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JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEMS: A CROSS- NATIONAL REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Childhood is the most rigorously regulated aspect of personal life. The contemporary child has been the subject of several initiatives aimed at protecting it from physical, sexual, or moral threats, ensuring its 'normal' growth, and actively fostering traits such as intellect, educability, and emotional stability. The Child has emerged as the focal point of several legislative measures, research initiatives, programs, and interventions that claim to prioritize the child's best interests. Currently, juvenile delinquents are a distinct focus for governance, which may be indirect, voluntary, or forceful. The welfare of a nation is contingent upon the welfare and well-being of its children; hence, they necessitate special protection and attention from society, and the State has a duty to care for them. Children are innocent and vulnerable, need enough care and sustenance during their formative years to develop into productive members of society. They are the builders of a nation's future and, thus, must be safeguarded from all forms of abuse and afforded opportunity for comprehensive development; just procreating without adequate resources and thereafter neglecting the kid constitutes an implicit offense. The issue of thousands of youngsters residing both on the streets and off is not exclusive to India; it is prevalent in several other emerging nations as well.

INTRODUCTION

Since the dawn of civilization, individuals have recognized that adequate child development is essential for its continuation. Children are the most susceptible demographic within any population, necessitating the highest level of social care and protection. Their fragility and dependency significantly increase the likelihood of exploitation, mistreatment, and manipulation by anti-social forces within the community. Historically, it is evident that, despite comprehensive care and protection, children have engaged in deviant or anti-social behavior. The behavior of children, sometimes referred to as juvenile delinquency, has been recognized as a persistent issue throughout history.

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The phrase "Juvenile Delinquency" is commonly utilized in everyday language. The dictionary definition of "juvenile" is "a young person" or "a child," whereas "delinquency" refers to "failure in or omission of duty," "fault," or "crime." Consequently, "juvenile delinquency" denotes any failure, neglect of duty, defect, or criminal act committed by a youngster.[1] The term "delinquency" is typically employed similarly to "crime" in everyday language. However, there is no definitive understanding of the term's precise meaning. The definitions of crime and delinquency diverge, making it challenging to ascertain a specific conceptual meaning. Delinquency can be seen from two primary perspectives: the legal standpoint and the societal perspective.

Legally, delinquency is defined as a pattern of behavior that is rejected by the court. The notion is straightforward, encompassing terms such as ungovernable, incorrigible, unmanageable, home desertion, and affiliation with anti-social groups. From a social perspective, delinquency refers to any behavior that is seen socially unacceptable. Consequently, some individuals want to broaden the notion to encompass all issues related to adolescent misbehavior, while others concentrate solely on behaviors that constitute criminal offenses. The challenge about the precise interpretation derives from the divergence of legal and moral norms across many countries. Professor Bela Dutta Gupta astutely notes, "what is perceived as delinquent behavior in the USA may not be regarded similarly in other countries where certain behavioral patterns are institutionalized." [2] An Egyptian priest stated, "Our Earth has deteriorated in these latter days." Indicators suggest that the world is nearing its conclusion due to children's disobedience towards their parents. Socrates identified several symptoms of delinquency and defiance nearly two thousand years ago.

He stated that, "Children now adore luxury, exhibit poor manners, display contempt for authority, show disrespect towards elders, and prefer chatter over physical exercise." Delinquency refers to any act, course of action, or circumstance that may be presented before the Court for adjudication, regardless of whether it is ultimately addressed there, through alternative means, or stays unaddressed. [3]

Juvenile delinquency refers to an act or omission by a minor that is subject to legal penalties within the judicial system. The term "Juvenile Delinquency" was likely first employed by an American committee established in New York City in the early Nineteenth Century to investigate the causes of pauperism and vagrancy. This committee posited that a significant

correlation existed between juvenile delinquency and pauperism, thereby broadening the definition of "juvenile delinquency" to encompass not only delinquent youths but also those predisposed to legal conflict.[4] This expansive perspective on juvenile delinquency allowed for more State intervention in the lives of families and parents unable to safeguard their children from impoverishment and homelessness. In contrast to the American approach, in Europe, "juvenile delinquency" was restricted to distinctly defined aberrant behaviors of youngsters that could be demonstrated to be in violation of the law. A juvenile delinquent is an individual often under the age of eighteen who engages in conduct that would otherwise be classified as a criminal if they were an adult.

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

The international declaration encouraged nations to legislate in accordance with fundamental principles, marking the commencement of a new era. The historical context of these countries must be examined through the lens of childhood, considering how children have been treated and the factors contributing to their neglect, which may lead to juvenile delinquency. The horoscopes of certain countries have been analyzed concerning their initiatives for children to assess their progress and success in this endeavor. Success will indicate the effectiveness of their actions, while failure will reveal either the insufficiency of the measures implemented or the necessity for improvement in identified deficiencies.[5]

The consequences of globalization have influenced the juvenile justice sector, as they have many other facets of criminal justice operations. Globalization denotes the heightened connectedness and interdependence that has developed across nations, facilitated by technical advancements and cultural transformations. While there are universal similarities, significant diversity exists in the measurement of delinquency across different countries, complicating the assessment of its precise prevalence and influence on the global society.

Statistical data reveal that, with the exception of the United States, teenage crime rates increased in nearly all regions of the world throughout the 1990s. In Western Europe, one of the few locations with relevant statistics, arrests of juvenile delinquents and underage offenders rose by around 50 percent from the mid-1980s to the late 1990s. The nations in transition have experienced a significant increase in delinquency rates; since 1995, juvenile crime levels in several Eastern European countries and the Commonwealth of Independent States have risen

by over 30 percent. Numerous criminal offenses pertain to substance addiction and excessive alcohol use.[6]

The growth in severe delinquency has been particularly significant in Europe, where both Eastern and Western European nations experienced considerable rises throughout the late 1990s and early 2000s, likely attributable to the social and economic upheaval and transformation occurring across the continent of Africa, different regions of Asia, and Latin America, industrialization is seen as a primary factor contributing to the increase of economically motivated, nonviolent crimes among adolescents in these areas. Moreover, affluent nations in the Arab world are also experiencing rises in delinquency. The World Youth Report (2003), a comprehensive study detailing juvenile delinquency globally, says that the number of children in particularly challenging situations is expected to have risen from 80 million to 150 million between 1992 and 2000. While many concur that these youths are at heightened risk of engaging in delinquent behavior, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) emphasizes the challenges in reaching consensus on a definition of delinquency. The UNODC asserts that every youngster interacting with the juvenile or adult criminal justice system need to be classified as a delinquent. The UNODC highlights factors that uniquely identify the youth in dispute with the law. This word, conflict with law, establishes a framework of criteria that offers practitioners a practical and applicable definition of delinquent adolescents. These criteria, or indications, are universally recognized and essential owing to the diverse circumstances seen throughout different nations.[7]

For example, juveniles held in custody may get such security for numerous reasons, and the permissible grounds for detention may differ significantly by jurisdiction. Consequently, children in some countries may be confined to a detention facility by a social worker owing to the absence of a main caregiver and/or the necessity for fundamental monitoring, care, and protection.[8]

Various sources indicate that delinquency has significantly escalated in numerous nations worldwide since World War II. The belief that adolescent delinquency is predominantly an American phenomena is often held by both laypersons and social scientists. The prevailing perspective is that the characteristics of American society that foster juvenile delinquency and adult criminal behavior are comparatively absent in other countries. The perceived elevated incidence of lawbreaking in the United States is attributed to a disregard for law and order,

pervasive societal disorder, and other defining traits of the nation. Regardless of the actual prevalence of juvenile delinquency across different nations, it is evident that theoretical frameworks and research pertaining to youthful misconduct have predominantly focused on the United States. We will analyze the general formulations that identify societal complexity and affluence as primary factors influencing the varying delinquency rates among nations. Subsequently, we will shift our attention to a series of studies on juvenile misconduct in diverse regions worldwide. T. C. N. Gibbens and R. H. Ahrenfeldt assert that the phenomenon of youth breaking has become increasingly prevalent in Belgium, Canada, Japan, Russia, and several other countries, alongside the United States.[9]

A primary assertion on the global increase in delinquency attributes its cause to the escalating complexity of these situations and the disintegration of conventional social norms organization in them. This theory posits that a higher degree of industrialization, modernity, and urbanization correlates with increased rates of delinquency and crime. Ruth and Jordan Cavan have amassed a substantial body of evidence relevant to the social complexity theory. They have compiled statistics on delinquency among Eskimos, as well as on juvenile criminality in Mexico, India, Russia, England, and eight other European nations. Their research on adolescent delinquency among Eskimos exemplifies the perspective of cultural complexity.[10] According to Jackson Toby, in industrialized and industrializing cultures, the socio-cultural divide between adolescents and adults tends to widen due to changes in the economic structure and several other variables. He asserts, "Individuals steal not due to hunger, but out of envy, and they are more prone to envy the possessions of others in nations with an increasing standard of living." [11] He discovered evidence of the correlation between income and criminality in post-World War II Japan. He noted that crime rates rose most significantly from 1955 to 1964 among individuals under eighteen years of age, but there was little notable change for those over eighteen.[12] These tendencies were likewise disclosed in a study by Hideo Fujiki. The overall number of individuals apprehended for crimes in Japan remained constant from 1948 to 1958; however, the subgroup of apprehended adolescents saw growth, especially between 1953 and 1958. The increase in juvenile arrests was disproportionate to the rise of the young population segment. According to him, this increase in juvenile delinquency occurred at a period of burgeoning wealth and tremendous economic progress.[13]

INTERNATIONAL DECLARATIONS AND CONVENTIONS ON JUVENILE

Abraham Lincoln, the sixteenth President of the United States, remarked in his Gettysburg Address, based on the signed "Bliss Copy," that four score and seven years ago, our forefathers brought forth on this continent a new republic formed in freedom and committed to the concept that all individuals are born equal.[14] The Thirteenth Amendment was ratified by the Senate on April 8, 1864, by American politicians, therefore eliminating the stigma of slavery and involuntary servitude from the nation. Article seventeen of the Constitution of India abolished untouchability. Their removal facilitated social tolerance. Likewise, prejudice towards children, together with their neglect and abandonment, is comparable to slavery or untouchability. Is participation permitted? Is it tolerable? Is it a crisis of self and a manifestation of your life longing? A child embodies the manifestation of parental love and its potential to diminish. Social scientists have deliberated on the issue and concluded that to safeguard the world's future from a dismal fate, all efforts must be redirected and focused on the care and protection of children. The youngsters are innocent, helpless, and reliant; but, they are also curious, energetic, and imbued with optimism. Their existence ought to be replete with joy and tranquility. Abandoning children and depriving them of a solid basis for life constitutes a crime against humanity. Gabriel Mistral, a poet of children, stated, "We are culpable of numerous errors and faults."

However, our gravest transgression is the abandonment of children, neglecting the very base of existence. Many of our needs may be deferred, but the needs of the kid cannot. This urgent appeal emphasized the necessity to address the issues before they reach a critical point of no return. It instilled in the international society a compulsion to do constructive and strong actions, therefore initiating the endeavor with earnestness. [15]

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, 1948

This Declaration was approved and announced by General Assembly Resolution 217A (III) on December 10, 1948. The General Assembly proclaims the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all individuals and nations, with the aim that every person and societal institution, keeping this declaration in mind, shall endeavor through education and instruction to promote respect for these rights and freedoms, and through progressive measures, both national and international, to ensure their universal and effective

recognition and observance among the peoples of member states and those under their jurisdiction.[16] Although every article is important, Articles 1 and 25(2) need particular attention.

Article 1: All individuals are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are equipped with reason and conscience and ought to interact with one another in a spirit of fraternity.

Article 25(2): Motherhood and childhood are entitled to specialized care and support.

EUROPEAN CONVENTION FOR PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, 1950

Article 14 reads, "The enjoyment of rights and freedoms outlined in this convention shall be guaranteed without discrimination on any grounds, including sex, color, language, religion, political or other opinions, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth, or other status." This article discusses the dignity of life and the corresponding respect for it. General Assembly Resolution 1386 XIV was announced by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 November 1959, addressing the statement of the Rights of the Child.

The first principle of the aforementioned Declaration states:

The Child shall possess all the rights delineated in this proclamation. Every child, without exception, will be entitled to these rights without distinction or discrimination based on race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinions, national or social origin, property, birth, or any other status, whether pertaining to themselves or their family.[17]

INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS, 1966

This covenant comprises 31 Articles, with Article 10(3) being particularly relevant as it stipulates that "special measures of protection and assistance should be implemented for all children and young persons without discrimination based on parentage or other conditions." Children and adolescents should be safeguarded from social and economic exploitation. The employment of minors in labor detrimental to their morality or health, hazardous to life, or likely to impede their natural development should be subject to legal penalties. States should establish thresholds within which the hiring of child labor is unlawful and subject to legal penalties.[18].

INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS, 1966

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966, comprises 53 articles. Although every article addresses the civil and political rights of all individuals, Articles 10(2)(b), 23(4), and 24 especially pertain to minors and must be upheld.[19] Article 10(2)(b): “Juvenile offenders shall be segregated from adults and presented for adjudication as expeditiously as possible.”

Article 14(4) stipulates that trial proceedings for minors must consider their age and the need of facilitating their rehabilitation. These rules are, however, somewhat restricted since they concentrate solely on narrow and particular issues of juvenile justice.

Article 23(4): “States Parties to this covenant shall take appropriate measures to ensure equality of rights and responsibilities of spouses in marriage.”

Article 24(1): Every child must possess, without discrimination based on race, color, sex, religion, national or social origin, property, or birth, the right to protective measures commensurate with their position as a minor, provided by their family, society, and the state. Every infant shall be registered shortly after birth and shall possess a name.

CONVENTION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD, 1989

This convention has 54 Articles, each addressing various elements of the child, all of which are incorporated within this document and are committed to ensuring their care, protection, and welfare. Articles 3 and 20 must be referenced.

Article 3(1): In all matters pertaining to children, whether conducted by public or private social welfare organizations, judicial bodies, administrative authorities, or legislative entities, the paramount priority shall be the best interest of the child.

States Parties commit to providing the child with necessary protection and care for their well-being, considering the rights and responsibilities of their parents, legal guardians, or other legally accountable individuals, and shall implement all appropriate legislative and administrative measures to this end.

States Parties shall ensure that the institutions, services, and facilities responsible for the care and protection of children conform to the standards established by competent authorities, particularly regarding safety, health, staff quantity and suitability, as well as competent supervision.

Article 20(1): A child who is temporarily or permanently removed from their familial environment, or for whom remaining in that environment is not in their best interests, is entitled to particular protection and help from the state. States Parties should, in line with their national legislation, arrange alternative care for such a child.

Such care may encompass, among other options, foster placement, "Kafala" under Islamic law, adoption, or, if required, placement in an appropriate facility for child care. In contemplating solutions, appropriate attention must be given to the importance of continuity in a child's upbringing, as well as to the child's ethnic, religious, cultural, and linguistic background. [20]

THE BEIJING RULES, 1985

The Beijing Rules offer guidelines to States on safeguarding children's rights and addressing their needs while establishing distinct and specialized juvenile justice systems. They were the inaugural international legal tools to thoroughly delineate rules for the administration of juvenile justice, emphasizing a child rights and child development perspective. These regulations are designed to develop a progressive justice system for juveniles in confrontation with the law. These regulations are in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and other international human rights instruments relevant to the rights of youth. There exist thirty rules. The Beijing Rules are segmented into six sections and encompass the entirety of the juvenile justice procedure. These six pieces are as follows:

- i) General Principles (Rules 1 to 9);
- ii) Investigation and Prosecution (Rules 10-13);
- iii) Adjudication and Disposition (Rules 14-22);
- iv) Non-Industrial Treatment (Rule 23);
- v) Institutional Treatment (Rules 26-29); and
- vi) Research, Planning, Policy Formulation, and Evaluation (Rule 30).

The primary objective of juvenile justice, as stipulated in Rule 5 of the Beijing Rules, is to prioritize the welfare of the juvenile and to guarantee that any response to juvenile offenders is commensurate with the conditions of both the offenders and the offense. The member States must strive to create conditions that will provide a meaningful existence for juveniles within the community.

During that phase of life when individuals are most vulnerable to deviant behavior, it will promote a process of personal growth and education that is as devoid of crime and delinquency as feasible. [21] Moreover, it was asserted that juvenile justice should be regarded as an essential component of the national development process in each country, situated within a comprehensive framework of social justice for all juveniles. Consequently, it simultaneously aids in safeguarding the youth and preserving societal order. Furthermore, these Rules shall be executed in accordance with the economic, social, and cultural conditions existing in each member state.[22]

Concerning juvenile rights, fundamental procedural safeguards, including the presumption of innocence, the right to be informed of charges, the right to remain silent, the right to legal counsel, the right to the presence of a parent or guardian, the right to confront and cross-examine witnesses, and the right to appeal to a higher authority, shall be ensured at all stages of proceedings.[23] In addition to these rights, the juvenile's right to privacy shall be upheld at all stages to prevent harm from excessive publicity or labeling. In principle, no information that could lead to the identification of a juvenile offender shall be published.[24] Juveniles on trial must be entitled to all rights and safeguards of the standard. The United Nations has established minimum standards for the treatment of prisoners, which include that juveniles must be segregated from adults and confined in a distinct facility or a separate section of an institution that accommodates adults. Juveniles in custody should receive care, protection, and all essential individual assistance—social, educational, vocational, psychological, and medical—appropriate to their age, sex, and personality. [25]

Furthermore, the police officers who regularly or solely interact with adolescents, or who are primarily engaged in the prevention of juvenile criminality, should receive specialized instruction and training.[26] Part IV of the Beijing Rules includes stipulations concerning assistance, stating that efforts shall be made to provide juveniles, at all stages of the proceedings, with essential support such as accommodation, education or vocational training,

employment, or any other practical and beneficial assistance to facilitate the rehabilitative process.[27]

THE RIYADH GUIDELINES

The United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency, sometimes referred to as the "Riyadh Guidelines," were approved in 1990. Recognizing the necessity of formulating national, regional, and international strategies for the prevention of juvenile delinquency, and affirming that every child possesses fundamental human rights, particularly the right to free education, while acknowledging the significant number of youth who may or may not be in conflict with the law but are abandoned, neglected, abused, exposed to substance abuse, and situated in marginal circumstances, generally at social risk, and considering the advantages of progressive policies for delinquency prevention and community welfare, recommendations were made to the General Assembly providing guidelines for the prevention of juvenile delinquency. It comprises 66 fundamental principles, asserting that the effective prevention of juvenile delinquency necessitates collective societal efforts to foster the harmonious development of adolescents, respecting and promoting their individuality from early childhood, while advocating for a child-centered approach. They should not regard them only as instruments of socialization or control.[28]

The guidelines primarily emphasize early protection and preventative action, with specific emphasis to situations of "social risk." The phrase "social risk" refers to children who are clearly threatened and require non-punitive interventions due to the impact of their circumstances on health, safety, and education, as assessed by a competent authority.

The Riyadh Guidelines primarily aim to assist, socialize, and integrate children via familial engagement and active community assistance. Simultaneously, it recommends that schools serve as resource and referral centers for counseling services, especially for children with special needs, and for the distribution of information regarding the prevention of drug, alcohol, and substance misuse.[29]

VIENNA GUIDELINES, 1997

The U.N. Resolution, referred to as the "Vienna Guidelines," offers a summary of information obtained from governments regarding the administration of juvenile justice in their respective

countries, particularly concerning their participation in formulating national action programs to enhance the effective implementation of international rules and standards in juvenile justice. A group of specialists convened in Vienna in February 1997 to produce a draft action program for minors in the criminal justice system, informed by the Riyadh Guidelines, the Beijing Rules, and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty (1990), referred to as JDL Rules. [30]

THE UNITED NATIONS GUIDELINES ON JUSTICE MATTERS INVOLVING CHILD VICTIMS AND WITNESS OF CRIME, 2005

The Economic and Social Council issued these recommendations in its Resolution 2005/20 dated July 22, 2005, to facilitate the implementation of General Assembly Resolution 44/25. These recommendations are categorized under XV Parts. It encompasses a broad spectrum related to all facets of the child, specifically focusing on custody, divorce, adoption, child protection, mental health, citizenship, and immigration and refugee legislation. They are neither comprehensive nor do they inhibit additional advancement. The aforementioned discussion highlights that the wellbeing of children is a significant issue at the international level, originating from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and continuing through to the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989. Numerous significant agreements, including the Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1959), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), have explicit provisions for the welfare of children. In addition to these efforts, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) hosted a World Summit in 1990.

The inaugural significant worldwide initiative for the enforcement of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Summit issued a declaration on the "Survival, Protection, and Development of Children" along with an action plan for its implementation. The World Summit embodied global aspirations for children, and as part of the action plan for executing the World Declaration, significant and sector-specific objectives were established. Despite the multitude of laws, conventions, declarations, recommendations, and policies, children remain underprivileged, disadvantaged, ignored, abandoned, and exploited within society.[31]

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ON JUVENILES

At the international level, much concern has been expressed over the welfare of children. The United Nations Children's Fund, a specialized agency of the United Nations focused on children's issues, was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1946 to assist children in Europe following World War II. This institution became a permanent component of the United Nations system in 1953 and is commonly referred to as UNICEF. Its duty is to safeguard children and their rights by delivering services and resources, as well as influencing policy agendas and budgets in the best interests of children.[32] It collaborates with government entities, non-governmental organizations, other United Nations agencies, and private sector partners. Its unprecedented Constitution is in the formulation of Article 40 of the UNCRC. The primary purposes and objectives of UNICEF programs are to:

1. Advocate for the reform and implementation of legislation to restrict child labor, particularly in hazardous sectors;
2. Assist Central and State Government in formulating an action plan for the withdrawal and rehabilitation of child labor.
3. Enhance collaboration among NGOs, media, industry, and legal frameworks for societal mobilization in favor of child labor initiatives.

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (UNESCO)

UNESCO's educational initiative for children has facilitated significant financial and technical assistance for educational endeavors benefiting children in challenging situations. UNESCO has been actively collaborating with street and Child labor in India has been a focus since the 1990 World Conference on "Education for All" in Jomtien and the subsequent World Declaration on "Education for All." UNESCO plays a pivotal role in coordinating policy planning at national, regional, and international levels to ensure that all children, particularly girls and marginalized groups, have access to and complete compulsory primary education. Other UN agencies, such as UNDP and the World Bank, are also endorsing educational initiatives.[33]

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (ILO)

The International Labour Organization defined the term "worst forms of child labour" and offered a detailed explanation of it.

- (a) All manifestations of slavery or similar practices, encompassing the sale and trafficking of minors, debt bondage, serfdom, and forced or compulsory labor, include the involuntary conscription of children into armed conflict:
- (b) The employment, acquisition, or solicitation of a minor for prostitution, the production of pornography, or for pornographic exhibitions;
- (c) The use, acquisition, or recruitment of a child for illicit activities, specifically for the manufacture and distribution of narcotics as specified in relevant international agreements; and
- (d) Employment that, due to its intrinsic nature or the circumstances under which it is conducted, poses a risk to the health, safety, or morals of children.

ILO 182's prioritization method highlights certain harmful forms of child work. Even when child labor is not intrinsically harmful, child workers, like other laborers, require legislative protections to shield them from exploitation. The existence of international treaties, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child established by United Nations conventions, is crucial for eliminating the abuse and neglect of street children. It is essential to develop effective and practical enforcement strategies to reduce the superficiality of these symbolic documents and increase the likelihood of real improvements in the lives of street children. India ratified the UN Convention in 1992.

The efforts of the committee dedicated to safeguarding children's rights, in collaboration with other United Nations entities, are essential for achieving goals, and the international community is obligated to assist nations that violate these rights in implementing substantive reform. The financial and political support of local groups that aid street children is crucial for instigating significant change in their lives. Therefore, due to the importance of the Convention and its commendable objectives, it is essential to focus on strengthening the existing international framework, condemning countries that consistently violate these provisions, and working to improve the circumstances of street children. The ongoing exclusion of children from the State's growth strategy necessitates attention for the welfare of current and future generations.

The preamble of international instruments, including the European Convention on the Exercise of Children's Rights, asserts that, in light of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, specifically Article 4, State Parties are required to undertake all necessary legislative,

administrative, and other measures to enforce the rights delineated in these conventions. The convention comprises 26 articles organized into five chapters; Article 1 holds particular significance:

Article 1(1): This convention shall apply to those who have not reached the age of 18 years.

Article 1(2): The objective of this agreement is to promote the rights of children in accordance with their best interests.

Article 1(6): This agreement does not exclude parties from enacting measures that are more beneficial for the advancement and enjoyment of Children's Rights.

THE HAGUE CONFERENCE ON PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL LAW (1996)

Article 2 of the Hague Conference on Private International Law (1996) specifies that the convention is applicable to children from birth until they attain the age of 18 years. These two tools unequivocally indicate that the optimal actions must be undertaken for the youngsters. The future of the nation unequivocally rests upon the children; thus, it is imperative that these young individuals are strong and healthy. The State must address this matter with utmost seriousness, lest it be too late.

Law is there to provide the necessary impetus. It will provide a calming influence if executed with genuine intent. The law will alter attitudes. However, both the courts and society must fulfill their respective roles. The law is not a compelling or forceful force in itself. Let us proceed promptly, as time is limited. Stephen Grellet, a notable French-born American Quaker missionary, stated: "I expect to pass through life but once. If, therefore, there is any kindness I can show or any good I can do for any fellow being, let me do it now."

CONCLUSION

Similar to the national level, there have also been several advancements in the administration of juvenile justice at the international level. The inaugural International Legal Instrument is the Declaration of Geneva, 1924. This statement was issued for the wellbeing of children, supported by the League of Nations. Subsequently, in 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted with the objective of establishing a single standard for all people by all governments. In 1950, a European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights was formed with the aim of safeguarding children's rights. Prior to the International Covenant on

Civil and Political Rights in 1966, there were no explicit regulations governing the administration of juvenile justice.

The requirements incorporated in the International Covenant, in this regard, are quite explicit. In 1985, the General Assembly established the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice, known as the Beijing Rules, which establish a comprehensive framework for the operation of a national juvenile justice system. In 1990, the United Nations approved the Riyadh Guidelines to prevent juvenile delinquency, emphasizing early protection and preventative intervention, particularly in conditions of social risk. In the preceding chapter, we examined the status of children across various countries, along with their protective measures. We also identified that the underlying causes of juvenile delinquency are largely consistent, including poverty, insufficient parental supervision, familial conflicts, peer group influence, and neighborhood conditions. It is observed that without focused efforts to eliminate all these reasons, the issue of adolescent delinquency cannot be resolved. What is required is not only protection but also prevention.

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