Chapter 3

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
A careful study of the literature relevant to this study published in the past 70 years has been made to assess the feasibility of the present study. However, no attempt is made to make this review exhaustive. It should be noted that though innumerable studies have been made on Juvenile delinquency, there are no enough specific studies made available on female Juvenile delinquency. This is a serious limitation on the tenant of literature. However, the books reviewed in this chapter provide a useful insight into the subject.

Bingham Anne (1923), a woman psychiatrist attached to New York - Probation and Protective Association, made a comprehensive and extremely competent study of 500 sexually delinquent girls and women. There is a fair amount of statistical details and a number of illustrative case histories. The case material did not consist of consecutive cases, but those which had been adequately worked up over a period of five years. The age range of these women was not stated, but their median age was seventeen and a quarter. The incidence of psychiatric abnormality was high. Only 28 per cent were regarded as normal. 24 per cent were feeble-minded and 13 per cent mentally subnormal, 26 per cent were diagnosed as constitutional psychopathic inferiors. The group also included 29 mentally ill-women. Their physical standards of health were also poor, with poor general development and nutrition. Sexual delinquencies had begun at an average age of 16, ranging 5 to 36. These women do not seem to have been sexually initiated very young. Only 23 were the first sexual 'delinquencies' ranging 5 to 11.
The home background of these women seems to have been very unfavourable in a high proportion of cases. More than three quarters came from immigrant families living in poverty.

Bingham emphasizes that delinquency is basically physiological and essentially individual reaction to an emotional situation. Physical and mental conditions, environment and heredity play a contributing role. The fundamental factor is the personality. Next significance came a low ethical sense.

In a study consisting of 123 boys and 74 girls, Cyril Burt (1925) compared them with a control group of 400 non-delinquent children. The ages of the girls ranged from 7 to 18 years. The aspects enquired into included hereditary conditions, poverty, defective family relations and defective family discipline, conditions outside the home at leisure and at work, physical development, mental deficiency, educational retardation, physical defects and disease, temperamental conditions, special abilities, sentiments, habit formation, neuroses and complexes.

The major conclusions arrived at are that one half of the total amount of delinquency was found in homes which were poor, or very poor, parental ill treatment, alcoholism, vicious conduct and neglect conduct were common
factors among family members. The study shows that the delinquent series are handicapped over a wide range of fields of observation, physically, temperamentally and intellectually too, in their environmental conditions within the home and without home.

Katharine Lumpkin (1931-2), in her study, striking finding was one of very low average intelligence. She reported on 252 correctional school girls, 11 years and older and under 18, being consecutive commitments over a two-and-a-half year period. Tests of intelligence were given at the school, and showed that the mode of the group was in the IQ 66-75 class. They were mainly sexual delinquents, and 40 per cent were venereally infected, but there was a history of truancy and stealing in many cases. There was a high proportion of broken homes, in 40 per cent broken by death, with a break from all causes in 63.5 per cent. Social defective tendencies were prominent in the families, with alcoholism, epilepsy, a tendency to cluster, in 11 per cent of the families one fourth of the members were delinquent.

A very curious relationship was found when the girls were divided into those with major and with minor offences. Unfavourable home factors were more prominent in the minor offenders.
Sullenger's (1934) in his study of 1145 Juvenile delinquents in Omaha indicates the importance of broken homes (death, divorce, or desertion among parents) as causative factor. Among girls the effect is more conspicuous.

Sen (1937), says that the broken home conditions are important factors in Juvenile delinquency.

In another study Bagot J.H. (1941) examined two samples, one of 1,263 boys and 95 girls in 1934, and another of 1,723 boys and 140 girls in 1936. The sample consisted of all cases. The sample of girls contained relatively few cases of sexual delinquency, and nine tenths of the girls had been convicted for larceny. Family reports and family histories made available to the courts formed the base of the report. These children came from large families. Bagot emphasizes the significance of defective discipline. He notes that where there are many children discipline tends to be weak. Especially when there are a number of younger children, and owing to the many calls on the parents, the older ones are often left to tend for themselves. It is definitely established that the delinquents are older than the younger members of the family. This applies even more strongly among girls than among boys.
Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck (1934), in their work studied the life histories of 500 women paroled from a reformatory in Massachusetts. The parole expired in the years 1921-25. Included in the study were, family history, history before commitment, history during parole, and follow up history for which the women were committed to the reformatory. They were predominantly sexual in nature. One fourth of the women had been sentenced for offences against public health and order and one fourth for property crimes. The women had mostly come from poverty-stricken families. Their future was inefficient and they were irregular workers, hardly able to support the large families. Moral standards in the home were poor. The parents in large measure were illiterates. The educational achievements were very low. The great majority of the women misbehaved in childhood by running away or truanting or engaging in irresponsible sexual activity and stealing.

Pollak O.L. (1950) has suggested that the difference in crime rates between the sexes is exaggerated by a policy of not pursuing inquiries or pressing charges against women. Another suggestion is that women in our culture are brought up to be more passive and conformist than men, and so they are more likely to support morality and the status quo, and avoid crime. Men are expected to be more assertive, to compete, and to provide, and are therefore under greater temptation to dishonesty. The misconduct of
Juveniles show marked sex characteristics long before the age when economic pressures or even differences in physical strength and agility could plausibly account for it. School teachers find girls more amenable, parents less often take their daughters to child guidance clinics, and the number of places in remand homes or approved schools occupied by pre-pubertal girls in very small indeed.

George Grosser (1951) in his study, "Juvenile Delinquency and Contemporary American Sex Roles" developed a detailed exposition on sex role socialization and delinquency. Much of his discussion involved a portrayal of the ways in which males and females are differently socialized from birth onward to be 'boys' or 'girls'. In particular he contended that the gulf between socially approved patterns of male and female behaviour becomes quite wide at adolescence, so that the teenage boys are expected to depart themselves quite differently from juvenile females. He has also observed that adolescent males are allowed more independence from parental control than girls, so that the girls are encouraged to retain filial bonds to their parents and are accorded less freedom, and in other ways, are treated differently from boys. To him, much juvenile theft on the part of the boys is, 'role expressive'. They demonstrate masculinity through such behaviour, other boys are involved in 'role-supportive stealing', in which they steal to obtain money for clothing, dating etc.
Ottman and Friedman (1952) concluded that a history of family disruption is hardly specific to delinquency, but it does act, as an important precondition to crime and it seems to have more to do with the formation of character disorders than with the etiology of some other equally serious forms of disturbance.

Atcheson and Williams (1954) in their study, 'A study of Juvenile Sex Offenders', used information which was obtained from a comparison of sex offenders among boys and girls with other convicted for other offences. The authors stated that 90 per cent of all sex offender were referred by the Toronto Juvenile and Family Court for investigation clinically, and 2,516 boys and 596 girls, all above the age of 7 and below 16, were referred during the years 1939 and 1948. Included in this were 35 per cent of girls and 6 per cent of boys committed for offences of all other kinds (except sexual delinquency). The authors took a group of 283 sex offenders, 116 boys, and 167 girls, and this was compared with non-sex offenders comprising 126 boys and 168 girls. Included among sex offenders were all those with promiscuous sexual behaviour as a part of the charges by the court.

The findings revealed a significant difference between boys and girls, sexual deviations were the main forms of delinquency for boys, but for the girls it was normal promiscuity. In both the groups of sex and non-sex
delinquency the boys were younger than the girls. Comparing sex offenders with others, no differences were found by the authors in the incidence of three measures of socio-economic stress which was less than marginal income at home, broken homes and unsatisfactory homes.

Robey, Rosenwald, Snell and Lee (1954) found in their study of 293 adolescent girls brought before the court during a ten year period that 162 (55%) were runaways. The girls ranged from thirteen to seventeen years and six months, the main age being fifteen years and three months. Their study excluded those who had not stayed away overnight and those who denied the intent to runaway. They emphasized that runaway, hardly a childish escapade, is generally indicative of some severe individual or family pathology and may result from a wide variety of intolerable home situations. In their study the cause most frequently observed was the unconscious threat of an incestuous relationship with the father, the fear of the resultant dissolution of the family and the concurrent depression.

O. Kelly Elizabeth (1955) contrasted the background of thieves and sexual delinquents. While both groups came mostly from disturbed homes, the thieves had more often suffered separation from or rejection by parents, while the sexual delinquents more frequently had difficult relations with fathers and mothers who were conjugally unstable.
Cohen, A.K. (1955) studied the social outlook and origins of members of delinquent gangs of juveniles and produced some penetrating observations which he and others have elaborated into a general theory of delinquency causation. The sub-culture thus formed stands in relation to dominant culture rather like a 'witches' cover in relation to orthodox Christianity. What was most condemned is now most admired. A lot of delinquent activity cannot be accounted for in terms of simple material gain, since very often great risks are valued by the thief that they are soon discarded or given away. The common motive behind all these forms of anti-social behaviour is malicious delight in annoying the representatives of respectability. In Cohen's view gang loyalties may contribute as much to the breakdown of family life as family conflicts contribute to gang recruitment. Advocates of the delinquent sub-culture theory argue that the reactions described are essentially normal and inevitable responses to a given set of social circumstances.

Smith (1955) points out that the comparatively high rates of delinquents who came from broken homes could be explained largely in terms of differential treatment of children not only by the police but also by the juvenile court.

Gibbens, T.C.N. (1957) in his article 'Juvenile Prostitution' observed that through the records of 400 girls aged 14 to 16, 18 of them had been
found living by prostitution at the time of their arrest. Eight of these 18 girls were very intelligent but very unstable emotionally, four girls were homosexual and more generally the attitude to men was one of hostility and contempt, with an 'incapacity to feel any real affection. Some girls were purely mercenary; some were very indolent and passive. Gibbens further observed that there is little to suggest that the outlook for juvenile prostitutes is any worse than for other wayward girls. Gibbens emphasizes that for these girls prostitution is a very different thing from being promiscuous. He regards juvenile prostitution as a temporary phase, and thinks that few if any of these girls go on to become adult prostitutes.

Monahan (1957) warns against the danger of over generalization and states that only a small minority of youngsters growing up in broken homes become delinquents. While no critical age has been established, it appears that older children are less adversely affected by broken homes than the young children. Further, it is indicated that delinquents are likely to come from disorganized but structurally non-broken homes as they are from broken homes. He also (Monahan) pointed out the fact of break in the home, rather than the nature of the break, may be of more crucial importance to the child in so far as official delinquency is concerned.
Jenkins (1957) and Short and Nye (1958) strongly pleaded that delinquency is a normal reaction to stress, a factor contingent upon parental deprivation. Nye's study is replete with various kinds of positive attachments to parents that are associated with less reported delinquency. Interestingly, he finds greater delinquency in unhappy intact homes than in simply broken homes. Nye indicates the importance of the quality of parent-child relationships as opposed to the more presence of parents in the home.

Miller, W.B. (1958) suggested that working-class sub-culture in America is such as to generate gang delinquency of itself, without any need for a reaction against middle class ideas. The local concerns of lower class youth, toughness and masculinity, cleverness in making easy money and not being duped, excitement in chance and risk-taking, and the wish to be independent and not bossed about, encourage attitudes that are already half-way delinquent. Skill in out cutting others in corner, gambling and in exchanging insulting repartee bring increased status.

Miller, W.B. (1959) argues that the lower-class child engages in gang delinquency in an attempt to establish his masculinity something he cannot do within the confines of a female based, father absent household.
Henry Clay Smith (1961) indicates in his personality adjustment that women are more sociable and warmer than men. But although these are qualities related to being a poor judge, women have more motivation for understanding others and are, therefore, likely to be better judges than men. The typical women in our society find that the attention she receives depends less upon her objective accomplishments than upon her personal conquests. The ability to recognise subtle indications of favour, disfavour, rivalry and defeat are vital to her.

Ruth Morries (1964) compared matching groups of delinquent and non-delinquent boys and girls. She found that to a significant extent, the delinquent girls had the highest incidence of broken homes, or of homes beset by quarrels and tensions and they were more often untidy and neglected in personal appearance. Male delinquents often appear to be disastrous, exuberant boys have found satisfaction among their more rebellious peers, but way-ward girls are more often unhappy misfits. Although admitted on the fringes of male gangs, girls have nothing like the same support from the delinquent subculture that boys can find.

Another big difference appears at puberty is that the wayward girls more often take to sexual misconduct. The promiscuity of wayward girls serves as an effectively upsetting form of protest against the attitudes and
restrictions of older relatives. Often it also seems a way of searching for the affection which is wanting in an unhappy parental home. It would be wrong to suppose that all young girls who run away from unhappy homes into the arms of a lower are promiscuous.

Sterne (1964) does not believe that the broken home is a major cause of delinquency, but rather disruption and tension within the home.

Moore, Arthur E. (1965) a former judge, describes the programs of camp Oakland for delinquents and neglected children and youth, and emphasizes the importance of family in both causes and cures of juvenile delinquency. He feels that the court should be a leader in prevention and should not be punitive.

Elliot (1966) in his study with seven hundred and forty three school boys found that the delinquency rate was high for lower class boys whether they remained in school or became dropouts. On the other hand, the rate of delinquency involvement was lower for the middle class boys who were in school and for the middle class dropouts.

Gibbens, T.C.N. and R.H. Ahrenfeldt (Eds) (1966) in their report of a meeting of an international group representing a variety of disciplines, which
met to discuss the contribution of cultural factors to juvenile delinquency. Discussed definitions of delinquency, male versus female involvement, age, social class, role of the police, sub-cultures, internal controls, comparability of statistics between countries, learning and unlearning delinquency, trends in delinquency in various countries, research, and the difficulty of reaching agreement on programs for action.

In a theoretical work W.I. Thomas (1967) emphasized the importance of socialization in female delinquent behaviour. He described four basic wishes that he believed people sought to satisfy. These were desires for new experience, security, response, and recognition. According to his theory, the female delinquent attempts to fulfill these needs through inappropriate and often illegal means. Lack of adequate socialization, especially among the poor, results in an inability on the part of females to deal with these desires in a socially acceptable manner. The young girl utilizes her body as a means of gaining new experiences, security, response and recognition. Sexual delinquency is to be expected from undersocialized girls. Thomas underscored the fact that the poor girls who are not privy to alternative means of realizing these desires, are the most likely to exhibit this behaviour.

Syed, Hussain (1967) dealt with the juvenile delinquency in India, discussing definition, the most prevalent types of delinquent behaviour,
causes, including economic factors, home environment, and personal factors, and treatment. Hussain maintains that the present form of the problem is a result of urban, industrial society.

Pathak, Sumitra (1967) presented case studies of sixty delinquents and considered the influences of such factors as home and family, environmental conditions and the community.

Cowie, John and Eliot Slater (1968) summarized earlier studies of delinquency in girls and conclusions derived from them and the reports on a new inquiry which examined age, intelligence, home and family and psychiatric record. They concluded that differences existed in these areas between delinquent and non-delinquent girls and between delinquent girls and delinquent boys.

Cavan, Ruth Shonle and T.Cavan (1968) made an intensive study of the delinquency and crime in fourteen societies. The study contrasted rural and urban areas and noted the effects of social change. The study was based on published rather than original research. The authors concluded that crime is international, that it spreads across borders, and that it can be defined in terms of each society's cultural values.
Hirschi, Travis (1969) in his study criticized strain, control and cultural deviance theories, advocated instead a social control theory which views the delinquent as a person lacking the aspirations and beliefs which hold most individuals to a law-abiding life. He stressed the importance of constructing a theory which is compatible with empirical data.

Beard Belle, B. (1969) studied 500 cases of juveniles on probation in Boston. He considered such variables as quality of home life, physical and mental health, companionship, work, recreation and education.

Shaw, Clifford, R.Henry and D.McKay (1969) focused their study on the Chicago area. The authors related juvenile delinquency to the physical structure of a city. They postulated that delinquency rates were high in urban areas characterized by a disrupted social order and a lack of organized community effort to deal with disorganization. The implications for prevention and treatment were discussed and linked to changes in economic and social conditions of the urban area.

A study by Terry (1970) indicates that because of the sexual nature of the offences frequently committed by girls there is tendency for them to be treated more severely than boys whose offences are rarely defined as sexually deviant. Terry implies that the reason for this type of severity is
because of the sexual implications of many of the offences committed by the girls and because the judiciary finds it more shocking to have a girl in court than a boy. The consequence of such attitudes towards female offenders when they commit sexual offences is that such girls are likely to be over represented both within institutions and in police and welfare agency statistics, creating the appearance that girls predominantly commit sexual offences which are serious enough to result in institutionalized punishment.

Gold Martin (1970) conducted a study in Flint, Michigan which attempted to obtain a clear picture of delinquent behaviour. Gold stresses the distinction between delinquency and delinquent behaviour, and concludes that present knowledge about juvenile delinquency may not apply to delinquent behaviour. Furthermore, varying degrees of delinquency exist. Since almost every one breaks the law, the idea of 'the delinquent' is invalid.

Frankenstein, Carl (1970) deals with the types of juvenile delinquency and their causes and symptoms. The author emphasizes 'Waywardness' because the largest number of delinquents are of this type - and psychopathy - because of its 'disquieting' nature.

Koller's, K.M. (1971) study indicates that a larger percentage of the delinquent girls had prolonged parental loss, large family size and
intermediate birth orders. Physical presence of a problem, mother and the influence of institutional life may also contribute to the development of subsequent delinquency.


Lemert, Edwin (1971) observes that too many children are processed by the juvenile court and that the harm done to them outweighs any benefits. He examines a number of alternatives for diverting youth from the courts, among which are the school, welfare agencies, police and community organizations. A major problem with these agencies is the phenomenon of labelling, whereby a juvenile comes to see himself as delinquent and subsequently behaves according to expectations. According to Lemert, new ways of perceiving the concept of prevention must be developed which consider the consequences of agency policies and actions. All children engage in delinquent behaviour. Therefore, efforts should be made to control rather than prevent such behaviour. Forms of juvenile delinquency are defined into existence, therefore, they can be defined out of existence.

Cortes, Juan, B. (1972) reviewed the biological, psychological and social factors associated with juvenile delinquency and crime.
Wolfgang et al. (1972) provides a statistical description of juvenile delinquency through studying the history of delinquency among a group of youths born in the same year. They analysed all available official data on nearly 10,000 boys from ages ten through eighteen, noting the age of onset of delinquency, and its progression or cessation. They then related these data to personal or social characteristics of delinquents and compared the characteristics with those of others in the Cohort who have not become delinquent.

Reckless, Walter et al. (1972) described in their work four phases, development of theory that self concept acts as an insulator against delinquency and testing of the theory; development of a school-based prevention programme at the sixth-grade level in certain schools, implementation of the programme at seventh-grade level in all inner-city schools; and evaluation through an annual follow up of all participating students and have interviews with a sample of participants. The authors view juvenile delinquency as an inherent part of our social system and as an entity much affected by the family, the community and the value structure. Findings showed few differences between participants and non-participants in the programme. The author offers possible explanations for such findings and suggest directions for further research.
In his study of juvenile correctional institutions in India Satyanshu Kumar Mukherjee (1974) focused on policy and legislation, institutional services, problems in administration, and practical solutions developed by administrators.

Freda Adler (1975) in her book 'Sisters in Crime' considers female delinquency in light of recent research. Adler notes that the traditional conception of the delinquent girl describes her as unadjusted, intropunitive and as utilizing her sexuality as a copying mechanism. Adler criticizes this perspective on grounds that it is based on the records of the juvenile court. She points out that the courts judge girls on the basis of social expectations of the female sex role. Girls are to be sexy' (but-not sexual), passive, and co-operative sexual activity is seen as pathological in girls. Female juveniles are more frequently institutionalized. They reflect the assumption that females need more care and protection. Adler explains female delinquency as originating from basically the same sources as male delinquency. Problems in transition from child to adult in society. The effects of societal changes and opportunity structures push both sexes toward delinquency involvement. She notes the changes in crime rates and the concomitant change in the female role in our society. Adler predicts even more delinquent involvement for females because today there is so much confusion about the female role. Identity problems are more severe for female adolescents. Lack of legitimate opportunities for females and the contrasting models of the traditional
domestic role and the new, more liberated woman make adolescence a very
difficult period for girls. Their involvement in delinquency has increased and
is of a more "masculine" nature resulting from the greater freedom and
opportunity for illegal activities available to women.

Mishra's (1977) results indicate a significant relationship between
parental deprivation and delinquency. The case study revealed unmistakable
evidence of the role of the father in the formation of the attitudes of
delinquent boys. It was also found that separation, neglect and deprivation
of love contributed towards the development of juvenile delinquency.

According to Geetha and Animasen (1979) personal and social
maladjustment, insecurity, excessive use of regression, intervention,
aggression, and high need for achievement were common personality traits
found among delinquents. The most salient features of the home-background
conditions were found to be defective parental discipline, parental rejection,
large sized families and poverty which predispose children to juvenile
delinquency.

Singh (1979) stressed that the major crime offenders were significantly
more psychic and neurotic than the minor crime offenders.
Shanmugam (1980) in his study with one hundred and fifty delinquents and one hundred and fifty non-delinquents brought out the importance of broken homes. He found a definite association between delinquents and their home conditions. He concluded by saying that “the results on the whole reflected more pathogenic factors in the delinquents have environment as compared to that of non-delinquents”.

Kodanda Ram (1981) studied the cognitive style of father absent delinquents. The findings indicate that father absent group was more dependent than the father present group.

Kundu and Bhaumik (1982) concluded that the combination of high neuroticism and extroversion has led the delinquents to a state of secondary psychopathy.

Shariff and Sekhar (1982) found that consanguinity among parents did not play a vital role in delinquency formation. Early childhood neuroticism plays a vital part in the formation of delinquency.