



CRIME AND JUVENILE DELINQUENCY: A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Crime and juvenile delinquency are significant social issues that affect individuals, families, communities and institutions. Juvenile delinquency generally refers to unlawful or socially harmful behaviour committed by persons who have not reached the legally defined age of adulthood. From a sociological perspective, juvenile delinquency cannot be understood simply as an individual failure or a consequence of personal characteristics. It is closely associated with the social environment in which young people grow, including family relationships, peer groups, schools, neighbourhoods, economic conditions, cultural expectations, social inequality and opportunities for constructive participation. The present study examines crime and juvenile delinquency from a sociological perspective by focusing on the social factors that influence delinquent behaviour and the ways in which society responds to young offenders. The study considers major sociological explanations including differential association theory, anomie and strain perspectives, social disorganization theory, social control theory, labeling theory, subcultural explanations and conflict perspectives. Juvenile delinquency may take different forms, including theft, violence, property offences, substance-related offences, cyber-related misconduct, vandalism and other forms of antisocial behaviour. The causes and patterns of delinquency vary according to social circumstances and historical and cultural contexts. Family instability, inadequate parental supervision, poverty, educational disadvantage, peer influence, neighbourhood disorder and exposure to violence can increase vulnerability, while strong family relationships, educational engagement, positive peer networks, community participation and supportive institutions can provide protection. The study is primarily descriptive and analytical and draws upon sociological literature, criminological theories, academic publications and institutional material. The analysis indicates that juvenile delinquency is a multidimensional social phenomenon rather than a problem that can be attributed to a single cause. Effective responses therefore require prevention, rehabilitation, education, family support, community intervention and proportionate legal measures. The study emphasizes that young offenders require accountability as well as opportunities for rehabilitation and reintegration. A balanced sociological approach recognizes both individual responsibility and the structural conditions within which delinquent behaviour develops. The study concludes that societies can reduce juvenile delinquency by addressing social inequality, strengthening families and schools, creating constructive opportunities for young people and developing justice systems that prioritize rehabilitation, restoration and social reintegration.



KEYWORDS: *Crime, Juvenile Delinquency, Sociology of Crime, Juvenile Justice, Youth Crime, Social Disorganization, Differential Association, Anomie, Strain Theory, Social Control, Labeling Theory, Peer Influence, Family, Poverty, Education, Rehabilitation, Social Inequality, Youth Development, Community, Prevention.*

INTRODUCTION

Crime is a complex social phenomenon that exists in different forms and degrees in almost every society. It involves behaviour that violates established laws and attracts formal sanctions from legal institutions. Sociology approaches crime not merely as an individual act but as a phenomenon connected with social structures, cultural values, institutions, relationships and patterns of inequality. The sociological study of crime therefore asks why certain behaviours become defined as criminal, why particular groups may be more exposed to conditions associated with offending and how social institutions respond to individuals who violate legal norms.

Juvenile delinquency represents an important area within the sociology and criminology of crime. Young people occupy a transitional position between childhood and adulthood. During this period, individuals develop identities, establish relationships, gain independence and learn social norms. Behaviour during adolescence can therefore be strongly influenced by family, friends, educational institutions, neighbourhoods and broader cultural environments.

Most young people who experience difficulties do not become persistent offenders. Adolescence is a period in which experimentation, risk-taking and opposition to authority may occur without developing into serious criminality. It is therefore important to distinguish temporary behavioural difficulties from persistent patterns of offending. A sociological perspective seeks to understand the circumstances under which problematic behaviour develops, becomes reinforced and may continue into adulthood.

The family is one of the earliest and most influential social institutions in a child's life. Through family interaction, children learn values, rules, responsibilities and acceptable forms of behaviour. Supportive family relationships and effective parental supervision can help young people develop social responsibility. Conversely, persistent family conflict, neglect, violence, inadequate supervision and unstable relationships may create circumstances in which young people become more vulnerable to delinquent behaviour.

Schools are another major institution involved in socialization. Educational institutions provide knowledge and skills while also teaching discipline, cooperation and social responsibility. Educational failure, school exclusion, absenteeism and disengagement can weaken the connection between young people and conventional social institutions. When students feel rejected by educational environments, they may increasingly seek recognition within alternative peer groups.

Peer relationships become particularly significant during adolescence. Young people often spend substantial amounts of time with friends and may adopt behaviours, attitudes and values associated with their peer groups. Positive peer networks can encourage educational achievement and constructive activities. Negative peer associations may provide opportunities for delinquent behaviour and normalize attitudes that justify offending.

Economic conditions also influence the social environment of young people. Poverty does not automatically cause delinquency, and young people from economically disadvantaged families are not inherently more criminal. However, poverty may coexist with unemployment, inadequate housing, limited educational opportunities, neighbourhood disorder and restricted access to recreational resources. These conditions can create forms of social disadvantage that influence opportunities and choices.

Neighbourhood conditions are also important. Communities with weak institutions, high levels of residential instability, social isolation and limited collective organization may have difficulty regulating behaviour informally. Young people growing up in such environments may encounter greater exposure to crime and violence.

The media and digital environment have added new dimensions to juvenile behaviour. Young people increasingly communicate and interact through digital platforms. Cyberbullying, online harassment, identity-related offences, fraud and other forms of cyber misconduct demonstrate that juvenile delinquency can occur both offline and online. At the same time, digital environments can provide educational resources, social support and opportunities for constructive engagement.

The legal response to juvenile delinquency has also changed over time. Modern juvenile justice systems in many societies recognize that children and adolescents differ from adults in their level of maturity, decision-making capacity and potential for rehabilitation. Consequently, juvenile justice often places greater emphasis on reform, education and reintegration.

A sociological perspective is particularly useful because it connects juvenile behaviour with the larger social environment. Instead of asking only why a particular young person committed an offence, sociology also examines family conditions, peer networks, schools, communities, inequality, cultural expectations and institutional responses. The study of juvenile delinquency is therefore important for both theoretical and practical reasons. Understanding the social roots of delinquency can help societies develop prevention programmes and policies that reduce offending while supporting the healthy development of young people.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary aim of the present study is to examine crime and juvenile delinquency from a sociological perspective and to understand the social conditions associated with delinquent behaviour among young people.

The study seeks to examine the meaning and nature of juvenile delinquency and its relationship with broader patterns of crime. It explores the major sociological theories used to explain juvenile offending and examines the influence of family, peer groups, schools, neighbourhoods, economic conditions and social inequality. The study also considers the role of cultural values, socialization, social control and labeling in the development and continuation of delinquent behaviour. Another important purpose is to understand the consequences of juvenile delinquency for young people, families and communities and to examine the principles of juvenile justice and rehabilitation. The study further considers approaches to prevention and identifies the importance of family support, educational participation, community involvement and constructive opportunities for youth development.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The sociological study of crime has developed through several theoretical traditions. Classical criminological thinking emphasized rational choice and the relationship between punishment and deterrence. Later sociological approaches shifted attention toward social structure, cultural norms, relationships and institutional conditions.

Émile Durkheim made a fundamental contribution to the sociological understanding of crime by arguing that crime exists in all societies and can perform certain social functions. His concept of anomie later influenced theories explaining how weakened norms and rapid social change may contribute to deviant behaviour.

Robert K. Merton developed the concept of anomie into a theory of strain. He argued that societies may promote cultural goals without providing equal legitimate means of achieving those goals. When individuals experience a gap between culturally valued aspirations and available opportunities, different forms of adaptation may emerge. This perspective has been influential in explaining certain forms of crime and delinquency.

Edwin H. Sutherland developed differential association theory, which argues that criminal behaviour is learned through interaction with others. Individuals learn techniques, motives, attitudes and rationalizations for offending through social relationships. This theory places peer groups and interpersonal communication at the centre of explanations of delinquency.

Shaw and McKay's social disorganization approach examined the relationship between neighbourhood conditions and juvenile delinquency. Their research suggested that areas characterized by poverty, residential instability and weakened community organization may have higher levels of delinquency because informal social control is weakened.

Travis Hirschi's social control theory emphasized social bonds. According to this approach, individuals are less likely to engage in delinquent behaviour when they have strong attachments, commitments, involvement and beliefs connecting them to conventional society. Weak social bonds may reduce the social constraints against offending.

Howard Becker's labeling perspective shifted attention from the behaviour itself to social reactions. Labelling theory argues that being identified and treated as deviant can influence an individual's identity and future behaviour. A young person who is repeatedly stigmatized may become increasingly disconnected from conventional institutions.

Albert Cohen's work on delinquent subcultures examined how young people experiencing status frustration may develop alternative standards of achievement and recognition. Delinquent groups can provide status and belonging when conventional institutions do not provide young people with meaningful opportunities for success.

Cloward and Ohlin expanded strain and subcultural approaches by emphasizing differential access to illegitimate opportunities. Their work suggested that opportunities for delinquency are also socially structured.

Agnew's General Strain Theory broadened the understanding of strain by including the loss of valued relationships, failure to achieve desired goals and exposure to negative experiences. Strain may generate negative emotions, including anger and frustration, which can influence delinquent behaviour under particular circumstances.

Contemporary research increasingly emphasizes the interaction between individual development and social context. Delinquency may emerge from combinations of personal vulnerability, family difficulties, peer influence, school disengagement and community disadvantage.

Developmental criminology has also examined how offending changes across the life course. Some young people engage in temporary adolescent offending and later desist, while others develop persistent patterns that continue into adulthood. Research on family relationships consistently emphasizes the importance of parental supervision, communication and emotional attachment. Family conflict and inconsistent discipline may be associated with greater behavioural difficulties.

Research on peer influence indicates that association with delinquent peers is one of the important social factors associated with juvenile offending. Peer groups can facilitate access to opportunities for crime while also providing social approval for delinquent behaviour.

Educational research indicates that school engagement is an important protective factor. Students who feel connected to their schools and teachers are generally more likely to develop positive social identities and

conventional aspirations. The literature therefore demonstrates that juvenile delinquency is a complex social phenomenon. No single theory adequately explains all forms of juvenile offending. A comprehensive sociological analysis requires consideration of social structure, socialization, interpersonal relationships, community conditions, institutional reactions and individual development.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study follows a descriptive and analytical research methodology. It examines juvenile delinquency through concepts and theories developed within sociology and criminology.

The study primarily uses secondary sources. Academic books, scholarly articles, criminological studies, sociological theories, institutional reports and relevant literature on juvenile justice are considered for the analysis.

The research uses a qualitative and conceptual approach. Major sociological explanations of crime are examined and connected with factors affecting young people. Particular attention is given to family relationships, peer groups, education, economic conditions, neighbourhoods, social control, cultural expectations and institutional responses.

The study does not attempt to establish a causal relationship between any single social factor and delinquency. Instead, it examines how different factors interact and create conditions that may increase or reduce the likelihood of delinquent behaviour.

The analysis also considers the distinction between juvenile delinquency and adult crime. Young people are still developing emotionally, socially and cognitively, and therefore responses to juvenile offending need to consider developmental characteristics.

The research maintains a sociological focus by examining the relationship between individuals and their social environments. The objective is to understand delinquency not simply as individual misconduct but as a phenomenon embedded within social relationships and institutional structures.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Juvenile delinquency represents a significant challenge for families, educational institutions, communities and justice systems. Young people who engage in delinquent behaviour may experience educational disruption, damaged relationships, social stigma and involvement with legal institutions. In some cases, repeated offending may contribute to continued involvement in crime during adulthood. The problem cannot be understood solely through individual characteristics. Young people develop within families, schools, peer groups and communities, and these environments influence their behaviour and opportunities.

Family conflict, inadequate supervision, neglect, poverty and exposure to violence may increase vulnerability. School failure and exclusion can weaken attachment to conventional institutions. Peer groups may provide encouragement or opportunities for delinquent activity. Social responses can also influence future behaviour. Punitive responses that stigmatize young people may sometimes reinforce deviant identities rather than support reintegration. The central problem of this study is therefore to understand juvenile delinquency as a social phenomenon and to examine how social structures, relationships, institutions and reactions contribute to its development and persistence.

NEED OF THE STUDY

The study is necessary because juvenile delinquency affects not only individual young people but also families and communities. Early involvement in offending can interfere with education, employment and social development. Understanding the social causes of delinquency is essential for developing

effective prevention policies. If delinquency is treated only as a legal problem, important social factors may remain unaddressed.

The study is also important because adolescence is a period of significant development. Young people have considerable capacity for change, and appropriate interventions may prevent temporary behavioural problems from developing into persistent offending. Families require greater awareness of the importance of communication, supervision and emotional support. Schools require strategies for identifying disengagement and providing supportive interventions.

Communities also have an important role. Young people need access to sports, cultural activities, vocational education, libraries, youth clubs and other constructive opportunities.

The study is particularly relevant in the context of changing technology. Online environments have created new forms of youth misconduct while also providing new opportunities for education and social connection. A sociological study can therefore contribute to a broader understanding of juvenile delinquency and help shift attention from punishment alone toward prevention, rehabilitation and social reintegration.

FURTHER SUGGESTIONS

Further research should examine juvenile delinquency using interdisciplinary approaches combining sociology, psychology, education, social work, criminology and law. Such approaches can provide a more complete understanding of the interaction between individual development and social conditions. Longitudinal studies can provide useful information about how juvenile behaviour changes over time. Following young people across different stages of development can help distinguish temporary adolescent offending from persistent criminal behaviour.

More attention should be given to the experiences of young people who successfully desist from delinquency. Understanding protective factors may help develop more effective prevention programmes. Research should also examine digital forms of juvenile delinquency because online communication and technology continue to transform young people's social environments.

Community-level research is needed to understand how neighbourhood organizations, schools, families and youth services can cooperate to prevent delinquency. Greater attention should also be given to socioeconomic inequalities and unequal access to education, employment, recreation and social services. Research should avoid stigmatizing young people and should recognize that delinquent behaviour does not define an individual's entire identity or future.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The scope of this study includes the sociological understanding of crime and juvenile delinquency. It examines social, cultural, economic, family, educational, peer and community factors associated with juvenile offending. The study covers major sociological theories including anomie, strain, differential association, social disorganization, social control, labeling and subcultural perspectives. The study also includes the social consequences of delinquency and the role of prevention, rehabilitation and juvenile justice.

The research is broad rather than restricted to a single geographical area or particular category of offence. Consequently, the findings provide a general sociological interpretation. The study has certain limitations. Juvenile delinquency varies across countries and legal systems, and the legal definition of a juvenile is not identical everywhere. Crime statistics may also be affected by differences in reporting, policing and recording practices.

The study is primarily based on secondary literature and therefore does not provide original field data from a particular group of young people. Another limitation is that social factors cannot be treated as simple causes. Poverty, family problems or peer relationships do not automatically produce delinquent behaviour. Their effects depend on the interaction of multiple conditions. The study also recognizes that young people are diverse. Gender, socioeconomic circumstances, culture, education, family environment and community conditions can influence experiences of delinquency differently.

findings

The study indicates that juvenile delinquency is a multidimensional social phenomenon. It cannot be explained by one factor or one theory. The family environment emerges as an important influence on young people's social development. Supportive relationships, effective communication and appropriate supervision can strengthen conventional behaviour, whereas persistent conflict, neglect and weak supervision may increase vulnerability.

Peer relationships are also significant. Young people may learn attitudes and behaviours through interaction with friends. Delinquent peer networks can normalize offending and provide opportunities for participation. Educational engagement appears to function as an important protective factor. Students who experience positive relationships with teachers and schools may develop stronger attachments to conventional institutions.

Economic disadvantage does not directly determine delinquency, but social and economic inequalities can create conditions associated with increased vulnerability. Limited opportunities, neighbourhood disadvantage and exclusion can influence young people's experiences. Neighbourhood conditions can affect informal social control. Communities with strong social networks and active institutions may be better positioned to discourage delinquent behaviour.

The study also indicates that social labeling can influence the future experiences of young offenders. Repeated stigma may make educational and employment reintegration more difficult.

Theories of strain suggest that frustration arising from blocked opportunities, social pressures or negative experiences may contribute to delinquent behaviour in some circumstances.

Differential association emphasizes the importance of learning through social interaction, while social control theory highlights the protective role of bonds with family, school and conventional institutions.

The findings also suggest that juvenile justice responses should consider rehabilitation and development. Young offenders may have significant capacity for behavioural change.

Prevention is likely to be more effective when it addresses underlying social conditions rather than relying exclusively on punishment.

DISCUSSION

The findings support the sociological understanding that crime is connected with social organization and social relationships. Juvenile delinquency develops within particular social environments and should therefore be interpreted in relation to those environments. Family relationships are especially important because families are among the primary institutions of socialization. Young people learn rules, expectations and methods of dealing with conflict through everyday family interaction. A supportive family environment can provide emotional security and guidance.

At the same time, it would be incorrect to assume that family problems inevitably produce delinquency. Many young people experiencing family difficulties do not offend. Protective factors such as supportive teachers, positive friendships and community programmes may compensate for some risks. Peer groups become increasingly important during adolescence. Young people may seek acceptance and

recognition from their peers. When a peer group approves of delinquent behaviour, offending may provide status and belonging.

This observation supports differential association theory, which emphasizes that criminal behaviour is learned through interaction. It also demonstrates the importance of providing young people with positive peer environments. The role of schools is equally significant. Education provides not only academic knowledge but also social integration. Students who feel successful and respected within schools may have stronger attachments to conventional society.

School exclusion can therefore have unintended consequences. Removing a young person from a conventional institution without providing an alternative educational or developmental environment may increase social disconnection. The relationship between poverty and delinquency requires careful interpretation. Poverty should not be treated as a direct cause of crime. Rather, economic disadvantage can interact with other forms of social exclusion. Lack of resources may restrict access to education, recreation and employment opportunities.

Social disorganization theory provides a useful framework for understanding neighbourhood differences. Communities with strong collective organization can establish informal forms of supervision and social support. Communities experiencing instability may find it more difficult to provide such mechanisms. Labeling theory highlights another dimension of the problem. Once a young person is officially identified as delinquent, the label can influence how teachers, employers, neighbours and family members perceive that person. Persistent stigma may make reintegration difficult.

This demonstrates why juvenile justice systems should be cautious about unnecessarily exposing young people to stigmatizing processes. Accountability is important, but responses should also provide opportunities for education and rehabilitation. Strain theory contributes another important explanation. Young people may experience pressure when they are encouraged to achieve socially valued goals but lack legitimate opportunities to achieve them. However, strain does not automatically lead to crime. Social support, coping skills and access to legitimate opportunities can influence how individuals respond. The discussion therefore supports an integrated approach. Juvenile delinquency should be understood through the interaction of social structure, socialization, peer relationships, institutional attachment and individual responses.

Crime, Deviance and Juvenile Delinquency

Crime and deviance are related but distinct concepts. Deviance refers broadly to behaviour that violates social norms, whereas crime specifically involves violation of formal laws. Not every deviant act is criminal, and not every criminal act is necessarily viewed as highly deviant by every social group. Juvenile delinquency generally refers to unlawful behaviour committed by young people who fall within the juvenile category established by law. The concept is therefore partly legal and partly social. The sociological distinction is important because social definitions change. Behaviour that is considered unacceptable in one society or historical period may be treated differently elsewhere. The study of delinquency therefore requires attention to both legal definitions and social reactions.

Family and Juvenile Delinquency

The family provides the first major environment of socialization. Children learn patterns of communication, conflict resolution and social responsibility through family relationships. Parental supervision can reduce opportunities for risky behaviour, while emotional attachment can strengthen children's commitment to family expectations. Family difficulties may include domestic conflict, inconsistent discipline, neglect, parental absence and economic stress. These conditions may increase

vulnerability, although they do not determine individual behaviour. Family interventions can therefore play an important role in delinquency prevention. Parenting support, counselling and communication programmes can strengthen family relationships.

Education and Juvenile Delinquency

Education is a major protective institution. Schools provide structure, social interaction and opportunities for achievement. Academic failure may weaken self-confidence and attachment to school. Repeated disciplinary problems can further distance students from educational institutions.

Schools can contribute to prevention by creating inclusive environments, supporting students experiencing difficulties and providing vocational and extracurricular opportunities. Education can also improve legitimate opportunities for employment and social participation, thereby addressing some structural conditions associated with delinquency.

Peer Groups and Juvenile Delinquency

Peer groups are important sources of identity and social learning during adolescence. Young people may adopt the language, attitudes and behavioural patterns of their friends. Positive peer groups encourage education, sports, creativity and community participation. Negative peer networks may normalize violence, theft, substance use or other forms of misconduct. Prevention programmes should therefore create positive peer networks rather than focusing only on individual behaviour.

Poverty, Inequality and Delinquency

Social inequality is an important dimension of criminological analysis. Young people who grow up with limited access to education, recreation and employment may face restricted legitimate opportunities. However, poverty itself should not be treated as an automatic cause of delinquency. Millions of economically disadvantaged young people do not engage in crime.

The relationship is more accurately understood through cumulative disadvantage, social exclusion and unequal access to resources.

Policies that improve educational opportunities, employment prospects and community resources can therefore contribute indirectly to crime prevention.

Juvenile Justice and Rehabilitation

Juvenile justice is based on the recognition that young people differ from adults in developmental maturity and capacity for change. The objective of juvenile justice should therefore include accountability, protection, rehabilitation and reintegration. Punishment alone may not address the social conditions associated with offending. Educational programmes, counselling, family intervention, vocational training and community-based rehabilitation may provide more constructive outcomes. Restorative approaches can also encourage young offenders to understand the consequences of their behaviour and, where appropriate, participate in repairing harm. Rehabilitation is particularly important because adolescence is a period of significant development. A young person who commits an offence should not necessarily be defined permanently by that act.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Effective prevention of juvenile delinquency requires strengthening family relationships and improving communication between parents and young people. Parents should provide appropriate supervision while also respecting the developing independence of adolescents. Educational institutions

should identify students who are disengaged, frequently absent or experiencing serious academic difficulties and should provide appropriate support before problems become more severe. Schools and colleges should provide counselling, vocational guidance, sports, cultural activities and opportunities for constructive participation. Community organizations should create safe spaces where young people can develop skills and positive relationships. Youth clubs, libraries, sports programmes and cultural organizations can provide alternatives to risky activities.

Peer mentoring can help young people develop supportive social networks. Positive peer influence should be encouraged through leadership and community programmes. Juvenile justice institutions should prioritize rehabilitation and education while maintaining appropriate accountability. Responses should be proportionate to the seriousness of the offence and the developmental circumstances of the young person. Stigmatization should be minimized. Young offenders should have opportunities to return to education, develop employable skills and participate positively in society.

Digital literacy and online safety education should be strengthened because young people increasingly spend substantial time in digital environments.

Communities should address structural conditions associated with disadvantage. Improving access to education, employment, recreation and social services can contribute to long-term prevention.

Government agencies, schools, families, social workers, community organizations and justice institutions should cooperate rather than working independently.

CONCLUSION

Crime and juvenile delinquency are complex social phenomena that cannot be explained exclusively through individual characteristics. A sociological perspective demonstrates that delinquent behaviour develops within social environments shaped by family relationships, peer groups, educational institutions, neighbourhoods, cultural expectations and economic opportunities. The family provides the earliest foundation for socialization. Supportive family relationships and appropriate supervision can strengthen social responsibility. Schools provide another important source of structure, identity and opportunity. Positive educational experiences can protect young people from social isolation and disengagement.

Peer relationships become particularly significant during adolescence. Young people may learn behavioural patterns through interaction with peers, and peer groups can either encourage constructive participation or normalize delinquent activities. Economic disadvantage and social inequality also require careful consideration. Poverty does not automatically produce crime, but unequal access to opportunities can create conditions that increase vulnerability. Social policies aimed at reducing exclusion can therefore contribute to delinquency prevention.

The major sociological theories examined in the study provide complementary explanations. Differential association emphasizes learning through interaction, strain theory focuses on pressures and blocked opportunities, social disorganization emphasizes neighbourhood conditions, social control theory examines bonds with conventional institutions, and labeling theory highlights the consequences of social reactions. No single theory explains every form of juvenile delinquency. An integrated sociological approach is therefore necessary.

The study also emphasizes that juvenile justice should recognize the developmental nature of adolescence. Young people must be held appropriately accountable for harmful behaviour, but they should also be provided with opportunities for education, rehabilitation and social reintegration. The most effective response to juvenile delinquency is therefore not limited to punishment. Prevention requires strong families, supportive schools, positive peer networks, healthy communities, accessible youth services and meaningful educational and vocational opportunities. Juvenile delinquency should ultimately be

understood not only as a problem of law enforcement but also as an issue of social development. Societies that provide young people with belonging, opportunity, education and constructive ways to participate are better positioned to reduce delinquency and promote responsible citizenship.

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