

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

CRIME AND CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR AMONG THE YOUTH:

A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF MATIGARA BLOCK

UNDER SILIGURI SUB DIVISION

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

1.2 Statement of the Problem

1.3 The Context of the Present Study

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1.5 Conceptual Clarification with Available Theories

1.5.1 Attempts at Definition

1.5.2 Theoretical explanation

1.5.2.1 Classical Explanation

1.5.2.2 Biogenic Explanation

1.5.2.3 Sociological Explanation

- i. General Strain Theory
- ii. Subculture Theory
- iii. Differential Association Theory
- iv. Conflict Approach
- v. Imitation Theory
- vi. Labelling Approach
- vii. Control Theory
- viii. Feminist Theory
- ix. Post-Modern View on Crime

1.6 Relevance of the Study

1.7 Review of Literature

1.8. Methodology and Universe

1.8.1 Methodology

1.8.1.1 Relevance of Qualitative Method in the Present Study

1.8.1.2 Methodological Contextualization

1.8.1.3 Appropriation of Multiple Methods

1.8.2 Research Universe

1.8.3 Data Collection Method

- i. Secondary data
- ii. Primary Data
- iii. Sampling Techniques
- iv. Schedule

1.8.4 Methods of Data Analysis

- i. Tabulation
- ii. Case Study
- iii. Observation
- iv. Phenomenological Analysis
- v. Netnography

1.9 Chapterization of the Thesis

References

1.1 Introduction:

The definition of crime has multiple connotations, and it gains more variations while defining the behavioral aspect. The study of crime and criminal behavior can be classified into two categories: sociological and legal connotation. According to Mowrer (1959) and Thorsten Sellin (1970), the defining ground of crime and criminal behavior should be social. However, Jerome Hall (1973) and Paul Tappan (1947) contend that the law and legal scholarship profoundly affect the notion of crime. Thus, a crime violates a certain legislation and legal framework. Hence, criminal acts and behaviors must be made illegal and determined by law. These actions are accompanied by appropriate defense or justification, and some regulated means of punishment exist.

However, sociological definitions have distinctive perspectives to look at the issue of youth crime and criminal behavior. The present research attempts accordingly to look into the social context and situation. According to Emile Durkheim, an activity is criminal, not because it is inherently criminal but because collectivity defines it as such and serves some social functions. According to R. K. Merton, the dysfunctioning between goals and legitimate means generates strain, which weakens individual commitment to culturally mandated goals or institutionalized means, causing a state of anomie; in such situations, individuals engage in deviant and criminal behavior. Even though Karl Marx did not propose a theory of criminal causation, his materialist interpretation has been used to explain how private property ownership causes poverty, crime, and criminal behavior. As a result, the perspective has defined the production system, which is the sole factor in determining crime. According to Clifford Shaw and Henry Mckey, the problem is linked to the social ecology of a

socially disorganized group. They additionally argue that these environmental conditions lead individuals to commit different criminal actions.

Dante's views about crime are rooted in their ethical concerns, social and political milieu, jurisprudence, and law surrounding an individual. These interrelated concerns- philosophical, sociopolitical, and legal criminological- will help explain contemporary doctrine about the relative gravity of the crime. The 'Inferno' emphasis has been given to 'sin' more than 'crime,' an intentional violation of the law of God. But after Dante, society calls for a redress of the breach of law merely to settle the matter between private and the emergence of crime as a public or social rather than a private wrong (Berman 1983, p. 181-94 in Chevigny 2001). The inferno questions the betrayal of trust, considered social capital (Coleman 1990). Living in a risk society increases mistrust, but at the same time, it also increases the need to find a basis for trust (1990). Thus, trust is an essential aspect of the functioning of the society.

However, the behavioral study also has a specific context when dealing with a certain age group. The present study has considered youth as an age group, which makes it distinct in its behavioral manifestation. However, youth is not only the representation of an age; it has multiple social and cultural elements in its characteristics. Thus, a youth's crime and criminal behavior are not individual but social and cultural.

1.2 Statement of the Problem:

Commonsensically, crime and criminality are considered individual phenomena; however, the trend has been changed to consider them as social phenomena. From the beginning of civilization, it characterizes the behavioral aspects of a human being. Since humans came into civilized form and started living together, they set for a communal life through a distinctive system. Simultaneously, it also provides the

scope of behaving against the system. Experiences against the system are to be addressed as crime and criminal behavior, which is the base for initiating an understanding of the study of crime. Whether legal or social, both approaches are the system's effective supporting mechanism and maintain its sustenance through regularity and repetitive exercise. It had been the practice in a society characterized by mechanical solidarity where repressive laws had been established. A system of repressive law addressed this issue; as the division of labor evolved and civilization developed, restitutive laws replaced repressive laws. The state's institutions define and determine an individual or group's crime and criminal behavior. Although traditionally, crime and criminality used to be defined and determined by the religious viewpoint, later, they started increasingly being viewed from a social perspective as the result of social change and evolution, making them a subject of sociological study. Socioculturally, the definition and the determinant of crime and criminality are intrinsically different. As a result of social evolution, society has experienced changing ideas, values, and changes in the various formal and informal institutions, which take care of their members' security through the authorization of legal power. But at the same time, it has also been a matter of fact that there has been a record increase in crime rates worldwide. More or less, in every sphere of social life, we see an increasing crime rate. New and newer dimensions of criminality extend the scope of research on crime and criminal behavior. Still, the reluctance to consider it as a social phenomenon is a matter to be concerned about. However, a separate branch of criminology has evolved, mostly focusing on an individualistic approach. Thus, studying crime and criminals and their specific behaviors is significant to sociology and criminology. Youth has multiple grounds for expressing behaviors, and it becomes more versatile when considering the sociocultural background.

Thus, developing appropriate theories that thoroughly explain youth behavior is challenging. It exposes the complexities regarding the characteristics, experiences, and background of the phenomena and the participants. However, sociologically, the study of the causation of youth crime can be viewed from two perspectives: structure and process.

The structural perspective emphasizes the social organization or structure and its relation with youth criminality and criminals. It enquires about the particular social structure where crime occurs and raises the question about changes in the structure that result in crime and criminality. The other approach explains several processes by which criminals are produced. It looks for the patterns of variables and the relationships that might explain how and why youth engage in different crimes and criminal behavior.

Although sociologically, the theories may be classified according to the social structure and a social process, many vital dimensions remain neglected in this classification. It is also to be noted that considering exclusive sociological theories and approaches may not bring fruitful results in examining youth criminality.

Often, crime and criminality are viewed as a function of social change. Its primary understanding is the condition of social disorganization, which is concerned with social control implied through different social organizations. Thus, it defines the ability to regulate oneself and the behavior of community members that helps realize shared goals, including a crime-free environment. Like any other living organism, humans are part of an ecosystem and could be addressed as 'homoeologous.' We made ourselves distinct from others by constantly regulating and controlling our demands, desires, and never-ending appetites for biological, material, and other necessary

supplements. From such a web of life, the human individual, through symbiosis, enters into the community goal where an action always considers serving self and assuring the accordance to others (Park 1939). In such circumstances, crime is the behavior that blurs the differentiation from other creatures in the ecosystem and would not be regulated and controlled by their demand, desires, and instincts.

Hence, crime occurs in a pathological living condition and on the breakdown of harmonious relations in the usual institutional method of social control. However, crime-producing factors are inherent in the social and economic fabric of the community and constitute a normal reaction to living in a disorganized area. The socio-psychological aspects of crime and delinquency over time, which undergo processes like industrialization, migration, and urbanization, and the effect of those changing factors on family, peer groups, schools, and other institutions could reflect the changes in the level of control exerted by those institutions.

As a result of social evolution, solidarity has loosened with growing complexities in society, and individualism has grown. Changes in solidarity have brought changes in society's class patterns and statuses based on the specific division of labor. Consequently, greater loneliness, social isolation, and loss of identity result in a consequent state of anomie or normlessness and an atmosphere where crime and other antisocial acts may develop and flourish. As youths are susceptible, they are easily influenced and vulnerable to different situations and circumstances, pushing their behavior into delinquency and criminality.

Individuals' failure to achieve their cultural goals with institutionalized, legitimate, prescribed means weakens their commitment to culture and other institutions. In such a condition, the individual faces pathological normlessness and commits different

criminal activities. It is explicit that social structure exerts pressure on some individuals who fail to continue with legitimate means for achieving any particular goal and behave in nonconformity.

In the social environment, many processes are working by which people become criminals. They live with a particular subculture, or sometimes people imitate others. Often, some groups of people are labeled as criminals in society. Furthermore, the modern media generates a learning environment of criminality where television and cyberspace have become the prime sources that heavily affect children and youth.

Throughout the last few decades in the study area, there has been a significant rise in the problem of unemployment. Large sections of youth are literate in the conventional form of education, which remains unproductive and unable to cope with job opportunities. Thus, youth as a social group suffer from dissatisfaction, disappointment, anger, and frustration. Simultaneously, processes like liberalization and globalization have opened multiple sectors of earning and job opportunities that are incompatible because of low skills and training. However, the section of youth with inadequate or conventional education cannot take up the new opportunities. They are not professionally skilled and well equipped due to a lack of specialization and profession-oriented training and knowledge. With the growing privatization in every sphere and the loosening of government control, an unstable social environment has grown, resulting in poverty, inequality, and unemployment. These situations lead them to nonconformity and expose them to criminality. Moreover, due to the atomization of relationships, the youths are no longer bonded with close-knit societal ties, leading to deviation, drug addiction, gang activity, and many sorts of criminalities.

With the expansion of the virtual world in contemporary times, youths are developing and experiencing a distinctive attitude toward life that changes social values and expectations. Simultaneously, it brings newer problems like fraud, identity theft, internet addiction disorder, hacking, profile cloning, etc. Even the nature and quality of social relationships and patterns of interactions get altered. In the present world of consumerism, the endless appetite for consumption, which they cannot afford, usually also causes finding satisfaction with criminality in such relationships. The modern media creates a world of virtual reality, and people are increasingly becoming members of a global village, which increases the crime rate distinctively. In such a context, as the force of globalization, mass advertising drives people towards an insatiable appetite for consumption; every individual desire ultimately motivates toward a hedonic pleasure. Thus, youths adopt different ways to satisfy this psychological hedonism, which eventually leads them to criminal activity. This hedonism may vary by space and time, and it is not ascribed; it is created through particular socialization, which ultimately leads to a particular ideology to achieve a specific hedonic pleasure. Beyond offline activity, the internet world consists of individuals' incessant online socialization.

It presupposes the more complex and elaborated division of labor that characterizes the individual youth. Interactions in cyberspace are more vibrant with specificity, preciseness, greater size, and volume. In such conditions, the emergence of online interdependence and a compelled form of solidarity spares very little space and time outside the internet society.

Arguably, each person has twenty-four hours a day, considering half is for rest and sleep to regain the energy for the next day, and remains awake for twelve hours. In between, approximately eight (standard working hours) hours are recognized as

productive hours, and the remaining four hours are for other life activities, including leisure, aesthetics, etc. The cyber world has extended awakening hours that result in cyber productivity. Capitalists are intimidated by the notion of profit behind the screen through cyber industries. By subtracting the energy-producing hour (resting hour), it continuously accumulates the surplus hour and adds to the awakening portion of the individual, which is always productive through the internet. Such circumstances have led towards more individualism with a distinct pattern of attitudes towards social values and morality where most performers are from the youth section of society. Thus, youths are mainly growing up with online socialization, which leads them to more individualism, breaking down the traditional forms of solidarity and harmony and creating a new one.

Such a virtual world initiates a reverse civilization that is unwanted and unplanned. In today's society, knowledge is not only power; more specifically, knowledge of information is a superpower. The super authority of cloud space (a grand space for storing virtual information) has made a controlled packaged product of information available to ordinary people. With a continuous process of providing free and unlimited accessibility to such products, they inject dependency on the internet among the commons. Such dependency sharpens the distinction between dominant and superordinate, where common people are more subjugated and subordinate. Moreover, they engross legalized and legitimate power over others by producing abundant 'cyberspace resources.' It enables them to keep a constant eye on the movement of the consumers, which regularly helps them prepare for every situation necessary to secure profit and remain dominant. This surveillance makes them more potent through online accession, and, on the other hand, the commons become more numb, languid, and passive receivers.

Thus, crime in cyberspace is defined and determined by identifying people from the subordinate group who become a threat to the cyber system and its resources. It challenges the online surveillance of the powerful and can ruin the stock of 'cyberspace resources,' which contains enormous amounts of information that helps them remain dominant in contemporary society. Hacking, phishing, online fraud, theft, viruses, and the like are the dominant forms of criminality in the field.

Furthermore, the structural approach to crime and criminal behavior has achieved a different degree that explains the intimacy between state and crime. Specifically, this perspective indicates how the state executes governance through crime and criminality (Simon 2007). This attitude lures the state to become the facilitator and often the initiator of crime and criminality. Consideration of youth crime pours more intensity into it. Eventually, the contextualization results in many actions that take place from the end of different state representatives using the power and resources of state corporations, which may be considered as crime. However, it is never reckoned as a crime as it is performed from the end of the men who represent the state. Therefore, Barak (1991) rightly questions how the state could be a criminal actor while the state itself defines criminal behavior through the legal device.

1.3 The Context of the Present Study:

There are six police stations presently functional in the Siliguri Police Commissionerate. These are Siliguri P.S, Pradhannagar P.S, Bhaktinagar P.S, Matigara P.S, Bagdogra P.S, and Women P.S. The study has been conducted under the jurisdiction area of Matigara P.S. It is one of the vital police stations under Siliguri Police Commissionerate of the subdivision in terms of its geophysical significance and nature and characteristics.

Although a large variety of crimes and criminalities are regularly registered and committed by different age groups of people, the study concerned is delimited precisely to youths and young adults between eighteen (18) and thirty (30) years of age who are engaged in different kinds of criminal activity in the study area. There is an emerging trend of such aged youth getting involved in various types of criminality in comparison to other age groups. Commonly, the form of recording criminality followed as dacoity, robbery, burglary, theft, murder, Crime Against Women (C.A.W.), and others under the Indian Penal Code (I.P.C.). (C.A.W. indicates the crime against women, and other I.P.C. means some cognizable offences).

According to the Report of the Committee on Crime Statistics, the broad classification of crimes under the Indian Penal Code (I.P.C.) is as follows-

- i. **Crimes against Body:** Murder, attempt to murder, culpable homicide not amounting to murder, kidnapping and abduction, hurt, causing death due to negligence.
- ii. **Crimes against Property:** Dacoity, preparation and assembly for dacoity, robbery, burglary, theft.
- iii. **Crimes against Public Order:** Riots, arson.
- iv. **Economic Crimes:** Criminal breach of trust, cheating, counterfeiting.
- v. **Crimes against Women:** Rape, kidnapping, and abduction for specified purposes, dowry death, cruelty by husband and relatives, molestation, sexual harassment, and importation of girls.
- vi. **Crimes against Children:** Child rape, kidnapping and abduction of children, procurement of minor girls, selling/buying of girls for prostitution, abetment of suicide, exposure and abandonment, infanticide, feticide.
- vii. **Other I.P.C. Crimes.**

Another categorization, the Crimes under the Special and Local Laws (S.L.L.), are-

- Arms Act
- Narcotic Drugs & Psychotropic Substances Act
- Gambling Act
- Excise Act
- Prohibition Act
- Explosives and Explosive Substances Act
- Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act
- Indian Railways Act
- Registration of Foreigners Act
- Protection of Civil Rights Act
- Indian Passport Act
- Essential Commodities Act
- Terrorists and Disruptive Activities Act
- Antiquity and Art Treasure Act
- Dowry Prohibition Act
- Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000
- Indecent Representation of Women (Prevention) Act
- Copyright Act
- Sati Prevention Act
- SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act
- Forest Act
- Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

- Other crimes (not specified above) under Special and Local Laws, including Cyber Laws under the Information Technology Act (I.T.), 2000.

Based upon the abovementioned criteria, in 2013, the registered crime number under the commissionerate was 6084 (This data availability starts from 2013 at the website of <http://siliguripolice.org.in> under the commissionerate authority), out of which registered crime at Matigara P.S was 714, constituting 11.74% of the total reported crime under the Commissionerate. Gradually, this proportion has increased significantly in later years. In comparison, the gross crime record has doubled after only six years at the Matigara police station. The total number of recorded crimes in 2019 became 1357, which was just 714 in 2013. Except in the category of culpable homicide with steady growth, we see a gradually increasing trend of recording crime and criminality in all other I.P.C. and S.L.L. crimes. A rapidly increasing trend can be observed in the case of theft and crime against women (C.A.W.). These two categories are directly linked with other I.P.C. crimes, which have multiple dimensions. Comparatively, the growing trend in murder and culpable homicide is less.

Such rapidly increasing crime trends have made the area vulnerable and an issue of concern. The Matigara police jurisdiction area has a peculiar vitality compared to other police areas of the commissionerate and the subdivision. The majority of the area is under rural administrative jurisdiction and also falls under the Siliguri Metropolitan Police administration. At the same time, the unprecedented growth of urbanization and commercial activities have increased dramatically in recent years. It has created a peculiar cultural conglomeration that frequently makes the area in news headlines through its criminal exposure. Thus, the nature and contexts of crime and

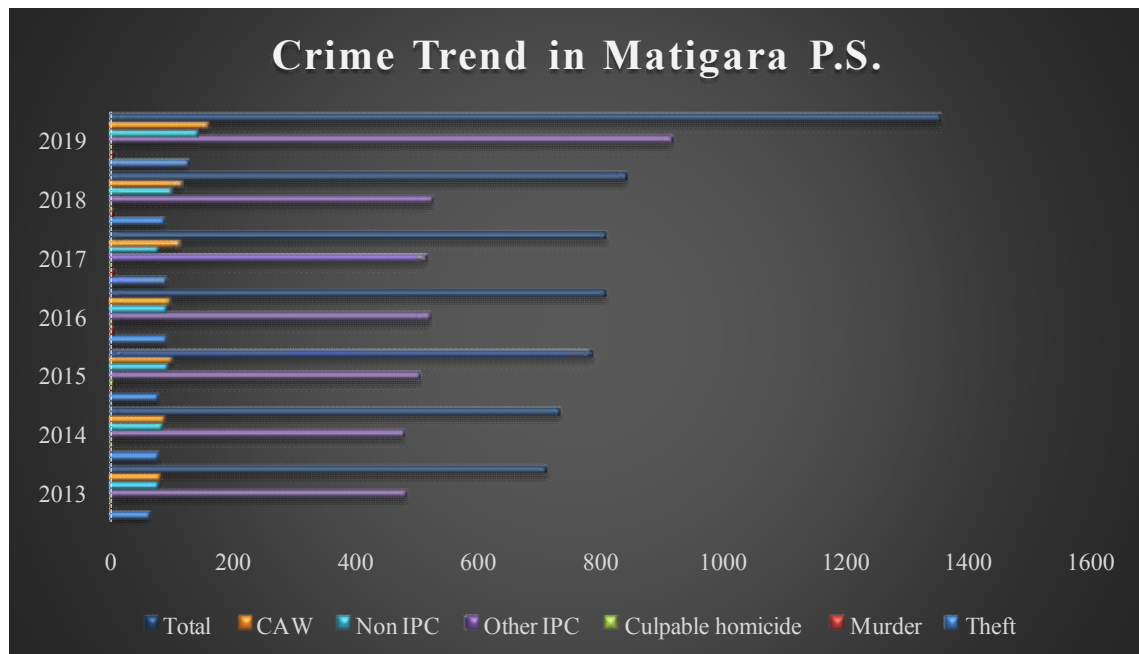
criminality are conditioned in a way that more distinctively characterizes the criminal behavior of youth than other parts of the city and subdivision.

Table 1: The Trend of Increasing Crime Records in Matigara P.S:

Year	Theft	Murder	Culpable homicide	Other I.P.C.	Non I.P.C.	C.A.W.	Total
2013	64	03	03	484	78	82	714
2014	78	02	02	480	85	88	735
2015	77	04	05	505	93	102	786
2016	91	06	04	522	90	98	811
2017	90	07	02	516	79	115	809
2018	87	05	04	527	102	118	843
2019	126	05	02	920	144	160	1357
Total	613	32	22	3954	671	763	6055
%	10.12	0.53	0.36	65.30	11.08	12.60	100

Source: Data compiled by the researcher from monthly gist of P.S. (Data started uploading at the website from the year 2013 and continued up to 2019)

Figure-1:



Presently, the crime associated with the cyber world is progressively forming a concrete space in crime reports across the city. Thus, the study also focuses on cyberspace-related crime amongst different forms of criminality. Such emerging

nature of crime influences and alters heavily the nature of existing criminalities such as property crime, crime against women, homicide, etc.

Matigara is an area with significant cultural, regional, political, and other forms of diversity. Its strategic location, porous border existence, and other relevant conditions make it a sensitive crime-prone area. The geophysical and territorial location, commercial significance, tourism, ethnic and cultural diversity, and other suitabilities make this place one of growing importance. As a result, a rapid increase in population and migration from neighboring states and countries leads to the emergence of heterogeneity and cultural plurality. Based on different cultural interests, differences in language, beliefs, ideas, and values sometimes lead to ethnic and communal conflict and violence. Different sociocultural forces, such as urbanization, globalization, and increasing market spreads, constantly change social conditions. With these additional conditions, young members of society are experiencing changing values, norms, attitudes, approaches, role expectations, and many other things, leading to several criminalities where the younger groups are vulnerable. However, many youth activities are recognized as deviance, not crime, which compromises the quality of life of the commons. Such activities include extortion, forceful donations in the name of different religious and other activities, teasing and threatening, etc.

The porous Indo-Nepal border and the floating population from Bangladesh, Nepal, and Bhutan have made the city and surroundings a breeding space for criminality. The communication facility and the smooth connectivity with the broader world have contributed to the changing nature of crime in social life. This loose border and administrative negligence create an opportunity for individuals' behavior to engage in different illicit businesses and criminality. Such a condition very quickly draws the

attention of the youth and other members of society living with problems like unemployment and poverty to commit different crimes and criminality. In such conditions, youths accept illicit businesses and criminality in organized or disorganized forms as a usual and easy way of earning their livelihood. It also brings compatibility to the consumer culture.

With social change, the members of society are experiencing changing ways of life. This transition results in breaking down solidarity and growing individualism. The continuous migration of the population makes a peculiar sociocultural composition, and the city is witnessing many people getting involved in borderline smuggling activities. The city has become a significant commercial point where human trafficking has become a growing concern. Other illicit businesses, such as trafficking drugs, natural resources, animals, and other things, are also prevalent.

Various global forces, through different agencies, directly enter into the structure and functioning of the family. With changing family structure and functioning patterns, people experience a loosening of social control, which also changes an individual's socialization pattern in society. In addition, the existing societal inequalities often contribute to criminal behavior. For different socio-economic reasons, society is getting fragmented into different ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups, which also has the potential to nurture criminal behavior in terms of sustaining inequalities within society. So, the fear of losing identity is another context of crime and criminal behavior. Based on it, various subcultural processes have emerged in favor of producing criminality.

In post-modern conditions, people are increasingly involved with cyberspace and becoming members of the virtual world. It extends the horizon of social

understanding of criminality with online computer hacking, payroll viruses, email bombing, identity theft, unauthorized data and information access, etc.

The above social context of crime and fear of criminality nurtured by the common people threaten the quality of life, providing the scope of the study of youth crime as a social phenomenon.

1.4 Objectives of the Study:

The present study aims to uncover the social background and context of crime and youth criminal behavior in Matigara Police Station under the Siliguri subdivision. With the concerned methodological approach, the study has fixed several potential objectives. It has been formulated as follows-

1. To understand the contemporary socio-economic causes and contexts behind youth crime and criminal activity.
2. To identify the crime trends among youth and examine its causes and changing faces.
3. To explore the contexts of youth crimes in social structure and consequent processes that determine the behavioral exposure of youth to criminality in contemporary times.
4. To understand the gender context in youth crime and criminality. Thus, it also includes the examination of Crime against Women as a prevalent nature of youth crime and victimization.
5. To examine different behavioral exposures of youth that are not defined through the conventional ways of explaining crime and go unrecorded but may be considered a crime and criminal behavior from the sociological perspective.

6. To examine the sociocultural context of cybercrime and criminality among youth. The study would ensure the analysis of cause and effect between the increasing influence of the virtual world in everyday life of individuals, the changing faces of crime and criminality, and the growing consistency of different social values in the target group of the study.
7. To identify the sociopolitical contexts of youth crime and criminal behavior that exist under the condition of social stratification.

1.5 Conceptual Clarification with Available Theories:

Every sociological study and research deserves clarification of relevant concepts for a proper scientific orientation. The present study also deals with various concepts and paradigms crucial for understanding the present investigation.

Studying crime and criminal behavior around the middle of the nineteenth century, between the 1940s and 60s, created a separate field named Criminology under Sociology. The inception of this entire stream took place in American Sociology. However, after the 1960s, American sociology lost exclusive domination because many programs, projects, and interpretations about crime and criminal behavior started evolving beyond boundaries. Eventually, Criminology was established as a new branch of study and developed with more contemporary dimensions. However, in the present condition, the concept of crime, although related to sociology, has separate significance for both the stream of sociology and criminology.

1.5.1 Attempts at Definition:

There is an unending controversy that exists in defining crime and criminal behavior. The existing definitions are conceptually distinct in two ways; some are based on law

and legal perception, and some are based on social and sociological vantage. Mowrer (1959) and Thorsten Sellin (1970) stressed the sociological definition, and Paul Tappan (1947), Jerome Hall (1973), and some other scholars put the legal definitions of crime in significance. Between this legal and non-legal conceptualization and definitions of crime, a scholar, Reid (1975), has mentioned that the legal definition may be used for compiling statistics and assessing the label of criminals. Still, the study of the causation of crime should include such persons in their criminal sample who admit to their crime but have not been convicted by the court. So, this is also a significant point when considering the definition of crime.

Although no full-fledged sociological definition of crime exists, many theories and concepts are essential for defining and explaining the causation of crime and criminal behavior. According to Emile Durkheim, an action is criminal not because it is intrinsically criminal but because collectivity defines it as criminal. It only becomes criminal when society accepts an action or behavior as criminal. Thus, there is an emphasis on collective recognition. According to R. K. Merton, the dysfunction between goals and means causes strain, weakening individual commitment to the culturally prescribed goals or institutionalized means and creating a state of anomie. Such a situation of anomie leads individuals to deviant behavior or crimes. Although Karl Marx did not specifically develop any theory of criminal causation, his economic determinism was adopted to explain that private property ownership resulted in poverty and criminality; the economic system is the sole determinant of crime. Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay said that the problem was tied to the social ecology of a socially disorganized community. They also noted that these ecological situations among delinquent groups are self-sustaining and transmitted through successive generations.

1.5.2 Theoretical Explanation:

Various theoretical explanations have emerged from different fields in analyzing youth crime and criminal behavior. Some are intrinsically relevant to this study and have been considered for further discussion.

1.5.2.1 Classical Explanation:

In the classicist explanation, Italian thinker Beccaria was influenced by Bentham and John Haword's belief in contract theory. According to them, states were free, sovereign individuals capable of defining their interests, and they sought to limit the state's power to define their rights, liberties, and security.

Beccaria and his classical school maintained that human behavior is rational based on hedonism or the pleasure-pain principle, is free, and is governed by self-interest. An individual commits a crime to achieve hedonic pleasure, where the particular individual has some rationality guided by self-interest.

1.5.2.2 Biogenic Explanation:

Leading proponents are Lombroso, Ferry, and Charles Goring, who mainly emphasize organic factors. They explain criminal behavior by the causation of the heredity factor. A criminal suffers from many physical abnormalities and has some particular physical features. It focuses on a psycho-analysis approach and discusses mental disability guided by the unconscious root of individuals' behavior.

1.5.2.3 Sociological Explanation:

The sociological understanding of crime could be divided mainly into structural-functional and processual explanations. The structural-functional set of illustrations

mainly emerged from the work of R.K. Merton, Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx, and other scholars like Fronsari and Bonger. Durkheim said that all people cannot be alike and have similar moral consciousnesses. Some individuals differ from collectivity. There is inevitably some divergence, including criminal behavior, not because the act is intrinsically criminal but because collectivity defines it as criminal. According to him, mechanical solidarity changed to organic solidarity in society. It is characterized by division of labor, unnatural differences in class and status, and less homogeneity, creating greater loneliness, social isolation, and loss of identity, resulting in a consequent state of anomie or normlessness and providing an atmosphere where crimes and antisocial acts may develop and flourish. Merton says social structure exerts pressure for changes where some are useful and others are not. Elaborating the conceptualization of goals and means, where the goals are the aspirations of all individuals and means by which goals may be obtained. People turn to unaccepted or unapproved means to achieve their goals when the approved means are not available to all for obtaining goals. As a result, normlessness or anomie occurs, and individuals commit various crimes. By recommending Merton's anomic theory, F. Messner and Richard Rossenfield have proposed a new approach called *Institutional Anomic Theory*. According to them, the desire to achieve goals of economic success by institution but not any alternative definition of success. According to them, all essential behaviors are concentrated around the economic institution, and by the rate of failures, one leads to criminal behavior.

i. General Strain Theory: Robert Agnew is the proponent of the general strain theoretical approach. According to him, three types of emotional conditions occur among individuals that create strains. At first, when the expectations and results are not matched. Secondly, when an individual loses sources of stability such as a loved

one, and thirdly, when confronted with negative stimuli such as abuse by their family members. These emotional conditions create strains among those victimized individuals. In this straining situation, individuals get involved in crime and criminal behavior. Supporting the fact, in a study, Agnew, with Lisa M. Briody and Sung Joong Jang, explains the causes behind higher crime rates among males than females.

ii. Subculture Theory: This is another important field of theoretical explanation about youth crime and criminal behavior as a distinct social category. The group is characterized by specific patterns of behavior, folkways, and mores that set it apart from the rest of society. It has been accentuated by William F. Whyte's work *Street Corner Society* in 1943. The position of an individual in a group may face a conflict between the system of their culture and the mainstream society.

Albert Cohen's book *Delinquent Boys* advocated for a Delinquent Subculture Theory in 1955, where he dealt with the problem of status adjustment of working or lower-class boys. Young people feel that their behavior depends on how others judge them. He argued that lower-class youth try to achieve the standard that is decided by the status system of mainstream society. But they are not well equipped in it. Hence, a 'status frustration' emerges as a separate delinquent subculture from the lower-class boys. In such a condition, lower-class boys develop a subculture that inverted middle-class values. Cohen said this subculture is non-utilitarian, malicious, negative, and versatile: short-run hedonism.

iii. Differential Association Theory: E. Sutherland (1939) tried to understand that criminal behavior is not the situation that motivates one in criminality; it is one's learned attitude and beliefs by encountering many inharmonious and inconsistent social influences in their lifetime, which he identified as a differential association.

However, many have criticized him by arguing that a person can become a criminal without associating with other criminals.

Many researchers try to show the relationship between crime and family. Some study shows that in children without a parent, living with a stepmother, father, or brother, sexual and other forms of abuse in later life turn to delinquent and criminal behavior. W. Byron Groves with Shaw and McKay found that the effect of economic disadvantage, weaker local friendship networks, low participation in voluntary organizations, and inadequate supervision of teenage peer groups causes increasing youth crime. In such a context, the assumption in social disorganization theory is that the frequent interaction among residents helps to reduce crime.

iv. Conflict Approach: Marx and Engels tried to understand society through class conflict. According to their perspective, crime is a by-product of capitalism, where social conflict exists, who owns the means of production and exploits those who have nothing. An inferior position economically or politically leads toward crime. Marx and Engels believed that the capitalist system is the sole determinant of crime and the causative element in all social, political, religious, ethical, psychological, and material life. They believed eliminating the inequalities between social classes would destroy conflict and abolish crime. Thus, they fundamentally differ from the Durkheimian functional approach, which suggests that crime is normal and inevitable.

Frank Tannenbaum also blamed the capitalist system for growing crime. He argued that in the capitalist system, people concentrate only on themselves, leading to selfishness. Thus, capitalism breeds social irresponsibility and contributes to crime. It does not determine criminal behavior but makes people more capable of becoming

criminals. Thorsten Sellin gave the concept of culture conflict theory and said criminal acts must be analyzed as conflict among norms.

v. Imitation Theory: The theory has been put forward by the philosopher Gabriel Tarde (1903). He argued that based on the proportion of close contact with other individuals, people imitate each other, and these imitations are sometimes unconscious, partly mysterious. by the inferior. He also believed that the impulse of crime is not derived from the lower strata of society. Masses are always tied to the ideas and fancies of social superiors. Drunkenness, smoking, moral offences, and becoming vagabonds are crimes that originated from the upper strata, and these are all transmitted through the process of imitation. Thus, the criminal propensities typically are downward and outward.

vi. Labelling Approach: Becker and K. Erickson gave the Social Reaction Approach. This theory does not deal with *why a person becomes a criminal* but *why society labels some people as criminals or deviants*. According to them, society brands some people but not others as criminals. Labeling the individual aims to push the delinquent towards further delinquent conduct, making it difficult to reenter the conventional world. Individuals may continue to commit crimes while receiving no help from society. Some criticize this theoretical stance and say it is sound logic but does not explain the cause of crime.

Akers and Sellers (2004) looked at the reaction to labeling theory, and they concluded that the primary importance of labeling theory is that it "calls attention to the unintended consequence of social control."

vii. Control Theory: Walter C. Reckless opines that the 'self' concept often controls individual behaviors. He advocates that self-concept is the key factor in choosing

alternative behavior. A favorable self-concept directs an individual towards being law-abiding, and an unfavorable one towards delinquent behavior. The ability to control makes a buffer in a person. If the buffer is strong, the person is law-abiding; if weak, one commits the crime.

Albert J. Reiss maintains that criminal behavior results from two kinds of control: personal and social. Another scholar, Gottferdson, says that a person with low self-control commits a crime, and this self-control arises through parent socialization.

viii. Feminist Theory: The present trend looks at the dominance of men over women and the impact on crime scenarios, either the crime against women or the crime committed by women. Feminist advocates claim that most research in criminology is male-dominated; thus, feminists aim to eliminate this bias. Feminist scholars go beyond an attempt to explain female criminality and look at female victimization in treating women in the criminal justice system.

Meda Clensey Lind and Kathleen Daly are two significant proponents of feminist theory. They emphasize patriarchy, with men dominating women as important as a social class in understanding crime.

ix. Post-Modern View on Crime: This view in the sociology of crime analyzes the hidden power of words. This approach looks at crime in such a way that the particular person may be in control and able to make his/her own decisions and perhaps not be subordinated. Also, they look at language and how it is being used by the powerful to control the powerless.

On another point, post-modern society is increasingly experiencing a media-generated life with great domination of knowledge and information that lays the ground for

virtual reality. People lose sight of the difference between what is symbolic or simulated and what is real. For instance, infotainment crime shows often blur the distinction between news and entertainment. Mass advertising drives people to view consumption as the ultimate measure of self-worth. It creates an insatiable appetite for things consumed for their practical function and what we think the product says about.

However, cybercrime, which was unheard of just two decades ago, has become prevalent; computer hacking, computer payroll viruses, email bombing, etc., are examples of cybercrimes. Identity theft also happens when people access databases containing information and use this for fraud and theft. We also cannot ignore the forces of globalization that make rapid changes in various dimensions, where we can find many relevant causes of change in crime and criminal behavior scenarios.

1.6 Relevance of the Study:

In the above section, the researcher has discussed available theoretical approaches around which the sociological understanding of youth crime and criminal behavior continues. Considering the differentiation of societies, time, culture, religion, and other elements, we must have an alternative design according to the field's situation. Although crime and criminal behavior are regarded as social phenomena in India, there is still less focus on research activity. The study has found the causes and context of youth criminality with its changing social structure and functioning. With growing individualism, people are becoming self-centric and loosening the bondage of collectivity, and youths are not excluded. The egoistic attitudes of individuals bring changes in the behavior pattern. The requirement of legitimation of the institutional world, setting up individual goals, and adopting unfair means for achieving those goals provides another scope of social understanding of crime and criminal behavior

among youth. An increasing youth crime rate also increases the number of victims, and ultimately, the quality of life of common people has fallen. At the same time, convicts are not from outside but from within the society. Thus, it is necessary to have a social inquiry and interpretation of crime and youth criminal behavior. The conventional subculture explanations of various scholars provide a distinct look at youth crime and crime behavior.

However, in the present study, the sense of superiority and inferiority often contextualizes youth crime and criminal behavior based on cultural distinctiveness. Deprivations and suffering from unequal resource distribution, low literacy rates, vote bank politics, and other such disturbances shatter solidarity and help raise communal violence and crime among youth. Besides this, many more causations exist outside of the conventional theoretical explanation, such as an essential post-colonial context of the migration process affecting this region, which leads to another picture of youth crime in the area. As an emerging city, urbanization also plays a significant role. Most prominently, the strategic location and porous border condition make it a high-alert area, which we must consider for the study.

The forces of globalization also significantly affect individuals' living conditions. With the expanding consumer culture, youth crime and criminal behavior acquire different peculiarities. Capitalistic ideology and the process of consumerism directly affect youths' psyches. A hedonic pleasure guides everyone's behavior; everybody wants to be happy by consuming more and more and wants to have life in a great fantasy. But when one fails to mitigate this appetite for consumption, one behaves in deviance, committing various forms of crime and criminal behavior.

Moreover, in another significant way, the present study examines the relevance and potentiality of *'state crime'* in understanding and contextualizing the crime phenomenon from social perspectives and unearthing the reality behind youth criminality in India. The effort is to explore how the state of India and its governing mechanism condition the crime orientation and produce state crime. It has also tried to understand the reason behind its persistence by examining specific cases and evidence that happened in historical times and continuity. The disciplinary approach also become crucial in contemporary times in our sub-continent of India.

As Foucault's saying goes-

"The fundamental objective of governmentality will be mechanisms of security, or, let's say, it will be state intervention with the essential function of ensuring the security of the natural phenomena of economic processes or processes intrinsic to population. (Foucault 2007: 353)"

Hence, to replicate the liberal attitude, the state would not intervene in the natural courses of subjects but would put effort into situating and resituating the concern of 'security' as a significant self-interest among the subjects. By analyzing the historiography of India, we would better understand how the colonial imprint is being carried to the post-colonial state system in India in many aspects. Relevantly, the hangover of *colonial state crime* deserves specific attention to the scholarship of crime research to dissect the current reality of state crime and criminality in India.

For instance, during the famine in the British era, among twelve major famines that occurred, the famine of 1876-1879 and 1896-1902 were the worst, with six to nineteen million deaths (Davis 2001, cited in Brown 2014), and the colonial policy of British power in different phases validate the brutal impact of colonial and post-

colonial state intervention for causing the harm to peoples and serving the *laissez-faire* (Brown 2014, Baker 2004, Adamson 2016). They claimed *laissez-faire* as the backdrop factor for contemporary rural indebtedness and food scarcity exposed in famine conditions in contemporary India. In contrast, it has been expressed technically as the governmental vision of the state, caring for self-interest and freedom of subject (Foucault 2007).

Altogether, the context of governing through crime (Simon 2007) becomes a crucial issue that remains a significant aspect of the present study. In this way, the contexts of symbolic violence, symbolic crimes, and cultural crimes, likely against the state corporation, are rampant nowadays.

1.7 Review of Literature:

In the book *Crime and Criminology*, Sue Titus Reid deals with different attempts to theoretically explain crime as a function of social change that occurs along with environmental change. Robert Ezra Park and E.W Burgess from the Chicago School show a comparative study between high and low crime rate areas distinguishing criminal behavior based on physical status, economic status, population composition, and social values. Shaw and McKay conclude that crime-producing factors are inherent in the social and economic fabric of the community and constitute a normal reaction to living in a disorganized area. Reid deals with Durkeim's concept of collective consciousness and changes in solidarity. R. K. Merton's conception of dysfunctioning between goals and means deals with the question of social approval. Robert Agnew talks about the negative emotional conditions of crime. The subculture theory, with the earlier work *Street Corner Society* (1943) by William F. Whyte, indicates the conflict between the status system of subculture and mainstream society.

This book also deals with the conflict approach of crime by Marx and Engels. According to their perspective, crime may be viewed as located in the social structure where conflict is a by-product of capitalism. Frank Tannebaum blames the capitalist system for growing crime. Capitalism breeds social irresponsibility and contributes to crime. Thorsten Sellin (1938) says criminal acts must be analyzed as a conflict among norms. Gabriel Tarde provides imitation theory, which has the conception of inferiority and superiority. Considering lower-class people as inferior always follows the high or upper class as superior. Social scientists Ray Surette and Jana Bufkin analyze the impact of and relationship between media and crime. Sutherland (1939) introduced the Differential Association Theory. He tries to understand it is one's learned attitude and beliefs by encountering many inharmonious and inconsistent social influences in their lifetime.

Ram Ahuja distinguishes between the legal and social definitions of crime and criminal behavior. He sheds some light in addition to this definition to explain the causation of crime. Using the Classicist, Biogenic, and Sociogenic theories, he makes clear and distinctive explanations about crime.

Albert Cohen's theory of Delinquent Subculture deals with the problem of *status frustration*. He holds that young people's images of themselves depend upon how others judge them, which is decided as a standard status system in society; lower-class people find themselves to be considered low under the standard system. The author discusses the labeling approach towards crime. There, society brands some people as criminals but not others. Labeling the individual pushes the delinquent towards further delinquent conduct, making it difficult for them to reenter the conventional world, and the individual may continue to commit crimes while receiving no help from society.

The American criminologist Walter Reckless stresses self-control and containment approach to explain crime (1960). The self-concept directs an individual towards either law-abiding behavior or delinquent behavior. There are two aspects of control: inner and outer. The author also emphasizes the confinement and correction of criminals. Particularly in the Indian context, the author tries to show the condition of prison norms and the process of prisonization. Donald Clemmer (1940) describes the internationalization of values and norms as the process of prisonization.

Sashi Sekhar Singh's book *Crime in India* provides the basic criminal procedure. He elaborates on the I.P.C. Indian Penal Code (1860) and different central investigation agencies such as C.B.I., N.C.B., Board of Tax, Customs, Excise, etc.; he also discusses punishment and prison conditions in India. The author uses the term criminalization of politics, where he says crime statistic in India is studied in isolation. He tries to show the growing political violence in the country and the number of young politicians with criminal records. He stresses elaborating the classification of recorded crime into I.P.C. (Indian Penal Code) and S.L.L. (Special and Local Laws) to analyze the criminal context in India. He also noted the happenings of fake encounters by some unethical, corrupt officers to earn quick promotions and for other considerations that lead the criminal to cause different peculiarities. He emphasizes organized crime that prevails in contemporary times in India, where thousands of people are working as in any large corporation, highly organized and disciplined. He draws the example of the Dawood gang in Bombay, the Chota Rajan gang, Virappain Karnataka, and the Rashid gang in Kolkata. Crime against women and children and Dalit and backward communities have been taken up; cybercrime has also been discussed in the book. The author nurtures the growing

significance of the I.C.T. Act (Information Communication Technology Act) and the alarming condition of Internet Addiction Disorder among youth.

In his book *Society and the Criminal*, Sethna defines crime as a phenomenon by which neither society nor the individual can benefit. He discusses the emergence of Criminal Science, where Francis Lieber (1838) coined the term Penology, which deals with the principle and method of punishment that are significant in understanding the context of criminal behavior. Thus, the author identifies that criminology is the study of the cause and remedies of crime. The author also tries to establish a relationship between crime, the state, and the liberty of subjects. According to him, the state should provide ideal methods of dealing with it and a satisfactory environment unfavorable to criminal activity. He also traces psychological hedonism as the cause of crime. Significantly, the author also considers the issue of criminal tribes. Many tribal groups of people exist in India, such as Pindairis, Thugs, Baurias, Minas, etc., whom society considers as born criminals. Hereditary factors contextualize their criminality.

In the book *Crime Justice and Society*, J. Ronald Berger, Marvin, and Patricia analyze the separation of Criminology from American Sociology between 1940 and 1960 as a pivotal juncture in crime study. Thus, in this book, they examine *Genocide* as one side of the mass killing of a group of people because of their race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, or political belief, which is government-sponsored. In interpreting such criminology, they focus on *Social Darwinism*, which posits that life has evolved through "*Survival of the fittest*." Hence, those who find it challenging to become fit for survival get involved in different crimes. Authors proclaim that humans are selfish or egoistic, and society is responsible for holding these self-desires on a checklist. The authors also signify the conflict theory of Marx and Engels and the imitation theory of

Gabriel Tarde (1903) in analyzing crime causation in the context of capitalism. The book discusses the emergence of the post-modern era, where people are experiencing life as media-generated, and that blurs the sight of the difference between symbolic and real. In such a context, William Leonard and Marvin Weber introduce the term *criminological market structure*, where corporate and organized crime is a crucial fantasy of criminality. Frank R. Scarpitti provides an attitude toward crime involving an essential sociological perspective, locating the causes of criminal behavior in environmental factors such as poverty, overcrowding, frustration, racial discrimination, and cultural norms favoring violence and aggression.

In the book *Youth and Crime*, Ram Ahuja opines that society's youth are engaged in a separate subculture and commit different kinds of crime where family, value system, and mass media play a vital role.

A.M Bagulia, in his book *Child and Crime* (2006), emphasizes how, in our rapidly developing country, children are widely abused, such as undergoing child labor, being forced into marriage in childhood, sexual assault, etc., multiple forms of torture and molestations, physical oppression of innocent victims have been cited in the book. Trade of Flesh is another space where the author draws a pathetic picture of female children that became prevalent in contemporary times.

Steven Furnell, in the book *Cyber Crime: Vandalizing the Information Society*, discusses the issues of cybercrime, a widespread form of crime related to information technology. He discusses how malware crime impacts various aspects of society, which is indicated in the book by examining such issues as Hacktivism and Cyber Terrorism. We find an explanation of malware in the book: it is a kind of software

that can harm the system, data, information, and other things associated with computerizing and the internet.

According to Durkheim (1970), crime and criminality are obvious and normal in every society. It carries a particular space for function. It continuously functions to crystallize the recognized behavior in society. The functions of criminality existed simultaneously in the social structure in the form of latency (Merton 1984). However, it remains latent or subsumed. Considering the social structure, a single space of behavioral manifestation is only spaced for the recognized set of behaviors. However, the latent functional space of crime and criminality eventually starts its respiration. So basically, criminality comes into exposure with the conflict between a recognized and latent set of behaviors simultaneously in the social structure.

Interpreting through the Marxian approach, a specific mode of production ensures a specific form of society with a particular structure and function; there, it also exists with specific conditions of spacing crime and criminality. The projection of the changing face of the crime scene in the late capitalist mode of production provides the virtual ground. It also carries a latent space of experiencing criminality. It comprises the newer classes in society and initiates the more unique forms of class struggle. In this struggle, the recognized space in society has been occupied by the bourgeoisie group, and the proletariat group has occupied the remaining unwanted, unrecognized space. The representative of the bourgeoisie's exploitation of the proletariat group is the reality of every historical mode of production.

Another direction in analyzing youth crime that has become relevant nowadays is the 'state organized crime.' The saying of William Chambliss (1989), regarding the plea for 'state organized crime' in the presidential address of the American Society of

Criminology (1988), argues that "*acts defined by law as criminal and committed by state officials in pursuit of their jobs as representatives of the state*" in identifying state criminality. Similarly, Louise Proal (1898), in his book '*Political Crime*' emphasizes the statesmen and political authorities, and Austin Tark (1982) published '*Political Criminality*' to explain state criminality.

E.H Sutherland (1949), in his work on 'white collar crime,' emphasizes the occupational aspect, which explains individual behavior rather than the behavior of a 'state' as a separate entity. All these efforts are likely to engage in significant resistance and consider crimes committed by the state authority or agency as 'noncriminal deviance' (Cohen 1990). Therefore, Barak (1991) argues by interrogating how the state could be a criminal actor while the state defines criminal behavior through the legal device. Sharkansky (1995) brought the example of the '*Holocaust*,' considered 'nasty' behavior but not criminal. The stance of citizens of the state as a social audience is also that these are only offenses (Green and Ward 2000). Recently, Michalowski and Rothe (2005) have proposed:

"State crime is any action that violates public international law, international criminal law, or domestic law when these actions are committed by individuals acting in an official or covert capacity as agents of the state pursuant to expressed or implied orders of the state or resulting from state failure to exercise due diligence over the actions of its agents."

Recently, many scholars have revealed that the implementation of international laws through the state has measured several youths in crime and criminality occurrence (Customary codified treaties, charters, and the newly emerged criminal law), which lays a foundation of definitional aspect and includes the standards such as human rights, social and economic harms while providing a legalistic foundation (Roth and

Fredrichs 2006). As a result, the concept of state-corporate crime has turned into growing criminological research with two dimensions: *state-facilitated* and *state-initiated* (2006).

Many state-corporate crimes may be analyzed as the consequence of the colonial regime (Muzzati 2006) in the study area. The growing separatist trends, such as the Gorkhland movement, the Kamtapur movement, and many other disputes, have resulted in several young people engaging in illegal activity and eventually into criminality. In the form of environmental crime (Burn and Lynch 2004), the area considered for study is experiencing a peculiar condition among the youth. They protest against the degradation of nature and ecology or sometimes indulge in the disputed borderlands. Surprisingly, all these concerned youth activities are increasingly counted as illegal and criminal.

The interpretation can be drawn by examining the abovementioned issues that the state and cooperation of relevant institutions enrich the state's political economy (Michalowski 1985) by eventually extending all those issues into political crime or crime against the nation (Hagan 1989, Ross 2003). It helps institutionalize and politicize youth crime and criminality.

Such institutionalization materializes through the filtration of criminal records. It consists of two sets of recording crimes through the I.P.C. (Indian Penal Code) and S.L.L. (Special Local Laws), which politically classify crime and criminals. Thus, determining youth crime and criminality requires considering the local context, which exclusively depends upon the local police authorities and administration.

According to Lasslett (2014), state crimes are politically and ideologically motivated acts that serve and adhere, directly or indirectly, to state politics and the state's hierarchical and nationalist agenda. They are conducted under a system of state-

related tools, such as surveillance, repression, and violence, to maintain the state's legitimate monopoly (Green and Ward 2004). They also argued that dominant approaches to state crime are restricted to the overlap between violations of human rights and a state's organizational deviance (2000:110).

However, according to Green and Ward, the human rights discourse alone is insufficient for the criminological investigation of state crime. Thus, they advocate drawing on a human rights analysis that enables powerful actors and those from 'below' to interrogate a state's 'deviancy and legitimacy' from state norms (ibid.: 111).

Subsequently, the function of disciplinary mechanisms in the governmentality of the state towards its populations and subjects is also significant. Michel Foucault, in his landmarking book *"Discipline and Punish"* (1977), analyzed that, in modern times, power is decentralized with a motive of not only governing the population through policing/force mechanisms but also more efficiently governing individual subjects through disaggregating (to make obedient) the population and sometimes both, wherever it is necessary to regulate and control the conduct of subject (Brown 2018). He mentioned it as the 'general economy of power' in his lecture series titled *Security, Territory, and Population* at 'College de France between 1977 and 1978. Thus, it is not to separate the sovereign and disciplinary power of the state but rather to intriguingly execute these two for more efficiency, with an outlook of a more liberal attitude of the state (2018). Brown analyzes Foucault in expanding the idea of *biopower*, emphasizing that the natural law that governs the subject in their conduct is the principle of the *self-interest* of individuals. Therefore, governing self-interest would bring success to the state by installing the concern of *security* into the subjects as a potential self-interest of individuals.

1.8. Methodology and Universe:

The following section discusses the methodological contextualization and universe of the present study. Methodologically, it has been categorized under two sections: one set of methods examines the data collection, and the other is data analysis. Before this categorization, the section discusses methodological relevance to the present study.

1.8.1 Methodology:

The practice of research in criminology persists with ambiguity regarding its methodological orientation, specifically while it is to analyze the behavioral aspect. From the beginning of positivism, researchers have suffered from the non-alignment of methodologies in explaining crime and criminal behavior until the 1960s and 70s. Therefore, it was necessary to search for alternatives where applying qualitative approaches brought new ways to look at behavioral issues.

1.8.1.1 Relevance of Qualitative Method in the Present Study:

Two significant issues always remain essential in the methodological context. One is defining the focal point in terms of its unit of analysis, whether it ought to be the individual, the social group, or the social structure. It directly brings certain implications in choosing the means of data collection, its validity, and the appropriate methods to be adopted. This again leads to the nonconformity of whether we are to depend upon the concerned institutions, individuals, or the collectivity of individuals. On the other hand, another issue in criminological research has drawn attention to exploring *determinism* and *causal thinking* beyond the concern about the unit or level of analysis (Jupp 2002). It focuses on the processes and factors responsible for certain behaviors among individuals and changes.

Therefore, it is difficult to dwell upon a single perspective while analyzing a particular youth's crime and criminal behavior as a distinctive social group. Youth is an important social group or category characterized by fluidity and liquidity regarding institutional, structural, and individual or causal appropriateness.

For instance, the positivist paradigm in examining crime and criminality among young individuals has always advocated for the quantification of the aspects, and that is more prone to happen when analyzing the youth's condition. The researcher is oriented to measure crime as an objective fact and hence depends on *observability* as one of the primary methods. In such a context, the research complies with the official record of the data compiled by police officials and other parts of the judicial system, which already predominated by counting youth criminality more in the record than any other category. Hence, research would be oriented and initialized by identifying crime and criminal action, which is propagated by the administrative and judicial officials inclined to the rigidity of rules and law.

However, pursuing criminological research among youth with certain paradigms remains unable to investigate the actions that are yet to be visible in the criminological analysis among youth. Instead, it would work as an instigation or creation to make the actual causation of youth crime invisible. It may function to hide or mask several actions that need to be interrogated regarding the fruitfulness of research is concerned.

For example, the existence of several instances propagated by the predominance of structural inequality in society, such as sexism, caste inequality, and racism, which often results in violence and criminality, would remain with similar tenacity as far as 'youth crime' is concerned; moreover, these may find support in validating such consequences from the kind of researches conducted through the statistical

quantification. It may function for the meta-theories or hypothesis to be tested by statistical data, and drawing some conclusions based on numbers and often eschewing the numbers in qualitative strategies also increases the difficulties in criminological research. Thus, quantitative methods remain useful only at the surface to test the hypothesis and theories rather than finding the social reality.

1.8.1.2 Methodological Contextualization:

In analyzing crime and criminal behavior, considering the physical place is essential to the applicability of the method in pertaining to theoretical investigation. Whether it is a qualitative or quantitative approach to be applied for the concerned data collection, it is incredibly significant to consider the contextualization of the place of crime and criminals, validating the ecological approach (Shaw and McKay 1929) in analyzing crime and criminal behavior to some extent. In all places, expecting similar responses and, consequently, similar causation would not bring fruitful results, hence, the actual explanation. However, it remains unresolved in criminal causation and how and whether to analyze crime before or after. Therefore, as far as the causation is concerned, if we tend to inquire about the causes behind the happening, we should never depend and wait upon the legal declaration of crime and criminals. It has been felt in experiencing field situations that, more or less, all popular methods (*observation, interview, telephonic means, schedule, etc.*) remain limited in producing pertinent data while these depend on the singular place for data collection. Therefore, the present study does not depend upon a single physical source to reach the crime and criminals; it has gone through multiple places beyond the legally identified crime and criminals and finds several potential dimensions concerning youth behavior. As a result, it becomes possible to catch natural and spontaneous data from multiple sources, including fields and populations. Thus, reasonably, the questionnaire for

interviewing the respondents has also been framed accordingly by putting the relatable questions into different segments.

For example, in the study area, the high volume of drug-related crime and criminality among youth cannot be understood by following only convicted or under-trial persons available in concerned homes or prisons. To exacerbate the all-inclusive causes that lead youth to criminality, we must conceive that those factors are laid in multiple places, whether connected to the individual, group, or structure. We sought and have accessed a series of places to understand youths' drug-related behavior and activities in the field and find the context and causation. Many of these interlinked places are often inaccessible regarding various factors such as security, privacy, confidentiality, etc.

1.8.1.3 Appropriation of Multiple Methods:

The inclusion of such multiple field methods considered here also liberates from the uncertainty about the unit or level of analysis to be considered. It validates that for single research with a fixed theory and hypothesis to be tested, fixing multiple levels or units of analysis is indeed necessary and pertinent whether individual, social group, or social structure. Hence, this methodological approach is relevant not only for the researchers to understand the deepened social reality but also for the potential of the research to be carried out on the matters or cases under investigation. This would also bring potential results in further policing, policy formulation, and framing of the relevant law and judicial attitudes and attributions.

Almost the entire sociological tradition of crime and criminality heavily depends on the official crime record to analyze criminality. For instance, the classical works on anomie done by Durkheim (1952), Merton (1958), Chicagoans study of delinquent areas by Shaw and McKay (1929), Sub-cultural explanations of Cohen (1955), Matza

(1961), Cloward and Ohlin (1961), etc. all have been conducted upon the analysis of the official criminal record. It manifests the direct reflection of institutions of the criminal justice system, such as police, prison, policies, laws, etc., and the personnel engaged in it.

Young (1986) has described it as 'administrative criminology' and often explained it as mainstream criminology, which is predominated by positivist orientation and consequently in criminal causation. Such an approach functions directly and indirectly and is intended to increase the efficiency of the said institutions and regulatory bodies under administration.

Methodologically, the explanation of the labeling approach has a more neutral position as it distinctively tries to interpret the crime phenomena separated from the earlier engagement. Moreover, the link between economic and class relations approaches to crime, and criminal behavior helps as a key factor in realizing the contribution of social inequality in analyzing crime and criminal behavior. From this point of view, we find the further development of Jock Young's (1986) work on 'working class criminality,' which has indeed pointed towards many other predominant social orders of inequality, such as race and gender. Many scholars started to find true crime by going beyond the official record, incorporating the survey method, and interviewing samples to gain unreported and unrecorded truth (Jones, MacLean, and Young, 1986).

Thus, the present study has incorporated multiple approaches in its methodological consideration, which would assist in being closer to reality. It does not solely focus on the recorded form of youth criminality; it has incorporated many unrecorded aspects. However, the present study has incorporated the field and respondents under institutional arrangements, such as police stations, correctional homes, officers, and

administrative personnel, and the field and respondents beyond institutional confinement, such as non-convicted, peer gatherings, escaped criminals, criminal spots, homes, etc.

1.8.2 Research Universe:

The present study focuses on the Matigara P.S. of Siliguri subdivision as its research universe. It is a Police Station under the Siliguri Police Commissionerate of Darjeeling district of North Bengal. Siliguri City is considered the second largest city in West Bengal in importance. It is popularly known as the gateway of North East India because of its strategic importance. The city has smooth connectivity and is surrounded by the provinces of Bihar, Sikkim, and Assam. It is also surrounded by the states of Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, and China through Sikkim. The police station is located at the city's entry point from the southeastern part, through which it is connected to the remaining mainland of the country. Geographically, the area of the subdivision spreads over 837.45 sq. Km. The Sub-Division has a long 19.32 Km International Border with *Bangladesh*. Based on the Census data 2011, the city has a population of 705,579, while the population of Siliguri Metropolitan area is 1,057,438. Males constitute 51% of the population and females 49%. The density of the population is 12,000/km² inside the metro area.

Within the sub-division, the study area, Matigara block, has a total area of 143 sq. Km. Matigara is located at 26°43'0"N 88°23'0"E at an elevation of 127 m above sea level. According to the 2011 Census of India, the Matigara block had a total population of 197,278, of which 135,583 were rural and 61,695 were urban. There were 101,023 (51%) males and 96,255 (49%) females.

In contemporary times, a substantial proportion of criminality and several kinds of smuggling activities are recorded in the city. The city is experiencing expansions through different forces, such as urbanization, globalization, and many other processes. Parallely, the growth of different institutions has resulted in several newer kinds of crime and criminal behavior of individuals. Thus, strategic importance and rapid increase of various forces and processes make the researcher eager to fix this place as the research area.

Methodologically, the study has considered both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Conventional sociological tools and techniques were used, and some flexibility was considered in the field situation.

1.8.3 Data Collection Method: Primary and secondary sources were considered in the study to collect data and relevant information. Characteristically, both sources are distinct in terms of their significance. The present study used both sources to accomplish the necessary data and information. The details are as follows-

i. Secondary data:

Different sources of primary and secondary data and information have been used. Several published and unpublished materials were used to understand the problem's background. The all-inclusive monthly gist of the police station was under consideration to understand the statement, background, causes, and context of undertaking relevant crime and criminals. The researcher accessed the Central Library of North Bengal University, the National Library of Kolkata, and the District Library of the subdivision for some specific secondary data. Besides these, the researcher has accessed different journals, magazines, other institutions, and relevant N.G.Os.

The researcher has occasionally accessed the relevant websites run by the government and other agencies to access the secondary data and other relevant information. The websites of the National Crime Records Bureau (N.C.R.B.) and the State Crime Records Bureau (S.C.R.B.) remained helpful. However, the efficiency of the official website of the Siliguri Police Commissionerate was not very strong, but it remains helpful in a few cases. Apart from these, the online portal of the Siliguri Times, the Newspaper of Uttarbanga Sambad, and a few other sources were beneficial and informative regarding the study.

ii. Primary Data:

For empirical data collection, fieldwork has been conducted in the study universe. A total of 96 respondents from the correctional home have been considered, and many other respondents have been communicated with personally. Convicted and non-convicted (means who have escaped punishment by some means), both kinds of respondents have been considered under the Siliguri Police Commissionerate from the Matigara police station.

iii. Sampling Techniques:

Two sample sets have been collected from the field. Hence, two fields were relevant to the study. One set of samples has been collected from the institutional source where arrested and convicted have been under consideration as respondents. It was conducted at the Siliguri Special Correctional Home, the only home under the jurisdiction area of the present study. It consists of four blocks for males and one block for females. Each block has the capacity of 60 inmates, but roughly, there have always been around 100 inmates in each block in the case of males, where the number of inmates changes every day. From such conditions, the researcher tried to have 20

percent male inmates as the respondents from each block. Regarding females from the only block, the researcher has considered 25 percent of female inmates as respondents, 15 out of 60 female inmates. Interview schedules were used to collect the data for both males and females.

Only one transgender inmate could be identified when conducting the study, who was kept at a male block whom the researcher has considered for the case study to have detailed information. In addition to these, the case study method was also applied to a select few male and female inmates. In this way, a total of 96 respondents from the correctional home were under consideration to collect the data. A simple random sampling (S.R.S.) method was followed to choose the sample in the abovementioned case.

The other sample set has been selected from respondents outside the correctional home who live in the study area using snowball sampling. After conducting a pilot survey, snowball sampling methods were used through a proper schedule and questionnaire for data collection. Beyond that, a specific focus was given to the interview and observation method.

iv. Schedule:

In both cases, the interview schedules consist of structured and unstructured questions. It consists of nine categories of questions: individual biodata, economic, nature of the crime, causes of crime, motivational ground, self-reaction, social reaction, victim connection, jurisprudence/verdict, and other observations. In such a way, it comprised a total of 35 questions. As necessary, the researcher switched to more than the questions available in the schedule to get to further depth.

According to necessity, the researcher also interviewed criminals and different officials such as public prosecutors, legal advisors, police officers, advocates, etc. The case study technique has also been employed in specific cases. For data and information related to cybercrime, the researcher visited the cyber cell of the Commissionerate office and different I.C.T institutions but got very little useful information as those mainly were emerging departments in the said police organization.

1.8.4 Methods of Data Analysis: Analyzing data is another significant step in accomplishing the research quest. In such a context, employing appropriate data analysis techniques is necessary to get more accurate findings, which may vary according to the research theme. Hence, the analysis techniques for the present study are as follows-

i. Tabulation:

The data set, collected from the institutional source of Correctional Home, has been organized and compiled using the tabulation process. This process helped the researcher to categorize the data accordingly and interpret the overall scenario successfully. It has been used primarily to classify and understand the respondents' socio-economic background. The tabulation process also helped to organize the data thematically, contributing to the more elaborated analysis for amplifying the contextual background of youth criminality.

ii. Case Study:

The selected respondents from the correctional home were under the consideration of the case study method for data analysis. It has been considered for both male and

female categories of respondents. The responses of one and only transgender individuals were entirely under consideration in the case study method. The data collected from the open field, outside the correctional home, were all under consideration for this data analysis technique of the case study. Narratives of all cases have been placed in the relevant chapters throughout the thesis.

iii. Observation:

The observation method remains useful in both cases, within the correctional home and the criminal incidence in the open field. Though it was not the participant observation, the researcher remained present on a few occasions in the 'correctional home' and in many criminal incidents in the open field, which helped the researcher understand more in-depth.

iv. Phenomenological Analysis:

The ethnomethodological and phenomenological approaches focus on finding out the root causation of crime and the criminal behavior of individuals. The descriptive phenomenological method was necessary to understand youths' behavior and images as they are judged by comparing others through a standard status system. Their subjective understandings are objectified through modification of the social reality. In such a condition, youths commit different crimes and engage in deviant behavior to achieve status under the standard system. To find out the causation, the researcher has tried to understand the individual's behavior in constructing social reality through socialization and the self-control that directs an individual towards being either law-abiding or delinquent.

v. Netnography:

In a few cases, to analyze cyber crime and its contexts, the researcher relied on following internet activities of respondents to collect the data and observe the facts. Many online contents have been analyzed under this consideration. Understanding the media content and youth representation would remain untouched without such methodical analysis. However, to measure the impact of those contents on the youth's behavior again, the method remains helpful while analyzing the different social media platforms and their representation. It also remains helpful to analyze cybercrime, the production of cyber surplus value, and its impact on the youth's crime and criminal behavior.

1.9 Chapterization of the Thesis:

Chapter 1 Introduction.

Chapter 2: Youth Crime and Society.

Chapter 3: Gender and Crime.

Chapter 4: State Crime and Youth.

Chapter 5: Social Implication of Youth Crime in the Study Area.

Chapter 6: Summary and Conclusion.

As the first chapter of the present thesis, the effort has been made to give a primary outline of the thesis and introduce the major issues that have been taken for accomplishment. In doing so, it also includes the chapter outline in the abovementioned section. Though several modifications and alterations have been made throughout the journey, the present structure is the last effort that has been taken to reach perfection.

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