

Adolescence Offence and Social Responsibilities: Perspective Upper Class Boys in Bangladesh

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ABSTRACT: Adolescence offence among upper-class boys remains shrouded in mystery. So scanty is our knowledge of this group that a public image of the upper-class adolescent is non-existent, and neither the barest trace nor suspicion is available of him as delinquent. Although the hard knot of delinquency (behavior that is apt to try any public tolerance) is located in the bottom levels of the working class, limited studies (using self-reported techniques) have revealed delinquency throughout the class structure. But nothing is known about the delinquency of boys who attend expensive private schools. The purpose of this paper is to study Bangladeshi upper class adolescents' involvement in different violent and criminal activities and their growing tendency to commit acts of violence in high schools and the reasons behind them. This study therefore aims to provide such data by attempting to understand the different influential factors that are closely related with the involvement of adolescence offence in Bangladesh. This study is based on primary data of 200 upper class adolescents who are involved in different criminal activities of Dhaka city, 40 parents, 30 secondary school teachers, 20 social workers and on review of secondary literatures. After collecting the data they are transcribed, tabulated and analyzed in terms of the research objectives. This study shows that parents' detachment, low internet cost, social media, reluctantness of law and enforcement agencies and friends' influence play the most important role on upper class adolescence offence. This study also recommends some ways to mitigate this problem.

KEY WORDS: *adolescence, violence, social responsibility, mental health etc.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Adolescence (from Latin *adolescere*, meaning 'to grow up') is a transitional stage of physical and psychological development that generally occurs during the period from puberty to legal adulthood (age of majority). Adolescence is usually associated with the teenage years, but its physical, psychological or cultural expressions may begin earlier and end later. The prevalence of antisocial and delinquent behavior in juveniles has increased dramatically over the past decades, along with the prevalence of other health-endangering behaviors, such as substance use and suicide. These trends have been accompanied by increased levels of psychiatric admissions and special classroom placements in schools. It is posed that these changes reflect decreased levels of impulse control by children living in the high society in Bangladesh. These papers focuses on reasons behind criminal activities of these adolescents and recommend some ways that might helps in impulse control as it relates to antisocial and delinquent behavior in juveniles. It traces the development of these behaviors through their age-specific manifestations, and summarizes known social and biological risk factors. The paper examines how different risk factors impinge on the development of antisocial behavior at different points in the life cycle. Developmental sequences are reviewed leading to serious antisocial behavior or to assistance of the behavior. The interaction between developmental tasks and the emergence of antisocial behavior is considered. Critical, "sensitive" periods in development often intersect with the increased prevalence of risk factors at certain age periods of children, leading to the emergence or aggravation of antisocial behavior. The use of empirical developmental knowledge for screening of population of youngsters is highlighted. The present paper explores the youth culture and its influence on private and public school upper-class boys. Limited self-reported data reveal that these boys are peer oriented and are interested in "social" non-academic affairs. Proportionately more private school boys report delinquent acts. A configuration of relatively consistent attitudes towards delinquent situations is evident and suggests, perhaps, new meanings of what is proper and improper among adolescents. Discussion concentrates on the significance of roles and rules in explaining much of this behavior.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Kendell, P. C. (2006) in his article Child and adolescent therapy: cognitive-behavioral procedures presents cognitive-behavioral approaches for treating frequently encountered child and adolescent disorders.

Fields, A. S., & McNamara, R. J. (2003) in his research The prevention of child and adolescent violence: a review. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 8, 61-91 shows how to develop and evaluate the effectiveness of a violence prevention program for Thai high school adolescents based on Orem's Self-Care Deficit Theory of Nursing.

We need everyone in this community to embrace the core value that youth violence affects each of us and each of us has a role to play to keep our children and youth safe. The role of our schools is especially important in this endeavor. With a recently approved new Strategic Plan, the Minneapolis Public Schools are at an important juncture. (Horn D. 2000)

Some internal factors of the family also indirectly teach them in becoming aggressive which creates an adverse response to their soft mind. *Rainbow Nari O Shishu Kallan Foundation*, a lead NGO in Bangladesh that works with children has found that conjugal parental disputes, familial chaos, physical torture in trifling matter etc., create an environment that propels negative outlook in the adolescents and paves the way that leads to criminal activities. Instead of going to school or practicing games and sports and enjoying creative entertainment, they enjoy vulgar programmes that are shown on numerous satellite TV channels which directly or indirectly play a role to take them towards crime.

According to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, there are around 40 million children in the country between the age of 5 and 17 years. Among them, around 1.3 million children are engaged in hazardous jobs, 70% of whom are also involved in criminal activities due to poverty. As Bangladesh observes National Child Rights Week 2016 from September 29 to October 5, sources at the Ministry of Home Affairs say around 44% of the street children in the country are involved in drug peddling, 35% are involved in picketing, 12% in mugging, 11% in human trafficking and 21% in other criminal activities.

According to Callaghan D. M. the influence of spiritual growth on adolescents' initiative and responsibility for self-care is significant.

Farrell, A. D., & Meyer, A. L., & White, K. S. (2001) in his article responding in Peaceful and Positive Ways (RiPP) is a school-based violence prevention program designed to provide students ages 10–14 in middle and junior high schools with conflict resolution strategies and skills. RiPP is designed to be implemented along with a peer mediation program. It combines a classroom curriculum of social/cognitive problem solving with real-life skill-building opportunities. Students learn to apply critical-thinking skills and personal management strategies to personal health and well-being issues.

Dahlberg, L.L., & Potter, L.B. (2001) in his paper Youth violence: developmental pathways and prevention challenges reviews the major trends in homicide victimization and perpetration among youths during the past decade, the developmental pathways of delinquent and violent behavior and the context in which these behaviors occur, and some of the challenges associated with disrupting these pathways and preventing violence. Previous research reveals that multiple pathways lead toward violence and delinquency. Predicting which pathway a youth will follow, or if one will be followed at all, depends to some extent on a host of other biological, psychosocial, and environmental factors present as young people transition from early childhood to adolescence to early adulthood. Preventing violence requires a comprehensive approach that takes into account developmental needs, tasks, and supports.

Objectives

The principle objective of the study is to identify the causes and consequences of juvenile delinquency. In this study, some specific objectives have also been considered:

- i. To find out the types of crimes committed by upper class adolescents in Bangladesh.
- ii. To find out the causes those are responsible for adolescence crime.
- iii. To put forward suggestions that may help to reduce the rate of adolescence crime in Bangladesh.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study is descriptive as well as exploratory in nature and based on primary and secondary data. The sample population for this study is composed on 200 upper class Adolescents, 40 parents, 30 teachers and 20 social workers. Samples have been collected through purposive sampling technique by means of a survey, using self-administrated questionnaires. This qualitative study was conducted using focus groups and in-depth interviews to explore the perceptions, experiences, thoughts and feelings regarding social responsibilities and violence management. After collecting data appropriate statistical analyses were used to satisfy the major objectives of the study such as weighted average, frequency distribution, pie chart, radar diagram etc.

Data Analysis and Findings

Following are the findings based on the objectives of the study referring from the sources of Primary and Secondary data:

Types of crimes

The following item provides some indication of the general interests and youth culture orientation of these teenagers. Each boy was asked to check those items which applied "to most of the boys here at school." Table 3 presents the selected items in rank order of response frequency. From 200 adolescents' response we found the following 6 major types of crimes those are mostly committed by upper class adolescents in Bangladesh:

| Types of crimes | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Drug addiction | 100 | 50% |
| Unrestricted Sexual behavior | 80 | 40% |
| Pornography | 180 | 90% |
| Cyber crime | 45 | 22.5% |
| Violation of laws | 30 | 15% |
| Homo Sexualities | 20 | 10% |

The above table revealed that the majority of the delinquents are addicted in pornography. Drug addiction, sex tourism, cyber crime, violation of laws like carrying arms or driving car without license, homo sexualities are also some common crimes committed by upper class boys in Bangladesh. Findings are described below:

1. **Drug addiction:** Addiction is a chronic disease characterized by drug seeking and use that is compulsive, or difficult to control, despite harmful consequences. The initial decision to take drugs is voluntary for most people, but repeated drug use can lead to brain changes that challenge an addicted person's self-control and interfere with their ability to resist intense urges to take drugs. These brain changes can be persistent, which is why drug addiction is considered a "relapsing" disease—people in recovery from drug use disorders are at increased risk for returning to drug use even after years of not taking the drug. Our primary data shows that about 50% adolescents are addicted in drugs. Study found some reasons behind drug addiction of upper class boys and these are: boredom, friends' influence and parents' unawareness.
2. **Unrestricted sexual behavior:** Study shows that 40% of the total adolescents are habituated at unrestricted sex. They have sexual relationship with more than one partner. Parents' detachment and drug addiction are responsible for this.
3. **Pornography:** Porn addiction is considered a behavioral addiction that is characterized by an ever-growing compulsion to view pornographic content or material. In the past, a person suffering from an addiction to pornography would primarily satisfy his or her craving for pornographic content by viewing or storing pornographic videos, magazines, and photos. Study shows that almost all the sample data responded yes against this activity. Low cost of internet is mainly responsible for this. In addition to the internet, a range of others means, such as social media and smart phones, enable porn addiction by providing an outlet to view pornography anywhere and at any time. These devices allow one to store and view porn in higher volumes than ever before while leaving little or no visible physical evidence of anyone's porn use.
4. **Cyber crime:** Cybercrime is defined as a crime in which a computer is the object of the crime (hacking, phishing, spamming) or is used as a tool to commit an offense (child pornography, hate crimes). Cybercriminals may use computer technology to access personal information, business trade secrets or use the internet for exploitative or malicious purposes. Criminals can also use computers for communication and document or data storage. Criminals who perform these illegal activities are often referred to as hackers. About 23% of the adolescents are experiencing this type of crime.
5. **Violation of laws like carrying arms or driving car without license:** 15% of the upper-class boys were found to carry arms or drive cars without license. Reluctantness of law and enforcement agencies regarding upper-class boys are responsible for this.
6. **Homosexuality:** Homosexuality is romantic attraction, sexual attraction or sexual behavior between members of the same sex or gender. As a sexual orientation, homosexuality is "an enduring pattern of emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attractions" to people of the same sex. This study shows that 10% boys experiences homosexuality and reasons behind this is lack of practice of religious activities, parental detachment and unawareness.

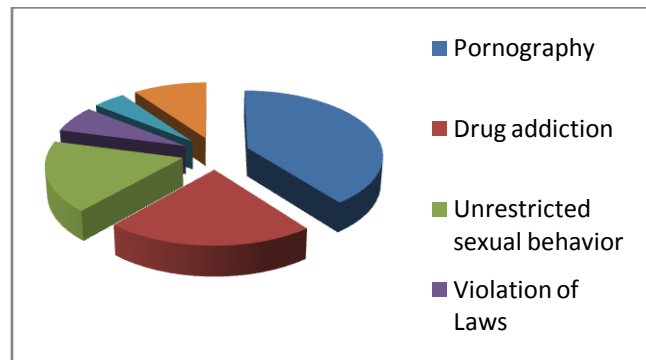


Fig- Percentage of types of crimes

From our primary data of 200 adolescents we found pornography is the topmost crime committed by most of the adolescents.

Reasons

Again from those 200 adolescents, 40 of their parents, 30 teachers and 20 social workers following 5 major reasons are projected behind their criminal activities:

1. Parents' detachment and unawareness
2. Friends' influence
3. Social media
4. Reluctantness of law and enforcement policies towards upper class boys.
5. Low cost of internet and mobile services

To project the importance of factors concerning reasons behind adolescence offence a structured questionnaire was administered with the following 5 point Likert scale: 1 = not responsible, 2 = less responsible, 3 = moderately responsible, 4 = very much responsible, 5 = mainly responsible. After collecting data weighted average was taken for each of the factors from adolescents, parents, teachers and social workers perspective and the following result has been found:

Table-2: Weighted average from adolescents, parents, teachers and social workers perspective

| Reasons | Adolescents | Parents | Teachers | Social workers | Aggregated Average |
|--|-------------|---------|----------|----------------|--------------------|
| Parents' detachment | 4.5 | 4 | 4.5 | 4.75 | 4.43 |
| Friends' influence | 3.26 | 4.50 | 4.25 | 4.5 | 4.12 |
| Social media | 3.5 | 4.40 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.23 |
| Reluctantness of law and enforcement policies towards upper class boys | 4.25 | 4.5 | 3.5 | 4 | 4.06 |
| Low cost of internet and mobile services | 5 | 4.75 | 5 | 5 | 4.94 |

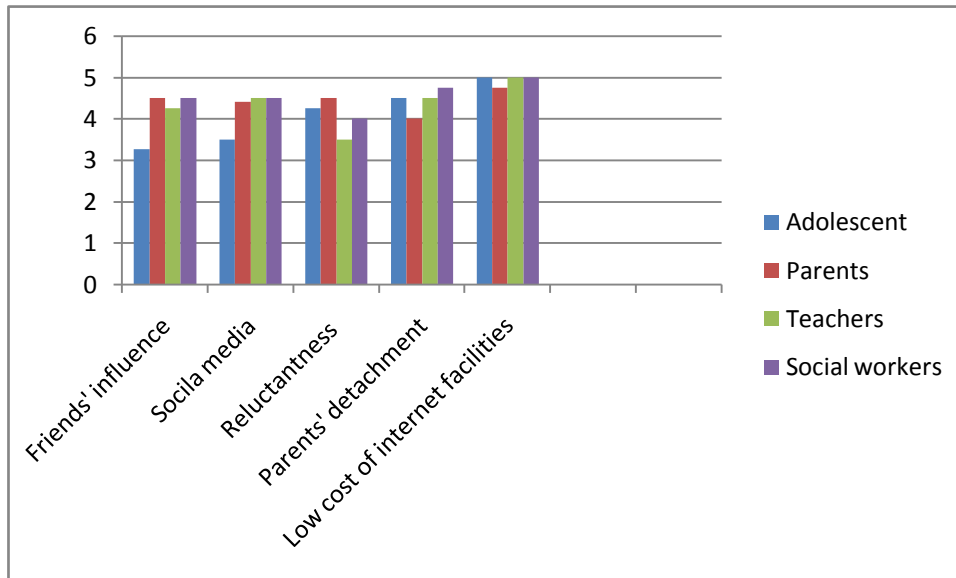


Fig: Reasons Behind Adolescence Offence

From the aggregated average of table-2 it is found that the main reason behind the criminal activities of upper-class boys is low cost of internet and mobile services.

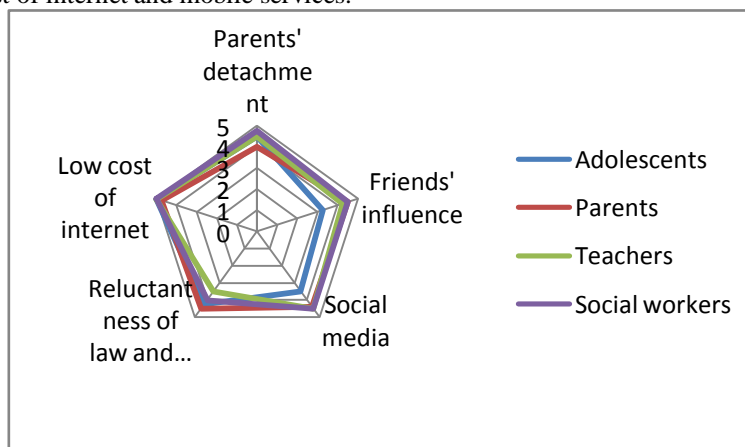


Fig: Radar diagram to show the differences among the perceptions of adolescents, parents, teachers and social workers

From the above diagram it is clearly shown that gaps are minimum at low internet cost and Parents’ detachment.

How to mitigate this Problem

1. The positive approach by teachers, school counselors and parents were perceived to be valuable for cultivating adolescents’ social responsibility. This approach consists of two helping methods: the first method is the individual approach, that is, treating the adolescents with warmth, love, respect, understanding and providing support, guidance and helpful explanations for decision making. For students who need close attention, especially when they feel sad or have made a significant mistake or lapse in judgment, the teachers give them positive reinforcement to assist in passing through the crisis. The second approach is more general. It encourages classroom to participate in positive social engagement such as greeting each other, respectfully giving and receiving compliments, and asking for help. This particular approach also encourages students to participate in peaceful engagement among themselves. Adolescent students feel safe and recognize the positive effect of responsibility in their daily lives despite the violent events that surround them.
2. Teachers realized that their role could significantly contribute to positive interpersonal relationships with adolescent students to promote non-use of violence towards others. I
3. The media is one of the factors that influence adolescents' social responsibility toward violence. Adolescents spend a great amount of time either on the Internet or playing computer games, which usually are showing violent situations. Adolescents are heavily influenced by the media as they lack proper judgment.

Recommendations

There are some recommendations from the social workers to mitigate the problem of adolescence offence in Bangladesh are as follows:

1. Cultivating social responsibility as a positive deterrent to violence is essential. The positive approach by teachers at school through which adolescent students feel safe and recognize the positive effect of responsibility in their daily lives despite the violent events that surround them.
2. Ethical, moral and spiritual development of the adolescents by their parents and teachers can play an important role to mitigate this problem.
3. Parents' attachment should be increased. Previously it was studied that the importance of adolescent-parent attachment as a determinant of health during this development phase and beyond. It is essential for mental health and other health and education professionals to be knowledgeable about adolescent development and the value of adolescent-parent attachment. Shifting our assumptions about adolescence as a period of detachment and rebellion to a view that better fits the reality of this developmental period and stresses the importance of staying connected is well overdue.
4. The prevention of criminal activities may seek to target the antecedents of delinquency by implementing a comprehensive school-wide approach that includes (i) ensuring that the school has supportive administrative leadership, with commitment and buy-in from faculty and staff; (ii) providing high-quality needs-based professional development; (iii) using academic and behavioral screening for the identification of at-risk youth; (iv) implementing continuous program evaluation and modification. As at-risk students are identified early, evidence-based strategies implemented, and student responses monitored and tracked regularly, incidents of juvenile delinquency may be dramatically reduced.
5. Parental or adult influence is the most important factor in deterring delinquency. When a parent or other adult interacts with the child and shows them what is acceptable behavior and what is considered wrong, the child is more likely to act in a way that is not delinquent. It is very important for a child to have a bond with a good adult who will influence their actions and show them the difference between what is right and what is wrong. Even if your child has committed an act of delinquency, their lives are not over. You, as their care giver have the chance to turn around their lives and show them how to change their ways.
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IV. CONCLUSION

Bangladesh is passing through a time when social stability is breaking down in proportion to any time. Bangladesh is facing different types of problems like malnutrition, unemployment problem, terrorism, corruption, political violence that are signed as major and silent problem. But a social violence like adolescent crime is not silent today. It has spread top to bottom in the society. The incidents of hostile and anti-social activities like smuggling, snatching, trafficking, extortions, murdering in broad daylight are increasing day by day. Because of various reasons, some adolescent are getting involved in these activities. These teenagers have insufficient knowledge and lack the sense of discrimination about determining what is right and wrong. They generally get offended, become emotional or hope to get fame in the society or are influenced by exemplary intention.

Thus, the period of the adolescents' growing sense of responsibility is a turning point towards the responsibility of adulthood and peaceful behavior. Understanding the essentiality of cultivating adolescents' social responsibility toward violence may be helpful in implementing a positive course of action. It may lead to more efficient allocation of time and energy to reconcile the patterns of early violence prevention that are recognized as social responsibility.

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