



Psychological Understanding for Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency through Spatial Design

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Abstract

Children's delinquent behaviour which is often met with rejection and misinterpretation of their immediate environment necessitates specific treatment for juveniles. The continuous rise in juvenile offences in India, particularly in crowded urban areas, has been an urgent challenge in recent years. According to the National Crime Records Bureau, 31,170 cases have been registered against juveniles in 2021, with a 4.7% increase over 2020. At the crux of such deviance is deprivation, poor-quality environment, and ignorance of its value causing adverse childhood experiences, social problems, and mental disorders. Neighbourhood design affects a person's behaviour, directly influencing deviance, or creating a hostile communal bond with a juvenile who might eventually exhibit deviance. This study investigates the intersection of psychology, architecture, and policies regarding juvenile crime prevention at the neighbourhood scale. It explores how the built environment influences the behaviour and development of children, and how strategic design interventions can prevent juvenile delinquency. The study also examines the CPTED approach of various countries to understand the design principles that influence social behaviour. The inferences drawn are applied to understand crime preventive design strategies in Indian urban low-income neighbourhoods with higher juvenile crime rates. While CPTED focuses on general crime prevention strategies, juvenile crimes, which require a more comprehensive approach and an understanding of the root causes of future crimes, have not been delved into. Hence, this paper proposes an integrated framework that promotes holistic neighbourhood design to prevent juvenile delinquency by creating safe, inclusive communities that nurture positive youth development.

Keywords: Child Psychology, CPTED, Design Strategies, Deviant Behaviour, Neighbourhood Design.