

# Juvenile delinquency research paper sample

[Business](#), [Strategy](#)



Juvenile delinquency essentially refers to the crimes committed by persons who have not attained the age of the majority. The age of the majority in most legal jurisdictions is eighteen years. In legal parlance, criminal liability refers to the liability that accrues as a consequence of one's action or omission. The liability as such occasions the incurrance of the blame for a particular result. In criminology, a person of sound mind and having attained the age of the majority will bear the criminal liability for any crime committed through the direct commission or omission of his actions. The law, however, applies exceptions when it comes to the category of persons who have not attained the age of majority or do not have a sound mind. This paper concentrates on the former category. The persons who have not attained the age of the majority are referred to as juveniles. It ought to be appreciated that there is no universally agreed lower age limit for the juveniles. However, from the American judicial systems and even the common law approach, criminal liability accrues only for persons who have attained the age of eleven and above years. In other words, the de facto age lower age limit lies at eleven years of age.

### **History of juvenile delinquency and the strategies employed in preventing juvenile delinquency**

The juvenile justice system entails a collection of a number of agencies that are charged with the deterrence, reduction and control of juvenile crimes. Activities within their mandate include the prosecution of juvenile crime, the correction of the confined juveniles, the education of the external parties involved in the deterrence of juvenile crime such as the guardians and the collection of feedback on juveniles on probation. Juvenile justice system

essentially works in accordance with the laws drafted by Congress. The main motivation of the juvenile justice system is the deterrence and control of juvenile crime. Towards the achievement of this objective, the justice system works through the coordinated efforts of various governmental agencies such as the judicial systems, the police office, the department of correctional justice and the input of the legislators who formulate the law and policies that govern the juvenile justice system.

The strategies engaged by the juvenile justice system in the quest of achieving their objectives involves a number of combined, coordinated and harmonized operations by the respective agencies. The department of correctional services is directly responsible for the management, rehabilitation and control of the juveniles who have already committed crimes and have been confined to correctional facilities through dispositions issued by a court of law. As such, it could be observed that the first strategy pursued in regard of controlling and preventing juvenile crime employs the services of the correctional department. The department essentially confines the juveniles who have been sentenced to confinement through the judicial dispositions. The rationale of the confinement is informed mainly by two dual issues. The first limb of the rationale spans from the fact that the juveniles are essentially of lesser ages compared to their adult counterparts. The law takes the precaution of mixing the adult confines with the juvenile confines. This is in appreciation of the fact that the adult confines could necessarily influence the juveniles into crime proper. This would be counterproductive as it is expected that the juvenile confines would be better, reformed and much more useful after completing their confinement periods in the correctional

facilities. On the other hand, the other limb of reasoning arises from the fact that the law cannot close its eyes to the realities of the world in light of the actions be the juveniles. As such, their circumstances that justify the confinement of juveniles in appreciation of not only the need to rehabilitate the juvenile, but also achieve the rather essentially responsibility of securing the public security. This strategy should be distinguished from the adult criminal strategy which essentially suffices for purposes of punishing the adult criminals for their felonies and misdemeanors. It should be equally noted that the special treatment of the juveniles could be limited only on correctional facilities. Otherwise, depending on the gravity of the offences committed, some crimes are treated with the same breadth and reasoning as those crimes committed by the adult criminals. The latter application suffices for enormously grave crimes such as murder, treason and rape.

Another strategy engaged in deterrence and prevention of juvenile crime involves probation services. The system usually suffices for juveniles who commit crimes that are not as grave but nonetheless are illegal and unacceptable in the society. The judicial systems operate harmoniously with the correctional services department in the administration of probation services. Probation works through the referral or commitment of a juvenile criminal to a body or a person. As such, the juvenile should report to the body or the person regularly and perform some activities. The activities commonly target the benefit of the community of the juvenile. These activities could include environmental cleaning, community service, compulsory work for free, among other probation terms and offers. The process is usually guided by the probation officer who shall be the judicial

officer charged with the observation, monitoring and evaluation of the criminal.

The first two strategies relate to the prevention of juvenile crime through action on the juvenile criminals. However, the juvenile justice system also approaches prevention through interactions with the juveniles who have not necessarily committed any crimes yet. The strategy involves the incorporation of educative sessions and media for purposes of disseminating information to the juveniles on matter pertaining to the rule of law and deterrence of juvenile crime. The strategy entails the use of parental services. The agencies expect parents to play a pivotal role towards the enlightenment of the juveniles on the rule of law. In addition, the juvenile justice system has an agency referred to as the National Centre for Juvenile Justice. This agency is charged with the dissemination of juvenile justice information and services to the people.

### **Stakeholders to the juvenile delinquency**

Juvenile delinquency is under the juvenile justice system. The juvenile justice system involves a number of agencies charged with the prevention, control, regulation and correction of juvenile crimes. The stakeholders and agencies that are directly involved in juvenile delinquency, therefore, are the judiciary through the Juvenile Court Systems, the Police Office charged with the prosecution responsibilities, the Department of Correctional Services, parents and juveniles themselves. Juvenile delinquency would essentially be consequent of the action of the juvenile. As such, the first stakeholder to juvenile crime is the juvenile. They ought to be cognizant of the law.

Secondly, the parents are considered as stakeholders because of their guardianship roles on their children. Parents are expected to train their children on the observation of the law by the letter and the spirit. The parents as guardians and role models ought to set good examples for their children to follow. The other set of stakeholders relate to law enforcement officers in respect of juvenile delinquency. The first stakeholders are the police officers. The police officers are charged with the prosecution of juvenile delinquency. They investigate the cases and make a decision on whether to prosecute the cases. The basis they use in deciding on whether to prosecute or give warnings to the delinquent juveniles considers the nature of the crime, the gravity of the crime, the sex and age of the suspected criminal, the frequency of the crime and the number of times the suspected as been involved in the crimes. The law gives the police officers the discretion to commit the criminal to prosecution or give warnings. The judicial officers are the second stakeholders under the law enforcement officers' category. The juvenile court system exists as a department within the larger judicial systems. The courts administer on cases relating to juvenile crime. It should be noted that the courts are limited by the legislation on juveniles, the constitution and other written laws. Commonly the courts avail dispositions of confinement to correctional facilities or probation. Under the court system lie the probation officer charged with advising the courts on the decision to make regarding whether to commit a juvenile to probation or not. The other main stakeholder within this class is the department of correction services. The department is charged with the rehabilitative functions on the juveniles. The department is expected to run

and manage correctional facilities. The stakeholders list cannot be completed without mentioning the legislators. The legislators in both the state assemblies and the Congress formulate the laws that govern juvenile delinquency. As such, they are part and parcel of the stakeholders in juvenile delinquency.

### **Strategies and interventions designed to solve juvenile delinquency and their weightings in terms of pros and cons**

Juvenile delinquency is here to stay. This is essentially due to the diverse nature of personalities. Not everyone is ready to follow the spirit and letter of the law. In addition, the rebellious spirit in the young people increases cases of juvenile delinquency. However, the level and extent of delinquency can be controlled and reduced. This would be possible through the enhancement of the existing policies as well as the introduction of new strategies. For instance, juvenile delinquency can be reduced through the spread of information and knowledge on the law. Many of the juvenile crimes can be attributed to the lack of knowledge by the criminals. In addition, the criminals falsely believe they do not have criminal liability by virtue of their ages. It should be communicated to them the concept of criminal liability and the expectations of the law. It ought to be specified to them the legal concept of mental intention and the general assumption of the law that mental intent is not limited to persons who have attained the ages of majority. The advantage of this strategy hinges on the basis that an informed person is more powerful than a non informed person. Although the observation of the law usually is that ignorance is no defense, the education and enlightenment of the juveniles would effectively address the knowledge

gap problems. The disadvantage lies in the loopholes existing in society. For example, some children delinquent do not have parents or under irresponsible parents who neglect them and blatantly disregard the law. This strategy would, therefore, be inconsequential in these cases.

Secondly, the role of peers and parents on counseling and guidance ought to be exhaustively exploited. The agencies should created awareness through the use of parents and peer educators who would be equipped with the knowledge and advised to pass the concepts to their peers on a day to day basis. This would fundamentally address the increase in juvenile crimes. The peers have the advantage of being in touch with their fellows and would be at a position to give the best advice on the course of action to be pursued by the juveniles. All together, the strategy should emphasize on the need to make the juveniles aware.

Further, the correctional services must be brought into currency with the societal developments. This calls for the continuous improvement of the programs implemented in the correctional services. The main intention of the correctional facilities is the rehabilitation of the juveniles. However, the correctional facilities should also endeavor to provide punitive activities that would serve the purposes of deterring other juveniles from committing crimes. The advantage of using correctional services is in the capacities within the agencies. For instance, the correctional schools have full time personnel trained and equipped with the administration of correctional services. The disadvantage lies in the costs that would have to be incurred by the government in funding the correctional agencies services.



Finally, the role of probation should be reconsidered. Probation should suffice for purposes of correcting juveniles from committing misdemeanors. The system should be tailored to effectively avail corrective lessons to the juveniles confined to probation. The advantage in the use of probation services is in the professionalism inherent in the trained probation officers while the costs would suffice as the disadvantages.

### **Prediction of juvenile justice prevention would be handled in the next two decades**

Juvenile justice prevention and intervention strategies in the next two decades will most likely focus on the direct engagement of the juveniles by the juvenile justice agencies. The information age has resulted into spread of knowledge and information to the entire globe. The modern juvenile is more exposed to the world's moral and legal obligations. Consequently, juvenile delinquency would attract criminal liability since the assumption of disinformation is dispensed with. The future, therefore, involves the direct engagement of the juveniles. The legislation would be tailored towards increasing the criminal liability on the juveniles.

### **Conclusion**

Juvenile justice system suffices for purposes of administration of justice to the juveniles. This is in recognition of the uncontested fact that the juveniles cannot incur the same criminal liability as their adult counterparts incur. This should not be interpreted as a loophole in the law to allow juveniles the opportunity to commit offences. No wonder, most jurisdictions suspend the juvenile laws in grave cases and apply the law of the land unaltered.

However, juvenile delinquency ought to be treated differently in appreciation

of the ability of the juveniles to rehabilitate and be of use to the society at large.

## **References**

Conrad, J. J., Allen, J. M., Cox, S. M., & Hanser, R. D. (2010). *Juvenile Justice: A Guide to Theory, Policy, and Practice*. New York: SAGE.

Elrod, P., & Ryder, S. (2011). *Juvenile Justice: A Social, Historical and Legal Perspective: A Social, Historical and Legal Perspective*. New York: Jones & Bartlett Learning.

Hesse, M., & Lawrence, R. (2009). *Juvenile Justice: The Essentials*. New York: SAGE.

Martin, G. (2007). *Juvenile Justice: Process and Systems*. New York: SAGE.

Whitehead, J. T., & Lab, S. P. (2012). *Juvenile Justice: An Introduction*. New York: Elsevier.