictor of empathic concern in children and adults is high levels of paternal involvement. Father warmth and nurturance significantly predicts children’s moral maturity, is associated with more pro-social and positive moral behaviour in boys and girls\footnote{Mosley, J. and Thompson, E. (1995), ‘Fathering Behaviour and Child Outcomes: The role of race and poverty’, In Marsiglio, W. (Ed.), \textit{Fatherhood: Contemporary theory, research, and social policy}, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.} and is positively correlated with higher scores on measures of internal moral judgment, moral values, and conformity to rules.

Father involvement protects children from engaging in delinquent behaviour, and is associated with less substance abuse among adolescents, less delinquency,\footnote{Zimmerman, M. A., Salem, D. A., and Maton, K. I. (1995), ‘Family structure and psychosocial correlates among urban African-American adolescent males’, \textit{Child Development}, Vol. 66, pp 1598-1613} less drug use, truancy, and stealing, less drinking, and a lower frequency of externalizing and internalizing symptoms such as acting out, disruptive behaviour, depression, sadness and
Adolescents who strongly identified with their fathers were 80% less likely to have been in jail and 75% less likely to have become unwed parents.

One of the most important benefits of a positive relationship between mother and father, and a benefit directly related to the objectives of the CPS caseworker, is the behaviour it models for children. Fathers who treat the mothers of their children with respect and deal with conflict within the relationship in an adult and appropriate manner are more likely to have boys who understand how they are to treat women and who are less likely to act in an aggressive fashion toward females. Girls with involved, respectful fathers see how they should expect men to treat them and are less likely to become involved in violent or unhealthy relationships. In contrast, research has shown that husbands who display anger, show contempt for, or who stonewall their wives are more likely to have children who are anxious, withdrawn, or antisocial.

The influence of a father's involvement on academic achievement extends into adolescence and young adulthood. Numerous studies find that an active and nurturing style of fathering is associated with better verbal skills, intellectual functioning and academic achievement among adolescents.

J. Mosley and E. Thompson studied school-aged children and found that children with good relationships with their fathers were less likely to experience

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\item \cite{Ibid. 228, p 161} Gable, S., Cmic, K., and Belsky, J. (1994), ‘Coparenting within the family system: Influences on children's development’, Family Relations, Vol. 43, No. 4, pp 380-386
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depression, to exhibit disruptive behaviour, or to lie and were more likely to exhibit pro-
social behaviour. This same study found that boys with involved fathers had fewer school
behaviour problems and that girls had stronger self-esteem. In addition, children who
live with their fathers are more likely to have good physical and emotional health, to
achieve academically, and to avoid drugs, violence, and delinquent behaviour.

R.D. Parke\textsuperscript{235} stated that the way fathers play with their children also has an
important impact on a child's emotional and social development. Fathers spend a much
higher percentage of their one-on-one interaction with infants and preschoolers in
stimulating, playful activity than do mothers. From these interactions, children learn how
to regulate their feelings and behaviour. Rough-housing with dad, for example, can teach
children how to deal with aggressive impulses and physical contact without losing control
of their emotions. Generally speaking, fathers also tend to promote independence and an
orientation to the outside world. Fathers often push achievement while mothers stress
nurturing, both of which are important to healthy development. As a result, children who
grow up with involved fathers are more comfortable exploring the world around them
and more likely to exhibit self-control and pro-social behaviour.

Children with involved and caring fathers have better educational outcomes.
K.Pruett\textsuperscript{236} suggested that fathers who are involved, nurturing, and playful with their
infants have children with higher IQs, as well as better linguistic and cognitive capacities.
Toddlers with involved fathers go on to start school with higher levels of academic
readiness. They are more patient and can handle the stresses and frustrations associated
with schooling more readily than children with less involved fathers.

\textsuperscript{235} Ibid. 225, p 160
Even from birth, children who have an involved father are more likely to be emotionally secure, be confident to explore their surroundings, and, as they grow older, have better social connections with peers. These children also are less likely to get in trouble at home, school, or in the neighborhood.\textsuperscript{237}

One of the most important influences a father can have on his child is indirect. Fathers influence their children in large part through the quality of their relationship with the mother of their children. A father who has a good relationship with the mother of their children is more likely to be involved and to spend time with their children and to have children who are psychologically and emotionally healthier. Similarly, a mother who feels affirmed by her children's father and who enjoys the benefits of a happy relationship is more likely to be a better mother. Indeed, the quality of the relationship affects the parenting behaviour of both parents. They are more responsive, affectionate, and confident with their infants; more self-controlled in dealing with defiant toddlers; and better confidants for teenagers seeking advice and emotional support.\textsuperscript{238}

A. Mullens\textsuperscript{239} stated high-quality father-child ties may be particularly important for child well-being because fathers who develop close affective bonds with children can be more effective in monitoring, teaching, and communicating with children, thereby allowing the social capital inherent in the father-child relationship to be realised.

\textsuperscript{239} Ibid. 13, p 8
4.7 Influence of Siblings

Research shows that if one sibling is a delinquent, there is a significant likelihood that his brother or sister will engage in delinquent behaviour. For example, if an adolescent takes drugs and engages in delinquent behaviour, so too will his sibling. A number of interpretations of these data are possible: siblings who live in same environment are influenced by similar social and economic factors; deviance is genetically determined and the traits that cause one sibling to engage in delinquency are shared by his brother or sister; deviant siblings grow closer because of shared interests. It is possible that the relationship is due to personal interactions older siblings are imitated by younger siblings.\textsuperscript{240}

While a variety of family characteristics are recognised as risk factors for violent behaviour of children, siblings may be particularly likely to influence each other’s behaviour, including acting as deviant peer role models, given the long-term and emotionally close relationships most share. Thus, a sibling-specific risk factor may operate across the family and peer domains during adolescence, making sibling influences on delinquency a vital area for research and prevention efforts.\textsuperscript{241}

Interest in the ways in which siblings may influence delinquency stems from research demonstrating that offenders tend to live in large families and that a small

\textsuperscript{240} Siegel, L. and Welsh, B. (2010), ‘Juvenile Delinquency: The Core’, Cengage Learning, Ohio, USA
number of families often account for a large proportion of officially convicted or self-reported offenders.\textsuperscript{242}

About 10 per cent of London families were responsible for 64 per cent of the adult convictions of male respondents in the Cambridge Study in delinquent development, while the same proportion of families accounted for 76 per cent of all self-reported offenses, 94 per cent of all felony theft offenses, and 100 per cent of all robberies in the National Youth Survey. Further evidence of a concentration of delinquent siblings in some families stems from research demonstrating that adolescent offenders are more likely than non-offenders to have delinquent siblings.\textsuperscript{243}

These findings have led researchers to focus on the sibling relationship more closely, to determine the extent to which siblings are likely to engage in similar offending behaviours and to examine the ways in which brothers and sisters may directly influence one another’s involvement in crime. Assessing sibling similarity in delinquency, Rowe and his colleagues\textsuperscript{244} reported an average sibling correlation of 0.35. Other non-intellectual traits have an average correlation of 0.12, suggesting that siblings may be particularly likely to emulate and/or influence one another’s involvement in delinquent behaviour. Moreover, some investigations demonstrate sibling associations as high as 0.50, with sibling similarity particularly likely for same-sex sibling pairs and those close in age. Such siblings may be most likely to view each other as salient role models, given

their similar demographic characteristics, increased amount of time spent together, shared history of significant events, and so on.\textsuperscript{245}

Sibling resemblance has been found for a range of behaviours, including aggression and externalizing behaviour, delinquency, and drug and alcohol use.\textsuperscript{246} Moreover, some investigations demonstrate sibling effects over time and into adulthood. For example, Reiss and Farrington\textsuperscript{247} found that having a delinquency sibling helped predict chronic offending for London males through age 32. Other research shows that sibling effects remain significant controlling for shared family experiences. In other words, even though both siblings may experience similar risk factors within their families, such as parental arrest, single-parent status, or low family income, these experiences cannot fully account for sibling similarity in behaviour.

### 4.8 Domestic Violence

Around 40 million children under the age of 14 years are estimated to suffer from abuse and neglect around the world. The prevalence of child abuse is showing an increasing trend in India. India has a large child population and many children are vulnerable to abuse, exploitation and neglect.


A growing body of clinical experience and research reveals that domestic violence and child abuse occur in the same families and are highly associated with similar social and economic risk factors. Domestic violence and child abuse take a devastating toll on children and society at large. Early childhood victimization, either through direct abuse, neglect, or witnessing parental domestic violence, has been shown to have demonstrable long-term consequences for youth violence, adult violent behaviours and other forms of criminality.\textsuperscript{248}

Violence on children is often part of a pattern of family violence. The family structure that should provide security, safety and cater to the emotional needs for one’s better mental health, often in reality, is the most frequent place for violence. Strengthening family bonds, providing crisis intervention services, and giving family life education to parents and children is needed to alleviate violence on children.

In a study\textsuperscript{249} on maternal employment and domestic violence where results indicated significant incidence of violence in Indian families which warrants the need for appropriate intervention programmes. Family life education programmes, and opportunities for learning alternative non-punitive ways of managing interpersonal conflict are suggested, to help reduce violence in families. Parenting skills especially for young mothers need to be imparted.


In another study, the incidence of children abused at their workplace was higher in households with higher income and higher education levels. Children in the red light area received better care than those in slums, but were easy targets for being befriended by liquor/drug peddlers and criminal gangs. Children living in Muslim dominated slums had a lesser degree of parental care and nutrition. Runaway children had poor interpersonal relationship with either of their parents than those living with their families and a majority of them were subjected to aggressive, dominating or indifferent treatment. Low economic status and illiteracy was also found to be a contributory factor. High income group felt that the incidence of abuse, especially substance abuse, was more prevalent in low income families, while the latter viewed employers and businessmen of higher income brackets as the main perpetuators of child abuse. With respect to impact of abuse, the low income group identified family disturbances, increase in rate of crime and threat to social harmony as the after effect of child abuse, while high income/skilled group showed least concern for the after-effects of child abuse.

The children who witness violence on their mothers in the family are affected in various ways. Often they remain neglected and hence are called ‘victims of domestic violence’. In Indian society, very few services are available for women who face violence within their family as patriarchy accepts this violence as normal. S. Sengupta documented the effects of violence on children/adolescents who witnessed abuse of their mothers by their fathers; and compared the differences, if any, of the effects on boys and girls. The study recommends that women need a safe environment to express their

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conflicts without this being defined as ‘risk’ to their children. It also recommends that the blame for any negative impact on the mother – child relationship lies solely with the perpetrator of violence. The harsh reality of domestic violence is that it affects a woman’s ability to care. The impact of continual physical attacks, verbal degradation, emotional torture and social isolation can have upon a woman’s life should never be underestimated or minimised. Women in such situations will try very hard to hold a family together and to maintain stability. Being ‘caught in the middle’ of domestic violence can have adverse effects on a child. Every child’s experience of this conflict is different and every child utilizes different coping mechanisms to deal with the situation. Such coping mechanisms are unique to each child and determine how a child will react to domestic violence.

4.9 Influence of Media

A study was conducted by Organisation for Applied Socio-Economic Systems, New Delhi to find out if delinquent persons, children and youth, had a higher or different media exposure that changed their behaviour patterns. The study indicated that those who were more exposed to mass media were not necessarily delinquents. It was revealed that a combination of media exposure or consumption and other factors, either inherent in a person or in his/her social milieu influenced their behavioural patterns. A higher percentage of delinquents tried to copy scenes from TV, compared to cinema. It was found that advertisements led to a feeling of deprivation among the population, more among delinquents than non-delinquents. One-third of the delinquents, mostly youth, felt that they were influenced by mass media in their criminal behaviour. Majority of those who felt that media had influenced their criminal activities blamed films, but it was found

that they watched more TV. Merely watching movies is not enough to make a person delinquent, but if he prefers to be ‘mostly alone’ then his chances of being a delinquent increases. The study was able to highlight a number of contextual issues related to influence of mass media on criminal behaviour among juveniles and youth. Media should censor stories involving sex, violence, crime, etc., and show self-restraint by following a system of internal censorship. It is also necessary for media persons to understand how their stories influence people. UNESCO\textsuperscript{253} studied the role of media particularly T.V. in the life of children and found a strong relationship between media violence and aggressive behaviour of children.

Media, specially television, was seen to have massive impact on children’s perceptions of violence being the main source of information. Violence was generally associated with the male sex and this was seen across all ages and both genders. Suggestion was made for reduction of social ills like poverty, unemployment, etc., and better parental guidance would help in moulding the thoughts of young minds and thus can control the increase in crime and violence.\textsuperscript{254}

Not all but some of the children who watch violence based programs in television felt that all the things will be set right by violence only. They recommended that some preventive measures should be taken so that these children are not exposed to programmes which convey negative values and are full of violence, perversion, vulgarity


and cruelty.\textsuperscript{255} Pornography has both psychological and sociological effects and promotes negative social issues on one hand, such as child sexual abuse, violence against women, rape, family breakdown and youth crime.\textsuperscript{256}

4.10 Other Factors

In the Western world, kinship is no longer the powerful social institution that governs status within the family. Now that many adult caretakers are working long hours away from their homes, children have less contact and less interest in family affairs. Individuation has superseded familial solidarity. Children are neglected, as too neglecting their families themselves. Overshadowing this is the recent awareness of child abuse that adds to the reasons to call for revision of the traditional view that the family is focal to our childhood, development and social orientation. The Convention on the Rights of the Child begins to give children much needed protection and a voice of their own. It does not protect the family, nor is there any equivalent legislation for the family. A paper by A. Milne\textsuperscript{257} is based on some findings of research into the lives of children and youth who have run away from home in the Netherlands. Those young people, thrust into a world of self-dependence are just one symptom of the malaise within nuclear family structures in the modern world. However, evidence begins to reveal another aspect of these changes: they are often not willful, indeed child abuse is sometimes the only expression of affection possible. The paper, therefore, concludes that improvements for children and

their families must come with legal and constitutional changes that give children voices that express their needs and points of view.

A study\textsuperscript{258} was carried out about the social, economic and psychological consequences of riots on children and to see how such children coped with the postriot situation in Shillong. The first major communal riot in Shillong took place in 1979, followed by riots in 1987, 1989 and in 1992. The study revealed that communal tension and riots resulted in the displacement of families, the loss of homes and property, and feeling of insecurity in the respondents. Community life was thrown out of gear and the impact of the same was noticeable on the psyche of the children. This hampered their overall personality development. The worsening inter-community relationships were reflected in the behaviour of the children, who grew up into psychologically impaired youths, after the riots. In schools and colleges, students tend to form small insular groups and rarely built strong friendships with children of other communities. Riots also badly affected the academic life of children. Many children from poor families were forced to drop their studies, and many lost their sense of discipline and order. Many children became orphans overnight due to the trail of murders and killings. They often grew up with a sense of vengeance towards communities responsible for their parents' death. Case studies were used to illustrate the impact of death, assault witnessed by the children or being stranded which affected them directly or indirectly.

A. Joglekar and R. Patel\textsuperscript{259} compared the delinquents and the neglected children with respect to their - intellectual abilities, personality profiles and psychiatric morbidity and discussed the implications of the differences between the two groups. The results revealed that more number of respondents in the delinquent group fall in the categories of mild mental retardation and border line intellectual functioning compared to the neglected group. The neglected children were found to be affected more by feelings and were more emotional. The same group was found to be more humble and conforming and relaxed than the delinquents. The delinquents were found to be more expedient and have a tendency to evade rules suggesting a weak super ego. Study suggested that there is a definite need to give more importance to the entity called Neglected children and further it suggested that the children in observation home should not be looked at with a bias and must be screened at the earliest in order to separate the neglected children from the delinquents as the former may become deviant through observation.

4.11 Chapter Summary

This review looked at the connection between family structure, non-cordial relations and family environment in adverse situation and its impact on children leading to deviant behaviour and the children coming in conflict with law and order in society in different countries. The chapter also looked at the influence of several factors like parenting practices, single parent, maternal employment, father, siblings, domestic violence etc., leading to the deviant behaviour of children. The presented preliminary research findings point to the need for further research on the role of family on a whole on a child’s development and behaviour.