

Full Length Research Paper

A Case Study of the Causes for Juvenile Delinquency and Introducing Educational measures as a Prevention mechanism: Pedagogical-Psychological Issues of Offending behaviour among Juveniles on the example of Georgia

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Abstract

Humans represent a complex system of unity, making it impossible to dissolve and isolate it into parts. Hence, the humans need to be taken care of and nourished on the whole. This should be applied as a principle of our upbringing. Educational measures with juveniles, raising their cognitive interests, giving a stimulus for life, development of labour skills and abilities, strengthening of one's will, raising the level of self-criticism and self-evaluation, advising, proving aid, sympathizing, tactful pedagogical intervention, showing considerate attitude towards them, humanistic and positive environment serve as the conditions, with the support of which a correct way should be shown to difficult children and prevent them from leading to offence.

Therefore, article explores importance of identifying causes for juvenile delinquency and introducing educational measures as a prevention mechanism, which is based on detailed study of Pedagogical-Psychological issues of offending behaviour among juveniles by Georgian authors as well as personal research and comparative analysis.

Keywords: Juvenile, Education, Society.

Introduction

Juvenile's diversion from public norms of behaviour, starting from disciplinary offences to crime falls under special attention of the society. Everyone is definitely fairly concerned with behaviour of the youth –our future. It is interesting to learn about their worries and concerns, as well as the requirements set towards them in modern time, the values served by them, their interests on the one hand, and on the other hand, what is requested from them by the modern society. Therefore, the study represents basic causes of juvenile delinquency and the ways for their further rehabilitation, in particular it aims at identifying and studying the fundamentals, factual circumstances and reasons leading to juvenile delinquency.

In view of identified practical needs and constraints, on the basis of analysis of various sources, personal experience, observation on real life-situation and forecasting the prospect, we got interested with research problem and searching their settlement ways.

Literature Review

The works by famous Georgian scientists and researchers acting in the sphere of education, social sciences, pedagogy and psychology in particular Doctor of Judicial Sciences Professor Sh. Demetrazze, Maia Khasia, Nino Gongadze, Giorgi Glonti and others are analyzed during the case study, in which not only pedagogical fragments and nuances of crime prevention but also specific pedagogical principles and bases are discussed. Analysis of various sources and real-life situation once again clarifies that in the recent period application of pedagogical means for crime prevention among the juveniles is given a priority.

During recent years, the number of offences has been considerably increased in Georgia. Juveniles tend to easily harm the lives of their coevals due to rather simple reasons. Sorting out the problems in the street has taken a frequent character, which is often finished with deplorable results. Hence, the issue of fighting against criminal world is rather actively supported in our society. This condition has become as one of the basic problems for our country, being still remained as unsettled. Problem settlement in this particular case considers elimination of the above-mentioned criminal mentality among the adults, which requires introducing a differentiated approach for settling this issue.

In order to elaborate fair, scientifically approved recommendations it is necessary to undertake in-depth study of the roots and sources conditioning offending among the juveniles. Of course, we agree with the assumption that people cannot be born as offenders, that juveniles are turned into offenders under the influence of the surrounding world.

Adults' feelings, aspirations and yet unformed forces often come in conflict with the obstacles and difficulties, being encountered on their way of life. Juveniles often turn out to be unready for the challenges requested with the choice for correct way of life. Therefore, the adults should be assisted in choosing a correct way of life within their families, schools and the society, although in order to provide aid you need to be aware of the type and way of assisting them. From this viewpoint it is of utmost importance to single out vital problems and to define the directions upon the ways for answering them to result in settling of these problems.

With this purpose, it is noteworthy to lead a targeted educational work with juvenile offenders, as well as juvenile suspects and the adults inclined towards crime. These represent the greatest concern for schools, families and the society. Unfortunately, indifferent attitude towards them is a concurrent feature of our society. Meanwhile, timely intervention and supporting the adults can definitely direct their distorted morality and behaviour back to good.

We think that together with social, pedagogical and psychological reasons are to be investigated in the basis of offence. Juvenile offenders are often represented by the following categories:

- ✓ *The adults offending consciously and consider themselves right, opposing the society. The offenders of the above-mentioned category, as a rule, represent group leaders and are able to have a strong and disastrous influence on diffident offenders;*
- ✓ *The adults being well aware of what is allowed and what is not. This category of adults is devoid of solid moral belief and deep moral feelings. Their behaviour is largely dependent on the situation. These young people often lead a normal life before falling under bad influence due to which they fail to oppose the evil impact.*
- ✓ *The adults being unable to oppose their requirements and often satisfy these requirements in an unpermitted form. This category of offenders often suffers from losing conscience and regret about offending after committing a crime. These adults are often willing to behave well, though their personal requirements often win in the struggle of motivations;*
- ✓ *The adults having failed to find their place in the groups of pupils, families and are constantly enraged. They deem everyone to be unfair towards them, that they are neglected, insulted, mocked at and abused. The above-mentioned negative feelings can be truly developed on real basis, though it is also possible that this might be pointless, as they may not be actually mocked at or insulted. These adults form a reserve of offenders.*

As we see, the surrounding of coevals often has a huge influence on children, which cannot be left beyond attention. This influence is often so strong that it demolishes all good, having been acquired from families and senior mates at school. We have often witnessed the facts of “digressions”, being conditioned with the street influence on the adults.

What attracts the adults to the street, what pokes them to it? We can name several reasons in this particular case, i.e. in conflict-driven families without understanding among the members the cosy atmosphere is often violated for children and they often search a “shelter” outside. In this case, the adults are misunderstood, are not sympathized with, feeling oneself as isolated from families and find a common language in the street, with coevals. The adults prefer to have contact with the people recognizing him/her, not being inquisitive towards them and respecting his/her personality. Adults easily achieve self-inculcation there, having been long-awaited.

When adults are escaped in the street, the representatives of older generation start exploring the reasons, though pay less attention to their hidden complaints, being less aware of their spiritual world; otherwise, we may not have made some mistakes, i.e. being violation of word and deed or breaking a promise. Saying one and doing another weakens not only power of word, but also our authority before them, leading to destroying children's trust towards us.

A rather thought-provoking picture is created by the conducted surveys: a large part of the adults arrested due to various offences belong to marginal groups of the society. Majority of offences are of economic character (stealing, burglary, cheating, appropriation, etc.) There are many cases when the offenders buy food for home with stolen money or pay for the grocery taken under debt. Often the sum for the stolen item comprises a ridiculously small amount, i.e. 5-10 Gel.

As seen after study of juvenile offenders, most of them manage to disguise their real intentions, upon which fair comments are made by Psychologist N. Rogava “*Under ordinary conditions it is rather difficult to notice double-facedness of the adult. The adult manages to disguise it, trying to make a positive impression on the surrounding people, though in conflict situations, when an uncompromised choice is to be made between good and evil, one can help revealing an adult's real face*” (Demetradze, 1996).

It is rather difficult for us to eliminate well-grounded selfishness among juvenile offenders. Eco-centrism, bringing personal interests on the frontline is a sign characteristic for difficult children. Majority of them are characterized by egoism, being expressed by the fact that such adults only think and care for their own interests when solving each specific task. They believe in necessity of realizing their interests and uniqueness of their personality.

The reasons of social behaviour described in the edition “*Rehabilitation of Juvenile Offenders in Georgia*” by State Management School at Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA) in relation to the causes of juvenile delinquency is particularly important: “*An individual is led to offending by the combination of the following factors: disappointment, limitation to achieving one's aims, low social control, pushing juveniles to more deeply enter the criminal world, which on its turn causes*

“As shown by the regional analysis majority of offences committed by the juveniles are registered in the cities, which is rather clear as the peculiarities of city life and the level of social control existing there is comparatively low in contrast to the villages” – notes Criminologist Giorgi Glonti (Glonti, 2008). The viewpoints by Giorgi Glonti upon the reasons of juveniles offences in various cities is as follows: “The cities distinguished with most insensitive spreading juvenile delinquency include a) the capitals characterized by tense settlements, increased opportunity of juvenile mobility and high portion of juvenile migrants. All three above-listed factors support anonymity of entertainment among all these category of juveniles, increasing likelihood of anti-social revelations. b) Industrial centres being basically settled with less qualified workers. As a rule, juvenile offenders come from these families; c) Resort-cities – lifestyle of which often push juveniles towards pastime and illegal ways of earning a living” (Glonti, 2008).

An interesting research upon the reasons of juvenile delinquency is represented in Maia Khasia’s book “*Juveniles rehabilitation in Georgia, reality and prospects*” (Part 2) (Khasia, 2006). The personnel of the Special Institution (Youth Detention Centre) as well as the juveniles detained (imprisoned) in this institutions participated in the research.

The research upon the reasons for offending by the juveniles provided us with the following list of offence motifs:

1. Hard family and social conditions;
2. Family conflicts;
3. Incorrect distribution of the functions within the family, having become a basis for juvenile delinquency. The juveniles being devoid of the education, profession and life experience have to maintain their families;
4. The role of the society and lack of its positive impact;
5. The problems of upbringing, i.e. incorrect upbringing; deficit of upbringing;
6. Psychological problems.

We believe that avoidance of offending among the juveniles is achievable though leading their correct and targeted up-bringing and education. Everything must be done in order not to lead the children to punishment and finally to their imprisonment. As we have already mentioned, conducting a correct pedagogical activity is of utmost importance with this purpose. The problem actually exists, though settlement ways are to be found. From this viewpoint, various practices exist, which should be shared, though all countries have their own traditions, culture, aspirations, values, which require individual approach.

It is noticeable that the cases of disciplinary violations have become more frequent in schools, having a negative influence on adults’ moral as well as social development. Occasionally, adult students become immediate participants or witnesses of various form of offences. False values, in particular that children study though modelling behaviour, i.e. imitating others often lead to severe results. Social elements are dominant in schools, not being a subject to study. In order to avoid socially unacceptable, negative forms of behaviour among the juveniles it is crucially important to support developing their normal psychics with joint forces. Apart from this, it is highly appreciated to support the sentenced juveniles as well as the juveniles having already served their sentence. We should of course hate evil, though a person, especially a child having committed it should be pitied and we have to take all efforts in order to return them to normal way of life. Otherwise, their forming into criminals will definitely harm the society.

Unfortunately, there is a constant danger of offending among the juveniles, which requires forming a mechanism preventing juvenile delinquency. Special activities are to be carried out in schools and various vocations centres. With this purpose, such forms and method of this activities are to be developed application of which will greatly contribute to the work of tutors, subject teachers, parents, school psychologist and sociologist in order to lead a joint and targeted work for avoiding juvenile delinquency as well as for effective involvement of the juveniles already served their sentence in academic and labour activities.

As it has been noted above, juvenile delinquency is often related to the environment in which the juveniles were brought up. The negative causes which could also be conditioned due to incorrect upbringing of the juveniles in families, or negligence from the family members, etc. Hence, the focus is to be made on in-depth study of the family, the role of the family not only before juvenile’s appearing in the penitentiary institution, as well as during serving the sentence, parents’ involvement in the process of rehabilitation.

It is noticed that majority of the juveniles being in conflict with law represent a deprived layer of the society, suffering from significant social and economic problems. Growth of delinquency among adult generation often serves as an indicator of lack of protection and care for children by the state. Children in most cases are in conflict with law through the acts exposed during struggle for survival (stealing, vagabondage, begging). They often face the danger of violence, insulting and violating their rights in the process of implementing criminal justice.

Deprivation of liberty, i.e. imprisonment can cause non-correctible psychological and physical damage to children, whereas isolation from family and society, as well as limiting a prospect of receiving education and professional development can create a number of social and economic difficulties for them. Applying imprisonment as a punishment form among the juveniles creates significant problems to their further development and reintegration into the society.

As shown by a number of researches, juvenile justice system is far from perfection on the world scale, though a real problem is represented not only by the system itself or selection of methods for its accomplishment, but the social and economic conditions often leading to violations of law and relevantly, it is necessary to timely expose and eliminate this baseline problems.

Considerably significant findings were obtained as the result of conducted research in our region. As shown by the analysis of survey result majority of surveyed population considers activation of educational institutions for reduction of juvenile delinquency as necessary. It is also noteworthy that pupils, students and pedagogues' viewpoints coincided with each other from this viewpoint. Only a slight difference was observed in the opinion of the convicts, who consider liberalization of legislation as more important in view of reducing juvenile delinquency. These data, on its way is of particular importance and is conditioned by the fact that the convicts realize with their own personal life experience that strict punishment does not lead to correction of the individuals and crime prevention. Liberalization of the legislation was named as the second priority, whereas improvement of social and economic within the country was named as following priority.

According to the opinion of the respondents participating in the survey, it is necessary to stricken safety rules in schools for reducing juvenile delinquency, which evidently comes in harmonization with the state strategy upon launching the school guard's institute in Public Schools.

It is evident that humans represent a complex system unity, making it impossible to dissolve and isolate its parts. Hence, the humans need to be taken care of and nourished on the whole. This should be applied as a principle of our upbringing. Therefore, in order to reduce the number of juvenile delinquency it is necessary to re-integrate the children spending time in the streets during learning process back to schools. Missing the classes is directly reflected on the growth of juvenile delinquency. Acts of violence is basically committed by the children once being the victims of violence. Hence, it is necessary to form a program foreseeing rehabilitation of the children victims of violence.

Educational measures with juveniles, raising their cognitive interests, giving a stimulus for life, development of labour skills and abilities, strengthening of one's will, raising the level of self-criticism and self-evaluation, advising, proving aid, sympathizing, tactful pedagogical intervention, showing considerate attitude towards them, humanistic and positive environment serve as the conditions, with the support of which a correct way should be shown to difficult children and prevent them to leading to offence.

Conclusions

Based on the analysis of pedagogical, psychological, legal sources and the findings of recent international researches it can be concluded that in returning juvenile offenders to healthy lifestyle results the priority is attached to a targeted pedagogical activity in a school as well as non-school environment. From pedagogical-psychological and legal viewpoint, foreseeing certain age peculiarities by the specialists working with pedagogues, lawyers and juvenile offenders supports to a) defining such form of penalty enabling a child to perceive and realize the responsibility for committed crime; b) relevant methods, means and resources for successful implementation of pedagogical activity with juvenile.

As shown by the analysis of real life-situation juvenile offenders are found inside as well outside schools. The children of the afore-mentioned category being in schools are under constant control and attention, though no targeted work is le with them. There is no staff unit for psychologist in schools and there are no special programs elaborated in view of working with difficult children.

To achieve positive results in view of rehabilitating juvenile offenders into school as the result of practical pedagogical activity it is recommended to take the following measures:

- a) *Formation of positive learning environment in schools;*
- b) *Arrangement of organized material-technical base;*
- c) *Identification of the position of children's social activity;*
- d) *Formation of the children database and involvement of school psychologist, school nurse and social worker in relevant activity as the results of their analysis;*
- e) *Mastering life skills and abilities by the juveniles;*
- f) *Application of approbated up-bringing methods (listening, self-observation, loyalty, art therapy, orthodox psycho-therapy, etc.)*

According to the survey results, for reintegration of the children remaining outside the schools or mastering vocational skills it is effective to apply the following forms:

- a) *Formation of a short-term pedagogical-psychological groups;*
- b) *Ensuring with a temporary shelter;*
- c) *Launching of psycho-analytical study room with relevant programs;*
- d) *Involving guardian families for the children in conflict with law.*

The following competences set for at various levels for qualification raising serve as a supporting factor for improving the quality of pedagogical activity with juvenile offenders in school:

- a) *Competences for class tutors;*
- b) *Competences for the chair of tutors (in case of such);*

- c) *Competences for school administration.*

The characteristics for achieving the competences are characterized with the following principles:

- a) *Foreseeing the class constitution;*
- b) *Selection of the methods oriented on the results of education activity;*
- c) *Study of children's pedagogical and psychological peculiarities;*
- d) *Cooperation with various specialists;*
- e) *Self-evaluation.*

Mastering social competences in the process of pedagogical activity with juvenile offenders is particularly effective, which assist them to live in harmony with other, in a moral way, legally, act in pursuant with the reality and change it in case of necessity, be able to expose and develop his/her own viewpoints and skills.

Recommendations

For settling the problems described by us we consider it necessary that:

1. *The school should apply a process-oriented approach and introduce a product-oriented approaches in view of the necessity;*
2. *The school should have the knowledge and possibility to introduce more preventive means and measures;*
3. *The forms of the relationships of the school guard with the pupils of anti-social behavior, teachers, school staff and all three parties involved in violence (victims, violators, witnesses);*
4. *To practically introduce the code of ethics among the pupils and teach students to realize the forms of behavior being unacceptable for them and the subsequences of this behavior;*
5. *To organize the training for school personnel enabling them to be aware how to strengthen desirable behaviors and to avoid/to settle the conflicts in a friendly manner;*
6. *To foresee selection of a safe mechanism during construction of new schools (taking into account international experience);*
7. *To launch a Web-site, enabling the pupils to share the viewpoints related to their own problems and be consulted.*

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