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Juvenile Delinquency in the Digital Age: A Sociological Study

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ABSTRACT

The rapid advancement of digital technology has significantly transformed the social, educational, and psychological environment of children and adolescents. While the internet, social media platforms, smartphones, online gaming, and artificial intelligence have created unprecedented opportunities for learning and communication, they have simultaneously contributed to the emergence of new forms of juvenile delinquency. Contemporary juvenile offending extends beyond conventional crimes such as theft, assault, and vandalism to include cyberbully, identity theft, online financial fraud, cybersquatting, hacking, dissemination of obscene content, digital harassment, and other technology-enabled offence. These developments have created new challenges for sociologists, criminologists, policymakers, and law enforcement agencies.From a sociological perspective, juvenile delinquency is not merely an individual behavioral problem but a consequence of multiple social, economic, cultural, familial, and technological factors. Weak family supervision, changing family structures, peer influence, socioeconomic inequality, exposure to violent digital content, inadequate digital literacy, and the declining effectiveness of traditional social control mechanisms significantly contribute to delinquent behaviour among adolescents. The paper critically analyses the emerging patterns of juvenile delinquency in the digital age, examines its sociological determinants, evaluates the contemporary legal framework, and proposes policy recommendations for effective prevention and rehabilitation.

The study concludes that juvenile delinquency in the digital era requires a comprehensive and multidisciplinary response. Legal reforms alone cannot effectively address the problem. Strengthening family institutions, promoting digital literacy, improving school-based counselling, enhancing community participation, expanding cyber safety education, and implementing rehabilitation-oriented juvenile justice policies are essential for creating a safer digital environment for children and adolescents.

KEYWORDS

Juvenile Delinquency, Digital Age, Cybercrime, Juvenile Justice, Cyberbullying, Digital Literacy, Social Control.

INTRODUCTION

The digital revolution has transformed almost every aspect of human life, particularly the lives of children and adolescents. The widespread availability of smartphones, affordable internet services, social networking platforms, online gaming, and artificial intelligence has created unprecedented opportunities for education, communication, and entertainment. However, alongside these benefits, the digital environment has also generated new forms of criminal behaviour involving juveniles. Today, juvenile delinquency is no longer confined to traditional offences such as theft, vandalism, or physical violence; it increasingly includes cyberbullying, identity theft, online fraud, cyberstalking, hacking, digital harassment, and the circulation of illegal online content.

Juvenile delinquency is a complex social phenomenon influenced by multiple factors, including family structure, peer influence, socio-economic conditions, educational opportunities, community environment, and technological exposure. Rapid urbanization, changing family patterns, reduced parental supervision, excessive use of digital devices, and unrestricted access to social media have significantly altered adolescents' behaviour and social interactions. As a result, many young individuals become vulnerable to deviant behaviour, either as offenders or victims in cyberspace.

From a sociological perspective, juvenile delinquency is not merely a legal issue but a reflection of broader social changes. Classical sociological theories such as Durkheim's Theory of Anomie, Merton's Strain Theory, Sutherland's Differential Association Theory, and Hirschi's Social Control Theory explain how social disorganization, weak social bonds, and learned behaviour contribute to juvenile offending. These theories remain highly relevant in understanding digital-age delinquency.

India has recently reformed its criminal justice system through the enactment of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023. Although juveniles in conflict with law continue to be primarily governed by the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, the new criminal laws have strengthened the legal framework for investigating and prosecuting technology-enabled offences. This study, therefore, examines juvenile delinquency in the digital age from both sociological and legal perspectives, highlighting emerging trends, challenges, and policy responses within the contemporary Indian context.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Juvenile delinquency has long been a subject of sociological and criminological inquiry. Early studies primarily associated juvenile offending with poverty, broken families, poor educational opportunities, and weak social control. However, contemporary research recognizes that rapid technological advancement and digitalization have significantly altered the nature and dynamics of juvenile crime.

A meta-analysis by van der Hof et al. (2023) identified weak parental supervision, association with delinquent peers, impulsivity, and excessive internet use as major risk factors for juvenile cybercrime.

Kulkarni, Durve, and Jia (2024) examined cyberbullying as a growing public health concern and reported that prolonged exposure to online harassment adversely affects adolescents' psychological well-being, social relationships, and academic performance.

Bhatnagar (2024) observed that increasing smartphone penetration and unrestricted internet access have accelerated juvenile involvement in cyber offences such as identity theft, cyberbullying, online fraud, hacking, and fake social media profiles.

Goyat (2025) argued that India's existing juvenile justice framework requires further strengthening to address technology-enabled offences committed by minors.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The rapid expansion of digital technology has fundamentally changed the nature of juvenile delinquency, making it one of the most pressing social and legal concerns in contemporary society. Increased access to smartphones, social media, online gaming platforms, and digital financial services has exposed children and adolescents to both opportunities and risks. While technology has enhanced communication and education, it has also facilitated cyberbullying, identity theft, online fraud, digital harassment, hacking, and other cyber-enabled offences involving juveniles. These emerging forms of delinquency require a comprehensive understanding that extends beyond conventional criminological approaches.The study is also significant because adolescents constitute one of the most active groups in the digital environment. Their psychological vulnerability, limited legal awareness, peer influence, and unrestricted internet access increase the risk of both victimization and offending. Understanding these factors is essential for designing effective prevention strategies.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Juvenile delinquency cannot be adequately explained by examining crime statistics alone. A sociological investigation must ask:

1. What family circumstances surround children who come into conflict with law?
2. Does inadequate parental supervision increase vulnerability?
3. What role do peer groups play?
4. Is educational discontinuity associated with juvenile delinquency?
5. How do economic circumstances influence children's lives?
6. What role can the family and community play in rehabilitation?

These questions are especially relevant to research on juvenile delinquency.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objectives of present study are following:-

1. To examine the concept, nature, and emerging patterns of juvenile delinquency in the context of rapid digital transformation.
2. To identify the major social, economic, psychological, familial, and technological factors contributing to juvenile delinquency among adolescents.
3. To analyse the influence of digital technologies on juvenile offending.
4. To analyse recent trends and available crime statistics relating to juvenile delinquency.
5. To propose evidence-based policy recommendations for preventing juvenile delinquency.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design.The research is based primarily on secondary data. Data and information have been collected fromGovernment of India sources, official crime statistics, parliamentary documents, Madhya Pradesh High Court records, Madhya Pradesh judicial-educationand juvenile-justice resources, published academic researchrecent empirical studies etc.

CONCEPT OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Juvenile delinquency refers to unlawful, antisocial, or socially unacceptable behaviour committed by children or adolescents who have not attained the legally prescribed age of adulthood. It is recognised as both a legal and a sociological phenomenon because it involves violations of law as well as deviations from accepted social norms and values. The concept extends beyond criminal acts to include behaviours that indicate maladjustment, social disorganization, and inadequate socialization among young people.

From a legal perspective, the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 defines a "child" as a person who has not completed eighteen years of age. A child who is alleged or found to have committed an offence is referred to as a "Child in Conflict with Law (CCL)." Unlike the adult criminal justice system, the juvenile justice framework emphasizes rehabilitation, counselling, education, skill development, and social reintegration rather than punishment. From a sociological perspective, juvenile delinquency is viewed as the outcome of interaction between individual behaviour and the surrounding social environment. Family instability, peer influence, school dropout, economic deprivation, urbanization, social inequality, substance abuse, and weak social control are widely recognized as major contributors to delinquent behaviour. In the digital era, additional factors such as excessive internet use, social media dependency, cyberbullying, online gaming addiction, digital anonymity, and exposure to harmful online content have expanded the scope and complexity of juvenile delinquency.

The nature of juvenile delinquency has also evolved with technological advancement. Traditional offences such as theft, assault, vandalism, and property crimes continue to occur; however, cyber-enabled offences including identity theft, hacking, online fraud, cyberstalking, digital harassment, and circulation of obscene material have become increasingly prominent. These developments require an interdisciplinary understanding that combines sociological theories with contemporary legal responses.

Therefore, juvenile delinquency should not be interpreted merely as individual misconduct. It is a multidimensional social issue shaped by family, education, community, technology, culture, and law. Understanding these interrelated dimensions is essential for developing effective preventive strategies, strengthening rehabilitation programme, and ensuring that the juvenile justice system promotes the best interests of children while maintaining public safety.

TYPES OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

The rapid expansion of digital technology has significantly altered the nature and pattern of juvenile delinquency. While traditional offences continue to exist, technological advancement has created new opportunities for cyber-enabled crimes committed by or against juveniles. These emerging forms of delinquency present complex challenges for families, educational institutions, law enforcement agencies, and the criminal justice system.

1. Property-Related Delinquency

Property-related offences remain among the most common forms of juvenile delinquency. These include theft, burglary, shoplifting, vandalism, motor vehicle theft, and destruction of public or private property. Such offences are often associated with economic hardship, peer pressure, or the desire for material possessions.

2. Violent Delinquency

Violent juvenile offences include physical assault, bullying, group violence, intimidation, and other acts causing physical or psychological harm. Exposure to domestic violence, aggressive peer groups, substance abuse, and violent media content may increase the likelihood of such behaviour.

3. Cyber Delinquency

Cyber delinquency has become one of the fastest-growing forms of juvenile offending. It includes cyberbullying, hacking, identity theft, phishing, online financial fraud, cyberstalking, digital impersonation, and unauthorized access to computer systems. The anonymity of cyberspace, easy access to digital devices, and limited awareness of legal consequences often encourage adolescents to engage in these activities.

4. Social Media-Related Offences

The misuse of social networking platforms has created new forms of juvenile delinquency. These include creating fake profiles, spreading misinformation, posting defamatory content, sharing private images without consent, online harassment, and hate speech. Such activities may have serious legal, psychological, and social consequences.

5. Sexual and Technology-Enabled Offences

Digital platforms have also facilitated offences involving the creation, possession, or circulation of sexually explicit material, online grooming, sextortion, and other forms of child sexual exploitation. These offences are addressed through the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, the Information Technology Act, 2000, and relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, depending on the nature of the conduct.

6. Status Offences

Status offences are behaviours that are considered offences only because they are committed by minors. These include habitual truancy, running away from home, violation of parental supervision, and certain forms of substance use. Although these acts may not constitute crimes for adults, they often indicate underlying social, emotional, or family-related problems that require counselling and rehabilitation.

The diversity of these offences demonstrates that juvenile delinquency in the digital age extends far beyond conventional crime. Effective prevention requires coordinated efforts involving families, schools, communities, legal institutions, and digital platforms.

CAUSES OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY: A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

Juvenile delinquency is a multidimensional social problem that results from the interaction of individual, familial, social, economic, psychological, and technological factors. In the digital age, these traditional causes have been further intensified by unrestricted access to the internet, social media, and emerging technologies. Understanding these causes is essential for developing effective prevention and rehabilitation strategies.

1. Family Disorganization

The family is the primary institution responsible for a child's socialization. Broken families, parental conflict, domestic violence, neglect, inconsistent discipline, and lack of emotional support significantly increase the likelihood of delinquent behaviour. In many cases, adolescents experiencing weak parental supervision become more vulnerable to negative peer influence and risky online activities.

2. Peer Group Influence

Adolescence is a period during which peer acceptance becomes highly significant. Association with delinquent peers often encourages juveniles to imitate antisocial behaviour, including

substance abuse, cyberbullying, online fraud, and other unlawful activities. Social learning within peer groups continues to be one of the strongest predictors of juvenile offending.

3. Socio-economic Inequality

Poverty, unemployment, educational deprivation, and limited access to opportunities create frustration and social exclusion among young people. Economic hardships mayencourage some juveniles to engage in theft, online financial fraud, or other forms of criminal behaviour as alternative means of achieving material success.

4. Educational and School-Related Factors

School dropout, poor academic performance, weak teacher-student relationships, bullying, and inadequate moral or digital education contribute significantly to juvenile delinquency. Educational institutions play a crucial role in developing discipline, social responsibility, and ethical values among adolescents.

5. Digital Technology and Social Media

The rapid expansion of smartphones, online gaming, social networking platforms, and anonymous digital communication has transformed juvenile behaviour. Excessive screen time, exposure to violent or inappropriate online content, cyberbullying, internet addiction, and easy access to criminal techniques through digital platforms have increased the risk of cyber-enabled juvenile offences.

6. Psychological and Behavioural Factors

Low self-esteem, impulsivity, emotional instability, mental stress, substance abuse, and poor decision-making abilities can increase adolescents' vulnerability to delinquent behaviour. Without timely counselling and family support, these psychological issues may develop into persistent behavioural problems.

7. Weak Social Control

According to sociological perspectives, weakening social institutions, declining community participation, reduced parental monitoring, and limited social cohesion have diminished informal mechanisms of social control. In the digital era, virtual interactions often replace direct social relationships, reducing accountability and increasing opportunities for deviant behaviour.

The interaction of these factors demonstrates that juvenile delinquency cannot be explained by a single cause. Instead, it is the cumulative outcome of social, economic, familial, psychological, and technological influences operating within a rapidly changing digital society.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK GOVERNING JUVENILE DELINQUENCY IN INDIA

India has established a comprehensive legal framework to address juvenile delinquency by balancing accountability with the principles of child protection and rehabilitation. The legal system recognizes that children possess greater potential for behavioural change than adults; therefore, the primary objective of juvenile justice is correction, reintegration, and the protection

of children's rights rather than punitive punishment.The principal legislation governing juveniles in conflict with law is the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 (JJ Act). The Act defines a child as a person below eighteen years of age and classifies offences as petty, serious, and heinous. It provides for the establishment of Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs) to deal with cases involving children in conflict with law through child-friendly procedures. The Act emphasizes rehabilitation through counselling, education, vocational training, foster care, and social reintegration. It also permits a preliminary assessment by the Juvenile Justice Board for children aged 16–18 years alleged to have committed certain heinous offences, as provided under the Act.

The enactment of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023, and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA), 2023 has modernized India's criminal justice system. While the JJ Act continues to govern the treatment of juveniles, offences committed by children are identified with reference to the substantive criminal law contained in the BNS. Similarly, the BNSS provides the procedural framework for criminal investigations and trials, whereas the BSA recognizes the evidentiary value of electronic and digital evidence, which is particularly important in cases involving cyber-enabled offences. In addition to these laws, the Information Technology Act, 2000 plays a significant role in addressing cyber offences such as unauthorized access to computer systems, identity theft, online fraud, and data-related crimes. The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 provides a specialized legal mechanism to protect children from sexual abuse, exploitation, and online sexual offences.

Collectively, these statutes establish a comprehensive legal framework that combines child protection with criminal accountability. However, the increasing prevalence of technology-enabled offences involving juveniles highlights the need for stronger digital literacy, specialised cybercrime investigation, effective implementation of child-friendly justice procedures, and coordinated efforts among families, schools, law enforcement agencies, and judicial institutions to ensure both public safety and the best interests of the child.

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY IN INDIA: RECENT TRENDS AND NCRB ANALYSIS

Juvenile delinquency in India has undergone significant changes over the past decade due to rapid urbanization, technological advancement, increased internet penetration, and changing socio-economic conditions. While traditional offences such as theft, assault, and property-related crimes continue to constitute a substantial proportion of juvenile offences, the emergence of cyber-enabled crimes has altered the nature of juvenile delinquency. Digital platforms, social media, online gaming, and electronicfinancial systems have created new opportunities for both offending and victimization among adolescents.

According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), juveniles continue to account for a relatively small proportion of the total crime in India; however, the changing pattern of offences requires serious policy attention. The latest available official data show that a substantial proportion of juveniles apprehended for offences belong to the 16–18 years age group, indicating that late adolescence remains the most vulnerable stage for delinquent behaviour. Property offences, crimes against persons, and offences involving digital technology continue to dominate the juvenile crime profile. Recent reports also indicate a gradual increase in cyber-related offences involving adolescents, reflecting the growing influence of digital technologies in everyday life.

Several socio-economic characteristics are consistently associated with juvenile delinquency. NCRB data indicate that many juveniles in conflict with law come from economically disadvantaged families, have low educational attainment, or have experienced school dropout. Nevertheless, juvenile delinquency is not confined to economically weaker sections alone. Cases involving adolescents from middle- and higher-income households demonstrate that factors such as excessive internet use, inadequate parental supervision, peer influence, psychological stress, and digital exposure also contribute significantly to delinquent behaviour. The increasing availability of smartphones, affordable internet connectivity, and anonymous online communication has expanded the scope of cyber-enabled offences, including cyberbullying, identity theft, phishing, digital fraud, online harassment, and unauthorized access to digital accounts. These trends highlight the need to strengthen cyber safety education, digital literacy programmes, and parental awareness.

Overall, recent crime patterns suggest that juvenile delinquency in India is evolving from conventional street-level offences towards more technologically sophisticated forms of offending. Therefore, effective prevention requires an integrated strategy combining legal enforcement, family support, educational interventions, community participation, psychological counselling, and responsible digital governance to address both the social and technological dimensions of juvenile delinquency.

CASE STUDY

1. Siddharth Dubey vs. State of Madhya Pradesh

A case originating in Vindhyanagar, Singrauli, involved allegations concerning digital communication and harmful online material. The judgment discussed the use or transmission of digital material in the context of the proceedings.

Sociological significance

The case illustrates the changing relationship between adolescent communication and digital technology. Earlier, harmful communication could be limited by physical distance. Digital platforms have removed many of these geographical barriers.

2. Children in Conflict with Law vs. State of Madhya Pradesh

A 2025 Madhya Pradesh High Court case arising from Damoh provides another useful example. The case record referred to social-media photographs connected with the allegations and their circulation through digital platforms. The matter was considered within the juvenile-justice framework.

Sociological interpretation

The important aspect is not simply the alleged conduct but the way digital technology can amplify an incident. An event involving a small number of adolescents can quickly become visible to a much larger social group through:

Photography → Social media → Sharing → Re-sharing → Public exposure

3. Jitendra Singh vs State of Madhya Pradesh — Indore, 2025

The petition concerned a Class 9 student whose school alleged that he and two other students had created an Instagram page in the school's name and posted memes concerning teachers. The student admitted the conduct and apologized. The school subsequently attempted to discontinue his education. The Madhya Pradesh High Court examined the matter in the context of the Juvenile Justice Act, the Right to Education framework and child-protection principles.

Sociological interpretation

Digital misconduct by adolescents, social media, school discipline, rehabilitation and continuation of education.

DISCUSSION

The central finding emerging from the available evidence is that digital juvenile delinquency is not simply a technological phenomenon. Technology provides the medium, but social relationships provide much of the context. A teenager who creates an offensive social-media post may be influenced by:

Peer pressure → desire for recognition → inadequate digital awareness → weak supervision → online opportunity

Similarly, a teenager who becomes a victim of cyberbullying may experience:

Peer conflict → social-media exposure → online harassment → social isolation → psychological and educational consequences

CHALLENGES IN ADDRESSING JUVENILE DELINQUENCY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

The increasing integration of digital technologies into everyday life has created new challenges for preventing and addressing juvenile delinquency. Although India has strengthened its juvenile justice system through the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 and the recently enacted Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, the rapid evolution of cyber-enabled

offences continues to test the effectiveness of existing legal, social, and institutional mechanisms. One of the foremost challenges is the growing accessibility of digital technology. Smartphones, social media platforms, online gaming applications, and encrypted communication tools provide adolescents with easy access to cyberspace. While these technologies offer educational and social benefits, they also expose juveniles to cyberbullying, identity theft, hacking, online fraud, digital harassment, and harmful online content. The anonymity of the internet often reduces fear of legal consequences and encourages risky behaviour.

Another significant challenge is limited digital literacy among children, parents, teachers, and even some law enforcement personnel. Many adolescents lack awareness of cyber laws and the legal implications of online activities. Similarly, parents often find it difficult to monitor children's digital behaviour because of rapidly changing technologies and privacy concerns**.**

Weak family supervision and changing family structures further contribute to juvenile delinquency. Long working hours, increasing nuclear families, and reduced parent-child interaction may weaken emotional support and behavioral guidance. In addition, peer pressure, social media influence, and the desire for online popularity often encourage adolescents to engage in risky or unlawful activities. From a legal perspective, the investigation of cyber-enabled offences involving juveniles presents considerable difficulties. Collecting electronic evidence, preserving digital records, tracing anonymous users, and addressing cross-border cybercrime require specialized technological expertise and inter-agency cooperation. Delays in investigation and inadequate cyber forensic infrastructure can adversely affect the administration of justice.

Another challenge lies in balancing accountability with rehabilitation. The juvenile justice system must ensure public safety while simultaneously protecting the rights, dignity, and future prospects of children in conflict with law. Excessive criminalization or social stigma may hinder rehabilitation and increase the risk of repeat offending.Addressing these challenges requires a multidisciplinary approach involving families, schools, communities, policymakers, cyber experts, law enforcement agencies, and judicial institutions. Strengthening digital literacy, expanding counselling services, improving cyber forensic capacity, and promoting child-centred rehabilitation remain essential for an effective juvenile justice system in the digital era.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND PREVENTIVE MEASURES

The increasing complexity of juvenile delinquency in the digital age requires a comprehensive strategy that combines legal reforms, educational initiatives, family support, technological safeguards, and community participation. Since juvenile delinquency is influenced by multiple social and technological factors, preventive measures should focus not only on punishment but also on rehabilitation, social integration, and child protection.

First, digital literacy and cyber safety education should be incorporated into school curricula at all levels. Students must be educated about responsible internet use, online ethics, cyber laws, privacy protection, and the legal consequences of cyber offences. Regular awareness programmes can help adolescents recognize online risks and develop responsible digital behaviour.

Second, parental involvement should be strengthened. Parents should be encouraged to maintain open communication with their children, monitor internet usage appropriately, and promote healthy digital habits. Awareness programmes for parents can improve their understanding of cyber risks and effective methods of online supervision without unnecessarily restricting children's educational opportunities.

Third, educational institutions should establish school-based counselling and psychological support services. Professional counsellor can identify behavioral problems at an early stage, provide emotional support, and assist students experiencing stress, bullying, internet addiction, or family-related difficulties. Early intervention significantly reduces the likelihood of persistent delinquent behaviour.

Fourth, the government should strengthen cybercrime investigation and digital forensic capabilities by providing specialized training to police officers, prosecutors, and judicial personnel. Improved technological infrastructure, inter-agency coordination, and faster investigation mechanisms are essential for effectively addressing cyber-enabled offence involving juveniles.

Fifth, community organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and local governance institutions should actively participate in juvenile crime prevention programmes. Community-based mentoring, sports, cultural activities, vocational training, and life-skills education provide constructive opportunities for adolescents and reduce their involvement in delinquent activities.

Finally, greater emphasis should be placed on rehabilitation rather than punishment. Consistent with the philosophy of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, rehabilitation programmes should include counselling, formal education, vocational skill development, family reintegration, and psychological support. Such measures promote long-term behavioral change and reduce recidivism. An integrated policy framework involving families, schools, communities, law enforcement agencies, and policymakers is essential for creating a safe digital environment and ensuring the healthy social development of children. Preventive, rehabilitative, and rights-based approaches remain the most effective strategies for addressing juvenile delinquency in contemporary India.

CONCLUSION

Juvenile delinquency has emerged as one of the most significant social and legal concerns in the twenty-first century. The rapid expansion of digital technology has transformed not only the

nature of communication and learning but also the pattern of juvenile offending. Traditional offences such as theft, assault, and vandalism continue to exist; however, cyberbully, identity theft, online fraud, cyberstalking, hacking, digital harassment, and other technology-enabled offences have become increasingly prevalent. These developments demonstrate that juvenile delinquency is evolving in response to technological and social change, requiring new approaches to prevention, intervention, and rehabilitation.

This study has shown that juvenile delinquency is a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by family environment, peer relationships, socio-economic conditions, educational experiences, psychological factors, and digital exposure. The study further highlights that India's juvenile justice system is primarily guided by the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, while the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023, and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA), 2023 have modernized the country's criminal justice framework. Together with the Information Technology Act, 2000 and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, these laws provide a comprehensive legal framework for addressing offences involving juveniles. Nevertheless, the increasing sophistication of cyber-enabled crimes requires continuous legal adaptation, improved digital investigation capabilities, and stronger institutional coordination. In conclusion, addressing juvenile delinquency in the digital era requires a balanced approach that combines legal accountability with child protection and social rehabilitation. A coordinated effort by families, educational institutions, policymakers, law enforcement agencies, and civil society is essential to create a secure digital environment where children can develop into responsible, law-abiding, and socially productive citizens.

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