INTRODUCTION
1.1 INTRODUCTION

_We are guilty of many errors and many faults, but our worst crime is abandoning the children, neglecting the fountain of life. Many of the things we need can wait, the child cannot._

Gabriela Mistral, Nobel Prize Winner

Juvenile delinquency, also known as juvenile offending or youth crime, is participation in illegal behaviour by minors (juveniles) (individuals younger than the statutory age of majority) (Siegel, Larry J. and Brandon Welsh, 2011). Most legal systems prescribe specific procedures for dealing with juveniles, such as juvenile detention centers and courts. A juvenile delinquent is a person who is typically under the age of 18 and commits an act that otherwise would have been charged as a crime if they were adults. Depending on the type and severity of the offense committed, it is possible for persons under 18 to be charged and tried as adults.

Ever since the dawn of human civilization, crime has always been one of the major prevailing problems. Very hardly any society can be thought about without besetting the problem. Human beings inherently by nature are fighting animals to think about a crimeless society thus is nothing but a mere myth. Adolphe Quetelet, the eminent Belgian social statistician observed someone and a half century ago that adolescents, especially the young males are more prone to crime, disorder and delinquency due to their childish impulsiveness and adolescent conflict. In his own words, “the propensity to crime is at its maximum at the age when strength and passions have reached their height, yet when reason has not acquired sufficient control to master their combined influence”. A child is born innocent and if nurtured with tender care and attention, will blossom with faculties; physical, mental, moral and spiritual into a person of excellent stature. On the contrary, unhealthy surroundings, negligence of basic needs, wrong company and other abuses may turn a child to a delinquent. The noted Nobel laureate Gabriel Mistral has observed and commented in this regard as,

_“We are guilty of many errors and many faults, but our worst crime is abandoning the children, neglecting the foundation of life. Many of things we need can wait, the child cannot, right now is the time his bones are being formed, his blood_
is being made and his senses are being developed. To him, we cannot answer 'tomorrow'. His name is 'today'."

Children are always believed to be the most important asset of this planet and every possible effort should be made to provide equal opportunities for their development so that they become robust citizens of tomorrow.

Etymologically, the term delinquency has been derived from the Latin word 'delinquer' meaning ‘to omit’. The Roman used the term to refer to the failure of a person in case of performing the assigned duty or task. It was in 1484 when William Caxton used the term ‘delinquent’ to describe a person found guilty of customary offence. The word also found place in the famous Shakespearean play “Macbeth” in the year 1605. Indeed, in the ordinary sense, delinquency is a form of behaviour or rather misbehaviour or deviation from the commonly accepted norms or conduct in the society.

However, according to the interpretation of the modern penologists, ‘juvenile delinquency’ refers to a large variety of disapproved behaviour of children and adolescents which society does not approve of and for what some admonishment, punishment or corrective measure is justified in the public interest. The perception that juvenile delinquency is a creeping social menace is sharpened because the crimes with which the youths are quite often associated are those of wanton violence and destruction where the motive is often difficult to discover. However, the exact types of menacing behaviour have been changing over time; but in Britain have been personified by such groups as Teddy Boys in the 1950s, muggers and football hooligans in 1970s and 1980s. Thus, the term expresses a very extensive meaning, covering hostile and rebellious behaviour of children and their malignant attitude towards society. Certain other acts as such begging, truancy, vagrancy, obscenity, loitering, pilfering, drinking, gambling etc. which vicious persons very often commit are also included within the meaning of the term. It may, therefore, be inferred that a juvenile delinquent is an adolescent between childhood and manhood or womanhood as the case may be who indulge in some kind of anti-social behaviour, which if not checked in time may grow into a potential offender.
For many young people today, traditional patterns guiding the relationships and transitions among family, school and work are being challenged. Social relations which ensure a smooth process of socialization are collapsing and lifestyle trajectories are becoming more varied and less predictable. The restructuring of the labour market, the extension of the maturity gap (the period of dependence of young adults on the family) and arguably, the more limited opportunities to become an independent adult are all changes influencing relationships with family and friends, educational opportunities and choices, labour market participation, leisure activities and lifestyles. It is not only the developed countries that are facing this situation even in developing countries as well there are new pressures on young people undergoing the transition from childhood to independence. Rapid population growth, the unavailability of housing and support services, poverty, unemployment and underemployment among youth, the decline in the authority of local communities, overcrowding in poor urban areas, the disintegration of the family, and ineffective educational systems are some of the pressures young people must deal with.

Youth nowadays, regardless of gender, social origin or country of residence, are subject to individual risks but are also being presented with new individual opportunities—some beneficial and some potentially harmful. Quite often, advantage is being taken of illegal opportunities as young people commit various offences, become addicted to drugs and use violence against their peers.

The majority of studies and programmes dealing with juvenile delinquency mainly focus on youth as offenders. However, adolescents are also victims of criminal or delinquent acts. The continuous threat of victimization is having a deleterious impact on the socialization of young men and on their internalization of the norms and values of the larger society. According to data on crimes registered by the police, more than 80 per cent of all the violent incidents are not reported by the victims. Information about the victims allows conclusions to be drawn about the offenders as well. Results of self-report studies indicate that an overwhelming majority of those who participate in violence against young people are about the same age and gender as their victims; in most cases the offenders are males acting in groups. Those most likely to be on the receiving end of violence are between the ages of 16 and 19 years, with 91 in every 1,000 in this group becoming victims of some form of crime.
Surveys have shown that men are more likely than women to become victims. In the United States, 105 in every 1,000 men become crime victims, compared with 80 per 1,000 women. Men are 2.5 times more likely to be victims of aggravated assault. Older people are less often affected and crimes are usually committed by representatives of the same age groups to which the victims belong.

Studies have shown that basically neglected children and juveniles fall an easy prey to criminality. As long ago as 1895, the Gladstone Committee in UK gave official recognition and strong support to the view that the juvenile delinquent of today is the hardened and persistent adult criminal of tomorrow. By this hypothesis, if juvenile delinquency could be understood and possibly prevented, a large portion of adult criminality could be pre-empted and checked.

Of late, the average age for first arrest has dropped significantly, and younger boys and girls are committing crimes. Between 60-80 per cent of adolescents and pre-adolescents engage in some form of juvenile offense (Steinberg, L., 2008). These can range from status offenses (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 of concern. However, juvenile offending can be considered normative adolescent behaviour. This is because most teens tend to offend by committing non-violent crimes, only once or a few times and only during adolescence. It is when adolescents offend repeatedly or violently that their offending is likely to continue beyond adolescence, and become increasingly violent. It is also likely that if this is the case, they began offending and displaying antisocial behaviour even before reaching adolescence (Moffitt, 2006).

Crime committed by children and adolescents under statutory age is called juvenile delinquency. A juvenile delinquent is one who is a minor with major problems. The age limit and also the meaning of delinquency vary in most countries, but it is always below 18 years. Generally, any person between the ages 7 to 18, who violates the law, is considered as delinquent and persons above this age are considered as criminals. The incidence of delinquency is rising amongst the girls also. Juvenile delinquency is one of the most serious problems of our times. It basically means anti-social behaviour. The different forms of delinquent behaviour include loitering, loafing, pick-pocketing, stealing, gambling, sexual offences like eve teasing, etc. The
rate of delinquency is rising very fast all over the world and one of the main suspected reasons could be the negligence of parents.

### 1.1.1 Signs and Symptoms of Delinquent Behaviour

The emergence of behaviour problems can be detected as early as age two. Opposition to parents and aggressive behaviour with other children are natural developmental pathways for toddlers. These oppositional behaviours typically decline between the ages of 3 and 6 as children acquire the ability to use appropriate speech, and this ability facilitates the expression of needs and feelings as well as the resolution of conflict. However failure to develop complementary behaviours such as honesty non-aggression and respect for authority figures may lead to problematic behaviors such as the following:

- Authority Conflict Stubborn and defiant behaviour disobedience to parents and other authority figures skipping classes or not attending school at all and running away from home as a means of avoiding rules and regulations.
- Covert Acts Lying shoplifting property damage (including vandalism and fire setting) or more serious forms of property damage such as burglary.
- Overt acts annoying and bullying others by physical fighting, gang fighting and other violent behaviors such as attacking others with a weapon and sexual assault. If fear that the child may be heading down a path towards delinquency or is at a high risk for developing these behaviors then keep in mind that prevention is the best solution.

### 1.2 CAUSES OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

The intensity and severity of juvenile offences are generally determined by the social, economic and cultural conditions prevailing in a country. There is an ample evidence of a universal increase in juvenile crime taking place concurrently with economic decline, especially in the poor districts of large cities. In many cases street children later become young offenders, having already encountered violence in their immediate social environment as either witnesses or victims of violent acts. The educational attainments of this group are rather low as a rule, basic social experience acquired in the family is too often insufficient, and the socio-economic environment is determined by poverty and under- or unemployment.
The causes of and conditions for juvenile crime are usually found at each level of the social structure, including society as a whole, social institutions, social groups and organizations, and interpersonal relations. Juveniles’ choice of delinquent careers and the consequent perpetuation of delinquency are fostered by a wide range of factors, the most important of which are described below.

1.2.1 Economic and social factors

Juvenile delinquency is driven by the negative consequences of social and economic development, in particular economic crises, political instability, and the weakening of major institutions (including the State, systems of public education and public assistance, and the family). Socio-economic instability is often linked to persistent and rampant unemployment and low incomes among the young, which can increase the likelihood of their involvement in criminal activity.

1.2.2 Cultural factors

Delinquent behaviour often occurs in social settings in which the norms for acceptable behaviour have broken down. Under such circumstances many of the common rules that deter people from committing socially unacceptable acts may lose their relevance for some members of society. They respond to the traumatizing and destructive changes in the social reality by engaging in rebellious, deviant or even criminal activities. An example of such a setting would be the modernization of traditional societies and the accompanying changes wrought by the application of new technologies; shifts of this magnitude affect the types and organization of labour activity, social characteristics, lifestyles and living arrangements, and these changes, in turn, affect authority structures, forms of obedience, and modes of political participation—even going so far as to influence perceptions of reality.

In both the developed and developing countries, consumer standards created by the media are considerably beyond the capacity of most families to achieve. Nevertheless, these ideals become a virtual reality for many young people, some of whom will go to great lengths to maintain a lifestyle they cannot afford. Because not all population groups have access to the necessary resources, including education, professional training, satisfactory employment and income, health services and adequate housing, there are those who are unable to achieve their goals by legal
means. The contradiction between idealized and socially approved goals and the sometimes limited real-life opportunities to achieve them legally creates a sense of frustration in many young people. A criminal career becomes one form of addressing this contradiction. One of the reasons for delinquent behaviour is therefore an excessive focus on proposed goals (achieving success) coupled with insufficient means to achieve them.

The likelihood of deviant acts occurring in this context depends in many respects not only on the unavailability of legal opportunities but also on the level of access to illegal opportunities. Some juveniles, cognizant of the limitations imposed by legal behaviour, come under the influence of adult criminals. Many young people retreat into the confines of their own groups and resort to drug use for psychological or emotional escape. The use of alcohol and illegal drugs by juveniles is one cause of delinquency, as they are often compelled to commit crimes (usually theft) to obtain the cash needed to support their substance use.

1.2.3 Urbanization

Geographical analysis suggests that countries with more urbanized populations have higher registered crime rates than do those with strong rural lifestyles and communities. This may be attributable to the differences in social control and social cohesion. Rural groupings rely mainly on family and community control as a means of dealing with antisocial behaviour and exhibit markedly lower crime rates. Urban industrialized societies tend to resort to formal legal and judicial measures, an impersonal approach that appears to be linked to higher crime rates. Cultural and institutional differences are such that responses to the same offence may vary widely from one country to another.

The ongoing process of urbanization in developing countries is contributing to juvenile involvement in criminal behaviour. The basic features of the urban environment foster the development of new forms of social behaviour deriving mainly from the weakening of primary social relations and control, increasing reliance on the media at the expense of informal communication, and the tendency towards anonymity. These patterns are generated by the higher population density, degree of heterogeneity and numbers of people found in urban contexts.
1.2.4 Family

Generally children who receive adequate parental supervision are less likely to engage in criminal activities. Dysfunctional family settings-characterized by conflict, inadequate parental control, weak internal linkages and integration, and pre-mature autonomy—are closely associated with juvenile delinquency. Children in disadvantaged families that have few opportunities for legitimate employment and face a higher risk of social exclusion are overrepresented among offenders. The plight of ethnic minorities and migrants, including displaced persons and refugees in certain parts of the world, is especially distressing. The countries in transition are facing particular challenges in this respect, with the associated insecurity and turmoil contributing to an increase in the numbers of children and juveniles neglected by their parents and suffering abuse and violence at home.

The family as a social institution is currently undergoing substantial changes; its form is diversifying with, for example, the increase in one-parent families and non-marital unions. The absence of fathers in many low-income families can lead boys to seek patterns of masculinity in delinquent groups of peers. These groups in many respects substitute for the family, define male roles, and contribute to the acquisition of such attributes as cruelty, strength, excitability and anxiety.

The importance of family well-being is becoming increasingly recognized. Success in school depends greatly on whether parents have the capacity to provide their children with “starting” opportunities (including the resources to buy books and manuals and pay for studies). Adolescents from low-income families often feel excluded. To raise their self-esteem and improve their status they may choose to join a juvenile delinquent group. These groups provide equal opportunities to everyone, favourably distinguishing themselves from school and family, where positions of authority are occupied by adults.

When young people are exposed to the influence of adult offenders they have the opportunity to study delinquent behaviour, and the possibility of their engaging in adult crime becomes more real. The “criminalization” of the family also has an impact on the choice of delinquent trajectories. A study carried out in prisons in the United States reveals that families involved in criminal activities tend to push their younger
members towards violating the law. More than two-thirds of those interviewed had relatives who were incarcerated for 25 per cent it was a father and for another 25 per cent a brother or sister.

1.2.5 Migration

Because immigrants often exist in the margins of society and the economy and have little chance of success in the framework of the existing legal order, they often seek comfort in their own environment and culture. Differences in norms and values and the varying degrees of acceptability of some acts in different ethnic subcultures result in cultural conflicts, which are one of the main sources of criminal behaviour. Native urban populations tend to perceive immigrants as obvious deviants.

1.2.6 The media

Television and movies have popularized the “cult of heroes”, which promotes justice through the physical elimination of enemies. Many researchers have concluded that young people who watch violence tend to behave more aggressively or violently, particularly when provoked. This is mainly characteristic of 8- to 12-year-old boys, who are more vulnerable to such influences. Media bring an individual to violence in three ways. First, movies that demonstrate violent acts excite spectators, and the aggressive energy can then be transferred to everyday life, pushing an individual to engage in physical activity on the streets. This type of influence is temporary, lasting from several hours to several days. Second, television can portray ordinary daily violence committed by parents or peers (the imposition of penalties for failing to study or for violations of certain rules or norms of conduct). It is impossible to find television shows that do not portray such patterns of violence, because viewer approval of this type of programming has ensured its perpetuation. As a result, children are continually exposed to the use of violence in different situations-and the number of violent acts on television appears to be increasing. Third, violence depicted in the media is unreal and has a surrealistic quality; wounds bleed less and the real pain and agony resulting from violent actions are very rarely shown, so the consequences of violent behaviour often seem negligible. Over time, television causes a shift in the system of human values and indirectly leads children to view violence as a desirable and even courageous way of reestablishing justice. The American
Psychological Association has reviewed the evidence and concluded that television violence accounts for about 10 per cent of aggressive behaviour among children.

1.2.7 Exclusion

The growing gap between the rich and the poor has led to the emergence of “unwanted others”. The exclusion of some people is gradually increasing with the accumulation of obstacles, ruptured social ties, unemployment and identity crises. Welfare systems that have provided relief but have not eliminated the humble socio-economic position of certain groups, together with the increased dependence of low-income families on social security services, have contributed to the development of a “new poor” class in many places.

The symbolic exclusion from society of juveniles who have committed even minor offences has important implications for the development of delinquent careers. Studies show that the act of labelling may lead to the self-adoption of a delinquent image, which later results in delinquent activity.

1.2.8 Peer influence

Youth policies seldom reflect an understanding of the role of the peer group as an institution of socialization. Membership in a delinquent gang, like membership in any other natural grouping, can be part of the process of becoming an adult. Through such primary associations, an individual acquires a sense of safety and security, develops knowledge of social interaction, and can demonstrate such qualities as loyalty or leadership. In “adult” society, factors such as social status, private welfare, race and ethnicity are of great value; however, all members of adolescent groups are essentially in an equal position and have similar opportunities for advancement in the hierarchical structure. In these groups well-being depends wholly on personal qualities such as strength, will and discipline. Quite often delinquent groups can counterbalance or compensate for the imperfections of family and school. A number of studies have shown that juvenile gang members consider their group a family. For adolescents constantly facing violence, belonging to a gang can provide protection within the neighbourhood. In some areas those who are not involved in gangs continually face the threat of assault, oppression, harassment or extortion on the street or at school.
1.2.9 Delinquent identities

In identifying the causes of criminal behaviour, it is immensely important to determine which factors contribute to a delinquent identity and why some adolescents who adopt a delinquent image do not discard that image in the process of becoming an adult. Delinquent identity is quite complex and is, in fact, an overlay of several identities linked to delinquency itself and to a person’s ethnicity, race, class and gender. Delinquent identity is always constructed as an alternative to the conventional identity of the larger society. Violence and conflict are necessary elements in the construction of group and delinquent identities. The foundations of group identity and activity are established and strengthened through the maintenance of conflict relations with other juvenile groups and society as a whole. Violence serves the function of integrating members into a group, reinforcing their sense of identity, and thereby hastening the process of group adaptation to the local environment.

Other factors which may provide motivation for joining a gang are the possibilities of economic and social advancement. In many socio-cultural contexts, the delinquent way of life has been romanticized to a certain degree and joining a gang is one of the few channels of social mobility available for disadvantaged youth. According to one opinion, urban youth gangs have a stabilizing effect on communities characterized by a lack of economic and social opportunities.

1.2.10 Offenders and victims

Criminal activity is strongly associated with a victim’s behaviour. A victim’s reaction can sometimes provoke an offender, but “appropriate” behaviour may prevent a criminal act or at least minimize its impact. According to scientific literature, the likelihood of becoming a victim is related to the characteristics or qualities of a person, a social role or a social situation that provoke or facilitate criminal behaviour. The personal characteristics such as individual or family status, financial prosperity, and safety, as well as logistical characteristics such as the time and place in which a confrontation occurs, can also determine the extent of victimization.

People may become accidental victims, as assault is often preceded by heated exchanges. According to the classification of psychological types there are three
typical adolescent victims of violence: accidental victims; people disposed to become victims; and “inborn” victims. Studies have shown that in the majority of cases that result in bodily harm, the offender and his victim are acquainted with one another and may be spouses, relatives or friends; this is true for 80 per cent of murders and 70 per cent of sexual crimes.

Causes for juvenile delinquency have been pointed out by different criminologists in different ways. Cohen in his major work “Delinquent Boys” has claimed that crime committed by the young could be explained by the sub cultural values of the peer grouping and particularly he has emphasised on the problem arising from the middle class values. On the other hand, Cloward and Ohlin attached more importance to the criminality of the lower-class juvenile, because it illustrates the existence of gangs or subcultures which support and approve of the actions of the delinquent. Additionally, psychological researches on teen-age violence brought into light that reasons for violence may be birth complications, poverty, anti-social parents, poor parenting, aggression, academic failure, psychological problems, alienation from home, school etc. However, so far the Indian society is concerned, the chief causes for this unprecedented increase in juvenile delinquency may be as:

- Although increasing industrial and economic growth in India has resulted into urbanization, it has invited various novel problems like housing, slum dwelling, overcrowding, lack of parental control and family disintegration and so on. Moreover, temptation for modern luxuries of life lures young people to resort to wrongful means in order to satisfy their wants. Such factors cumulatively lead to an enormous increase in juvenile delinquency in urban areas of the country.

- Disintegrated family system and laxity in parental control over children is also another reason for it. The natural consequences of broken homes, lack of parental control, absence of security and want of love and affection towards children are contributing factors.

- Another very crucial cause of the said problem is unprecedented increase in divorce cases and myriad matrimonial disputes. Undue discrimination amongst children or step-motherly treatment also makes an adverse psychological effect on youngsters. Feeling of being neglected may make a
child to go astray and this furnishes a soothing ground for juvenile
delinquency. Hence, children need affection, protection and also guidance at
home where they must be handled carefully. Indeed, greater attention should
be given on preventing them from indulging into criminality rather than curing
them after committing the offence. The parents and other elderly members of
the family must keep an eye on the proper development of the personality of
their children and should try to provide adequate and equal opportunities to
them. Proper education and training and childcare can make it possible.

• Certain biological factors are also responsible for creating delinquent
behaviour amongst juveniles. Early psychological maturity and low
intelligence carry a major problem especially to the young Indian girls.
Though Indian girls attain puberty mostly at the age of twelve or thirteen, they
still remain incapable of conceiving about the realities of life. Consequently,
they fall a very easy prey to sex involvements for momentary pleasure
without, however, realizing the seriousness of the result of the act. So, it is dire
necessary for the parents to unhesitatingly explain to their children, especially
the girls, the probable consequences of prohibited sex indulgences which
might serve a timely warning to them. Special care should also be taken in
order to ensure effective protection to girls and child pornography.

• The rapidly changing patterns of modern lifestyle have created difficulty
among young people regarding adjustment to new ways of life. They are
seriously confronted with the problem of culture conflict and usually fail to
differentiate between what is right and what is wrong that may so easily drive
them to commit crime.

• Migration of deserted and destitute boys to slums brings them closely in
contact with anti-social elements caring on prostitution, smuggling of liquor or
narcotic drugs and bootlegging. Hence, in this way they jump into the clutches
of crime without even knowing what they are doing is prohibited by law.

• In a country like India poverty is one of the potential causes behind juvenile
delinquency. Parent’s failure in providing basic necessities of life such as food
and clothing drive to their children to earn money by easier means, no matter
what the way is that they will have to choose.
• Apart from these, all illiteracy, child labour, squalor etc. are other contributing factors aggravating juvenile delinquency.

• It must be stated here that the nature of delinquency among male juveniles and those of girls are not, however, of same kind. Boys are found to be more prone to offences such as theft, pick-pocketing, gambling, eve-teasing, obscenity, cruelty, mischief etc. while girls more commonly are discovered in sex-involvements, running away from home, truancy and shop lifting. Furthermore, delinquency rate in respect of boys is much higher than those of girls, as boys by nature are more adventurous and easily get aggressive as compared to girls.

1.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Nearly all cultures possess a transition phase from childhood into adulthood. As the world changed, so did the transition into adulthood. Whereas before, in most now industrialized countries, this transition ranged from brief to almost non-existent, it is now a significant part of a person's development. It is known now as adolescence. In fact, the popular term "teenager" wasn’t coined until the 1950s to describe this new group of people living through adolescence. It is believed that this new, drawn-out transition from childhood into adulthood that is common in the western world has left many adolescents in a sort-of limbo where they must seek to define their identity and place in the world, and delinquency may provide a way to do that. This is supported by the fact that crime is committed disproportionately by those aged between fifteen and twenty-five (Walklate, S., 2003). However, contrary to popular belief, it is highly seldom for teenagers to become spontaneously aggressive, antisocial or violent simply with the onset of adolescence. Also, although there is a high percentage of offending among all teenagers, the majority of offenses which violate the law are one-time occurrences and most often non-violent. Only about 5-10 per cent of adolescents commit violent crimes. In the United States, one-third of all of suspects arrested for violent crimes are under eighteen (Piquero, 2003). The high rates of juvenile delinquency often receive great attention from the news media and politicians. The level, amounts and types of delinquency are used by commentators as an indicator of the general state of morality and law and order in a country and consequently juvenile delinquency can be a source of ‘moral panics’ (Eadie, T. and Morley, R., 2003).
1.4 TYPES OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Juvenile delinquency or offending can be separated into three categories: delinquency, crimes committed by minors which are dealt with by the juvenile courts and justice system; criminal behaviour, crimes dealt with by the criminal justice system, and status offenses, offenses which are only classified as such because one is a minor, such as truancy, also dealt with by the juvenile courts (Woolard and Scott, 2009). According to the developmental research, there are two different types of offenders that emerge in adolescence. One is the repeat offender, referred to as the life-course-persistent offender, who begins offending or showing antisocial/aggressive behaviour in adolescence (or even childhood) and continues into adulthood; and the age specific offender, referred to as the adolescence-limited offender, for whom juvenile offending or delinquency begins and ends during their period of adolescence. Because, most of the teenagers tend to show some form of anti social, aggressive and delinquent behaviour during the adolescence. It is immensely important to account for these behaviours in childhood, in order to determine whether they will be life-course-persistent offenders, or adolescents-limited offenders. Although adolescent-limited offenders tend to drop all criminal activity once they enter into adulthood and show less pathology than life-course-persistent offenders, they still show more mental health, substance abuse and finance problems, both in adolescence and adulthood, than those who were never delinquent (Aguilar, Sroufe, Egeland and Carlson, 2000).

1.4.1 Sex differences

Juvenile offending is disproportionately (Department of Justice, 2011) committed by young men. Feminist theorists and others have examined why this is the case. The masculinity may make young men more likely to offend. Being tough, powerful, aggressive, daring and competitive becomes a way for young men to assert and express their masculinity (Brown, S., 1998). Acting out these ideals may make young men more likely to engage in antisocial and criminal behaviour. Also, the way young men are treated by others, because of their masculinity, may reinforce aggressive traits and behaviours and make them more susceptible to offending.

Alternatively, young men may actually be naturally more aggressive, daring and more prone to risk-taking. According to a study led by Florida State University criminologist, Kevin M. Beaver, adolescent males who possess a certain type of
variation in a specific gene are more likely to flock to delinquent peers. The study, which appears in the September 2008 issue of the Journal of Genetic Psychology, is the first to establish a statistically significant association between an affinity for antisocial peer groups and a particular variation (called the 10-repeat allele) of the dopamine transporter gene (DAT1) (Peers Newswise, 2008).

Of late, there has also been a bridging of the gap between sex differences concerning juvenile delinquency. While it is still more common for males to offend than females, the ratio of arrests by sex is one third of what it was 20 years ago (at 2.5 to 1 today) (Steffensmeier, Schawrtz, Zhong and Ackerman, 2005). This is most likely due to the combined effects of more females being arrested (for offenses which did not get them arrested before), and a drop in male offenses (Cauffman, 2008).

### 1.4.2 Racial differences

There is also a significant skew in the racial statistics for juvenile offenders. When considering these statistics, which state that Black and Latino teens are more likely to commit juvenile offenses it is important to keep the following in mind: poverty or low socio-economic status are large predictors of low parental monitoring, harsh parenting and association with deviant peer groups, all of which are in turn associated with juvenile offending. The majority of adolescents who live in poverty are racial minorities (Farrington, 2002). Also, minorities who offend, even as adolescents, are more likely to be arrested and punished more harshly by the law if caught. Particularly concerning a non-violent crime and when compared to white adolescents. While poor minorities are more likely to commit violent crimes, one third of affluent teens report committing violent crimes.

Ethnic minority status has been included as a risk factor of psychosocial maladaptation in several studies (Cauffman, Piquero, Kimonis, Steinberg and Chassin, 2007) and represents a relative social disadvantage placed on these individuals. Though the relation between delinquency and race is complex and may be explained by other contextual risk variables the total arrest rate for black juveniles aged 10–17 is more than twice that as of white juveniles (National Center for Juvenile Justice, 2008).
1.4.3 Risk factors

The two largest predictors of juvenile delinquency are

- parenting style, with the two styles most likely to predict delinquency being
- "permissive" parenting, characterized by a lack of consequence-based discipline and encompassing two subtypes known as
- "neglectful" parenting, characterized by a lack of monitoring and thus of knowledge of the child's activities and
- "indulgent" parenting, characterized by affirmative enablement of misbehaviour
- "authoritarian" parenting, characterized by harsh discipline and refusal to justify discipline on any basis other than "because I said so";
- peer group association, particularly with antisocial peer groups, as is more likely when adolescents are left unsupervised.
- Other factors that may lead a teenager into juvenile delinquency including poor or low socio-economic status, poor school readiness/performance and/or failure, peer rejection, hyperactivity, or attention deficit disorder (ADHD).

There may also be biological factors, such as high levels of serotonin, giving them a difficult temper and poor self-regulation, and a lower resting heart rate, which may lead to fearlessness. Most of these tend to be influenced by a mix of both genetic and environmental factors.

1.4.3.1 Individual risk factors

Individual psychological or behavioural risk factors, which may make offending more likely, include low intelligence, impulsiveness or the inability to delay gratification, aggression, empathy and restlessness. Other risk factors which may be evident during childhood and adolescence include, aggressive or troublesome behaviour, language delays or impairments, lack of emotional control (learning to control one's anger) and cruelty to animals(Bartol, Curt and Bartol, Anne, 2009).

Children with low intelligence are more likely to do badly in school. This may increase the chances of offending because low educational attainment, a low attachment to school and low educational aspirations are all risk factors for offending in themselves (Journalists Resource.org and Kirk, David S.; Sampson, Robert J.,
Children who perform poorly at school are also more likely to be truant and the status offense of truancy is linked to further offending. Impulsiveness and impassiveness is seen by some as the key aspect of a child's personality that predicts offending. However, it is not clear whether these aspects of personality are a result of “deficits in the executive functions of the brain” or a result of parental influences or other social factors (Graham, J. and Bowling, B., 1995). In any event, studies of adolescent development show that teenagers are more prone to risk-taking, which may explain the high disproportionate rate of offending among adolescents.

1.4.4 Family environment and peer influence

Family factors which may have an influence on offending include the level of parental supervision, the way parents discipline a child, particularly harsh punishment, parental conflict or separation, criminal parents or siblings, parental abuse or neglect, and the quality of the parent-child relationship. Children brought up by lone parents are more likely to start offending than those who live with two natural parents. It is also more likely that children of single parents may live in poverty, which is strongly associated with juvenile delinquency. However once the attachment a child feels towards their parent(s) and the level of parental supervision are taken into account, children in single parent families are no more likely to offend than others. Conflict between children and their parents is also much more closely linked to offending than being raised by a lone parent.

If children have low parental supervision they are much more likely to offend. Many studies have found a strong correlation between a lack of supervision and offending, and it appears to be the most important family influence on offending. When parents commonly do not know where their children are, what their activities are or who their friends are, children are more likely to play truant from school and have delinquent friends, each of which are linked to offending. The lack of supervision is also connected to poor relationships between children and parents. Children who are often in conflict with their parents may be less willing to discuss their activities with them.

Adolescents with criminal siblings are only more likely to be influenced by their siblings and also become delinquent, if the sibling is older, of the same
sex/gender and warm. Cases where a younger criminal sibling influences an older one are rare. An aggressive and non-loving/warm sibling is less likely to influence a younger sibling in the direction of delinquency, if anything, the more strained the relationship between the siblings, the less they will want to be like, and/or influence each other.

Peer rejection in childhood is also a large predictor of juvenile delinquency. Although children are rejected by peers for many reasons, it is often the case that they are rejected due to violent or aggressive behaviour. These rejections affect the child's ability to be socialized properly, which can abate their aggressive tendencies, and often leads them to gravitate towards anti-social peer groups. This association often leads to the promotion of violent, aggressive and deviant behaviour. "The impact of deviant peer group influences on the crystallization of an antisocial developmental trajectory has been solidly documented." Aggressive adolescents who have been rejected by peers are also more likely to have a "hostile attribution bias" which leads people to interpret the actions of others (whether they be hostile or not) as purposefully hostile and aggressive towards them. This often leads to an impulsive and aggressive reaction (Dodge, 2003). Hostile attribution bias however, can appear at any age during development and often lasts throughout a person’s life. Children resulting from unintended pregnancies are more likely to exhibit delinquent behaviour (Monea, J. and Thomas, A., 2011). They also have lower mother-child relationship quality (Family Planning - Healthy People 2020).

1.5 CRIME THEORIES APPLICABLE TO JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

There are a multitude of different theories on the causes of crime, most if not all of are applicable to the causes of juvenile delinquency.

1.5.1 Rational choice

Classical criminology stresses that causes of crime lie within the individual offender, rather than in their external environment. According to classicists, offenders are motivated by rational self-interest, and the importance of free will and personal responsibility is emphasised. Rational choice theory is the clearest example of this idea.
1.5.2 Social disorganization

Current positivist approaches generally focus on the culture. A type of criminological theory attributing variation in crime and delinquency over time and among territories to the absence or breakdown of communal institutions (e.g. family, school, church and social groups.) and communal relationships that traditionally encouraged cooperative relationships among people.

1.5.3 Strain

Strain theory is associated mainly with the work of Robert Merton. He felt that there are institutionalized paths to success in society. Strain theory holds that crime is copiously caused by the difficulty those in poverty have in achieving socially valued goals by legitimate means. As those with, for instance, poor educational attainment has difficulty achieving wealth and status by securing well paid employment, they are more likely to use criminal means to obtain these goals (Brown, S., 1998). Merton's suggests five adaptations to this dilemma:

1. *Innovation*: individuals who accept socially approved goals, but not necessarily the socially approved means.
2. *Retreatism*: those who reject socially approved goals and the means for acquiring them.
3. *Ritualism*: those who buy into a system of socially approved means, but lose sight of the goals. Merton believed that drug users are in this category.
4. *Conformity*: those who conform to the system's means and goals.
5. *Rebellion*: people who negate socially approved goals and means by creating a new system of acceptable goals and means.

A difficulty with strain theory is that it does not explore why children of low-income families would have poor educational attainment in the first place. More importantly is the fact that much youth crime does not have an economic motivation. Strain theory fails to explain violent crime, the type of youth crime which causes most anxiety to the public.
1.5.6 Differential association

The theory of Differential association also deals with young people in a group context and looks at how peer pressure and the existence of gangs could lead them into crime. It suggests young people are motivated to commit crimes by delinquent peers and learn criminal skills from them. The diminished influence of peers after men marry has also been cited as a factor in desisting from offending. There is strong evidence that young people with criminal friends are more likely to commit crimes themselves. However, it may be the case that offenders prefer to associate with one another, rather than delinquent peers causing someone to start offending. Furthermore there an enigma of how the delinquent peer group became delinquent initially.

1.5.7 Labelling

Labelling theory is a concept within Criminology that aims to explain deviant behaviour from the social context rather than looking at the individuals themselves. It is part of interactionism criminology that states that once young people have been labelled as criminal they are more likely to offend. The idea is that once labelled as deviant, a young person may accept that role and be more likely to associate with others who have been similarly labelled. Labelling theorists say that male children from poor families are more likely to be labelled deviant and that this may partially explain why there are more lower-class young male offenders.

1.5.8 Social control

Social control theory enunciates that exploiting the process of socialization and social learning builds self-control and can reduce the inclination to indulge in behaviour recognized as antisocial. The four types of control can help prevent juvenile delinquency are:

Direct by which punishment is threatened or applied for wrongful behaviour, and compliance is rewarded by parents, family and authority figures. Internal by which a youth refrains from delinquency through the conscience or superego. Indirect by identification with those who influence behaviour, say because his or her delinquent act might cause pain and disappointment to parents and others with whom he or she has close relationships. Control through needs satisfaction, i.e. if all an individual's needs are met, there is no point in criminal activity.
Delinquency prevention is the broad term for all efforts aimed at preventing youth from becoming involved in criminal or other antisocial activity. Because, the development of delinquency in youth is influenced by numerous factors, prevention efforts need to be comprehensive in ambit. Prevention services may include activities such as substance abuse education and treatment, family counselling, youth mentoring, parenting education, educational support and youth sheltering. Increasing availability and use of family planning services, including education and contraceptives helps to reduce unintended pregnancy and unwanted births, which are risk factors for delinquency (Hare, 1991).

It has been noted that often interventions may leave at-risk children worse off than if there had never been an intervention. This is due primarily to the fact that placing large groups at risk children together only propagates delinquent or violent behaviour. "Bad" teens get together to talk about the "bad" things they've done, and it is received by their peers in a positive reinforcing light, promoting the behaviour among them. As mentioned earlier, peer group, particularly an association with antisocial peer groups, is one of the biggest predictors of delinquency and of life-course-persistent delinquency. The most efficient interventions are those which not only separate at-risk teens from anti-social peers, and place them instead with pro-social ones but also simultaneously improve their home environment by training parents with appropriate parenting styles (Holmes, S.E., James, R.S. and Javad, K., 2001). Parenting style is the other large predictor of juvenile delinquency.

Following are some of the suggestions for the prevention of juvenile delinquency:

1. Accept the delinquent as a person in his own right, and give affection and security.
2. Watch for the signs of maladjustment; early treatment may prevent this maladjustment from taking a delinquent trend.
3. Providing the child with a variety of experiences like music and dance, art and craft etc. can serve the purpose.
4. Attempt to build-up a stable system of moral and social values.
5. Reject the delinquent behaviour without rejecting the delinquent.
6. Encourage the child to talk about and admit the existence of anti-social
tendencies.

7. Change the conditions of home, school and community that seem to give rise
to such behaviour.

8. Give a potential delinquent some post of special responsibility, such as task of
preventing other children from committing delinquent acts.

9. Once a delinquent act has been detected, never pass it over. Make clear to the
child that he has done something wrong, but do not punish him harshly.

10. Minimize the chances of a child’s going wrong by putting the smallest
possible number of temptations in his way.

Thus, parents and the other family members, and the teachers in school can do
a lot in the prevention and controlling of juvenile delinquency.

**1.7 CRITIQUE OF RISK FACTOR RESEARCH**

Two UK academics, Stephen Case and Kevin Haines, among others, criticized
risk factor research in their academic papers and a comprehensive polemic text,
*Understanding Youth Offending: Risk Factor Research, Policy and Practice*. The
robustness and validity of much risk factor research is criticized for:

**1.7.1 Reductionism**

Over-simplifying complex experiences and circumstances by converting them
to simple quantities, relying on a psychosocial focus whilst neglecting potential socio-
structural and political influences;

**1.7.2 Determinism**

Characterising young people as passive victims of risk experiences with no
ability to construct negotiate or resist risk;

**1.7.3 Imputation**

Assuming that risk factors and definitions of offending are homogenous across
countries and cultures, assuming that statistical correlations between risk factors and
offending actually represent causal relationships, assuming that risk factors apply to
individuals on the basis of aggregated data.
1.7.4 Juvenile sex crimes

The examples and perspective in this section deal primarily with USA and do not represent a worldwide view of the subject.

Juveniles who commit sexual crimes refer to individuals adjudicated in a criminal court for a sexual crime (DeLisi, Matt, 2005). Sex crimes are defined as sexually abusive behaviour committed by a person under the age of 18 that is perpetrated “against the victim’s will, without consent and in an aggressive, exploitative, manipulative or threatening manner” (Marvin, Wolfgang, Robert M. Figlio and Thorsten Sellin, 1972). It is utmost important to utilize appropriate terminology for juvenile sex offenders. Harsh and inappropriate expressions include terms such as “pedophile, child molester, predator, perpetrator and mini-perp”. These terms have quite often been associated with this group, regardless of the youth’s age, diagnosis, cognitive abilities or developmental stage. Using appropriate expressions can facilitate a more accurate depiction of juvenile sex offenders and may decrease the subsequent aversive psychological effects from using such labels (Raine, A., 1993).

1.8 INTERNATIONAL STATUS OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Examining prevalence data and the characteristics of juvenile sex offenders is a fundamental component to obtain a precise understanding of this heterogeneous group. With mandatory reporting laws in place, it became a prime necessity for providers to report any incidents of disclosed sexual abuse. Longo and Prescott indicate that juveniles commit approximately 30-60% of all child sexual abuse. The Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Reports indicate that in 2008 youth under the age of 18 accounted for 16.7% of forcible rapes and 20.61% of other sexual offenses (Dishion & McCord, 1999). Center for Sex Offender Management indicates that approximately one-fifth of all rapes and one-half of all sexual child molestation can be accounted for by juveniles (Barbaree, H. E. and Marshall, W. L., 2008).

Official record data

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention indicates that 15 per cent of juvenile arrests occurred for rape in 2006 and 12 per cent were clearance (resolved by an arrest). The total number of juvenile arrests in 2006 for
forcible rape was 3,610 with 2 per cent being female and 36 per cent being under the age of 15 years old. This trend has declined throughout the years with forcible rape from 1997-2006 being 30 per cent and from 2005-2006 being 10 per cent (Ryan, G., Lane, S., 1997). The OJJDP reports that the juvenile arrest rate for forcible rape increased from the early 1980s through the 1990s and at that time it fell again. The OJJDP also reported that the total number of juvenile arrests in 2006 for sex offenses (other than forcible rape) was 15,900 with 10% being female and 47% being under the age of 15. There was again a decrease with the trend throughout the years with sex offenses from 1997-2006 being 16% and from 2005-2006 being 9 per cent (Longo, R. E., Prescott, D.S., 2006).

Barbaree and Marshall indicate that juvenile males contribute to the majority of sex crimes, with 2-4 per cent of adolescent males having reported committing sexually assaultive behaviour and 20 per cent of all rapes and 30-50 per cent of all child molestation are perpetrated by adolescent males. It is crystal clear that males are over-represented in this population. This is consistent with Ryan and Lane’s research indicating that males account for 91-93 per cent of the reported juvenile sex offenses. Righthand and Welch reported that females account for an estimated 2-11 per cent of incidents of sexual offending (Federal Bureau of Investigation Crime Report, 2009). In addition, it is reported by The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention that in the juvenile arrests during 2006, African American male youth were disproportionately arrested (34%) for forcible rape. Although while African
American male youth are being disproportionately arrested, the most common ethnic group comprising juvenile sex offenders is Caucasian males.

1.9 STATUS OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY IN INDIA

Juvenile delinquency is on rise as 33,887 minor boys and girls were arrested in 2011. Over 33,000 juveniles, mostly between the age group of 16 and 18, have been arrested for crimes like rape and murder across the country in 2011, the highest in last decade. According to a Home Ministry data, of the total of 33,387 juveniles apprehended in 2011, 21,657 were in the 16-18 age group, 11,019 of 12 and 16 age group and 1,211 between 7 and 12 age groups.

A total of 33,628 adolescents were held in 2001, 35,779 in 2002, 33,320 in 2003, 30,943 in 2004 and 32,681 in 2005 for their involvement in different criminal acts. Whereas, 32,145 such youngsters below 18 years of age were held in 2006, 34,527 in 2007, 34,507 in 2008, 33,642 in 2009 and 30,303 during 2010, the data said. The data also shows increasing cases of rape by juveniles. As many as 1,419 such cases were recorded in 2011 as compared to 399 cases in 2001. It is pertinent to mention that a juvenile and five others were arrested by Delhi Police for brutally raping and assaulting a 23-year-old girl in the national capital on December 16, 2011. The victim later succumbed to her injuries.

The cases of murder by juveniles have also shown a surge in last ten years. As many as 531 youngsters below the age of 18 were apprehended for murder in 2001 as against 888 arrests between January and December 2011. According to the data, 6,770 juveniles were arrested in Maharashtra, 5,794 in Madhya Pradesh, 2,692 in Chhattisgarh, 2,542 in Rajasthan and 2,510 in Gujarat among others in 2011. In the same year, a total of 2,474 adolescents were arrested in Andhra Pradesh, 2,083 in Tamil Nadu, 1,204 in Uttar Pradesh and 1,126 in Bihar, the data said. Whereas, 942 juveniles were arrested in Delhi, 159 in Chandigarh, 85 in Pondicherry, 22 in Dadar and Nagar Haveli, 16 in Dadar and Diu and eight in Andaman and Nicobar in 2011.

Of the total number of juveniles arrested in 2011 under different sections of IPC and Special and Local Laws (SLL), 6,122 were illiterates, 12,803 were primary pass outs, 10,519 were above primary and below matriculation qualified and 4,443 were metric and higher secondary qualified, the data said. A total of 27,577 juveniles,
who were held for criminal acts, were living with parents, 4,386 were living with guardians and 1,924 were homeless, the data said giving details of their family background (PTI : New Delhi, Sunday, Jan. 13, 2013, 14:57 hrs)

CONCLUSION

After a long study and research, the criminologists have come to conclusion that it is the clinical service which can serve the best to prevent youngsters from in criminal activities. The All India Crime Prevention Society in this regard (established in 1950) has been showing its commendable service to suppress juvenile delinquency in the whole national front. The organization has also received recognition from the United Nations.

Empirical researches in the field of juvenile delinquency suggest proper guidance and education and training in school as well as in home can provide the greatest help to eradicate indulgence of children and adolescents in criminality. Since parents and teachers play the primary role in the actual moulding of a child’s character; in this respect they can serve the best in reducing from occurring such pitiable incidence.

In fact, it has now been well accepted that it is circumstances and atmosphere which compel children to become delinquent and not their own will itself, thus this is not impossible to reform the anti-social attitude in them by reforming the unhealthy and unfavourable surroundings, and by providing sufficient suitable means. For the fulfillment of this purpose the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000 has been enacted with effect from 30th December, 2000. It aims to consolidate and amend the law relating to juveniles in conflict with law and children in need of care and protection, by providing for proper care, protection and treatment, by caring to their developmental needs, by adopting a child friendly approach in the adjudication and disposition of matters in the best interest of children, and for their ultimate rehabilitation through various juvenile institutions like children home, observation home, special home, shelter home along with a Juvenile Justice Board, Child Welfare Committee etc., established under the Act. However, it is not merely the establishment of an institution but the action of the institution which actually decides the actual progress and success of a particular purpose. The target can be
totally achieved only when planning will turn into action. Child is the most precious asset of the society, and so it is only the society itself who can save it from stepping forward into the heinous world of crime. Healthy parenting and healthy education can therefore transform a child into a responsible citizen of tomorrow.

The problem of juvenile delinquency is becoming more complicated and universal, and crime prevention programmes are either unequipped to deal with the present realities or do not exist. By and large, many developing countries have done little precious to deal with these problems, and international programmes are obviously insufficient. Developed countries are engaged in activities aimed at prevention of juvenile crime, but the overall effect of these programmes is rather weak because the mechanisms in place are often inadequate to address the existing situation. Above all, current efforts to fight juvenile delinquency are characterized by the lack of systematic action and the absence of task-oriented and effective social work with both offenders and victims, whether real or potential.