

Criminal Psychology

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Abstract

Criminology is the study of crimes and criminals as to know about crimes we need to know the factors affecting it too. According to Webster, “It is the scientific study of crime as a social phenomena or criminals and their mental traits, habits, discipline etc.” It is the science of criminal behaviour. Now, What leads to criminal activity in society? Is it a nature or nurture? Certain factors of causation of crimes are Poverty, Peer Pressure, Drug abuse, Politics, Religion differences, Unemployment, Unfair Justice System etc. But there are two main factors affecting criminal behaviour in society :-Environmental Factor :- It means the kind of people with whom he or she is surrounded with. It may include abused childhood, alcoholic parents, bullying in schools and colleges, use of abusive language, stress, domestic violence, Drug or substance abuse, traumatisation and harassment. Biological Factor :- Is someone born to be a criminal ? Dr Adrian Raine conducted a research upon violent criminals and wrote a book “Anatomy of Violence”. When a woman consumes alcohol or substance abuse during her pregnancy, it will affect the mind of an unborn child, there will be hormonal imbalance or syndrome and the brain will not develop completely. The “Pre-Frontal Cortex” is a Guardian Angel of behaviour. Criminals who have poor functioning of pre-frontal cortex, they commit crimes in a fit of rage. Criminals who have high functioning of pre-frontal cortex, they commit crimes with methodical process. The “Amygdala” is a Seat of Emotions. It control emotions such as empathy , remorse , conscience etc. Brain scans revealed that psychopathy in criminals was associated with poor connectivity between weak Amygdala and strong pre-frontal cortex. Some criminals have low resting heart-rate due to which, they have lack of fear while committing a crime. Therefore, the causes of psychopathy remains a mystery.

WHAT IS CRIMINAL PSYCHOLOGY:-

- Science of study of criminal behaviour.

1. WHAT LEADS TO CRIMINAL ACTIVITY?

Causation of crimes

1. Poverty
2. Peer Pressure
3. Substance abuse
4. Politics
5. Unemployment
6. Unfair Justice System
7. Biological Factor
8. Mental disorder

2. THEORIES OF CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR:-

1. PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORY

According to Ferri, he classified criminals as insane, habitual, occasional and passionate.

He states that a person causes crime as he is psychologically challenged

- He classified criminals into 4 types :-
- Insane – mentally retarded
- For example: multiple personality disorder.
- Habitual – they commit crimes as they are addicted to it
- For example: kleptomaniac which has no cure.
- Occasional – they commit crimes for strong reasons
- For example: self-defence.
- Passionate – commit crimes for passion

▪ 4 BASIC IDEAS WHEN IT COMES TO PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES OF CRIME

1. Failures in psychological development
2. Learned behaviours of aggression and violence
3. Inherent personality traits
4. Relationship of criminality to mental illness

2. SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY

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- This theory of crime seeks to explain observed criminal activity through societal conditions in which they occur.
- They believe that society influences a person to become a criminal.
- Unequal distribution of resources compels society to commit crimes.

3. sociological theories of crime

• Social learning

It states that people learn from one another through observation, imitation and modelling.

It is often referred as a bridge behaviourist and cognitive learning theories as it encompasses attention, memory and motivation.

• Social conflict

It is a struggle over values or claims to status, power and scarce resources.

To gain desired values as well as to neutralize, injure or eliminate rivals.

It encompasses a broad range of social phenomena- class, race, Religion and civil disorder.

• Social disintegration

It is common when we go through sudden changes in our lives or when we live in larger cities. Sudden changes bring stress and frustration.

Anomie is a state of relative normlessness that comes from the disintegration of our routines and regulations.

4. ECONOMIC THEORY

Certain factors such as Poverty and unemployment constitutes a criminal to commit a crime due to poor economic condition.

- Certain factors such as Poverty, hunger, misfortune, disease and anger make humans do unwanted

things.

- 79% of the criminals belong to non-profitable class
- Unequal distribution of wealth leads to Unemployment that leads to alcoholism which leads to a crime.
- Increased spending power over children with lack of maturity leads to gambling, alcoholism, theft etc.
- It involves additional criminal acts like computer crime, elder abuse, violent crimes like robbery and murder.

Economic theories of crime:-

1. **Plato** - Human greed is a potential cause of crime
2. **Russell** - Food prices and crime go hand in hand
3. **R.H Walsh** - Depression and unfavourable Economic periods results in increase in crimes especially crimes against property

3 IS IT A NATURE OR NURTURE?

Environmental factor:

- Helplessness due to lack of resources such as money crisis
- Kind of people he or she is surrounded with.
- Abused childhood (alcoholic parents)
- Drug addicts
- Domestic violence
- Bullying and use of abusive language.
- Family environment
- Dysfunctional family
- Lack of parental supervision
- Exposure to violence at home
- Peer influence
- Association with delinquent peers and their involvement
- Media influence
- Exposure to violent content in media
- School environment
- Poor academic performance
- Bullying
- Lack of positive school experience

Biological Factor:

- Substance abuse during pregnancy affects the mind of an unborn child.
- Physical structure is different from others.
- Long arms, ear lacking earlobe, large teeth and lots of body hair.
- Sandwiched between primitive and modern generation of human beings.
- Insensitive to pain

Cesare Lombroso:

- Crimes are born and not made
- Criminals are physically different:-
- Twisted nose
- Excessive cheekbones And wrinkles

- Long arms
- Large lips ,jaw , chin and monkey like ears
- Tattoos marks

William Sheldon:

- People could be classified into 3 body shapes as personality types :-
- Endomorphic – having a soft body , under developed muscles , round physique and difficulty in losing weight
- Ectomorphic – flat chested, fragile, lean, lightly muscled and small shoulders.
- Mesomorph – muscular, excellent posture and thick skin.

Demerits:

- Explain relationship between gender and crime.
- Lack of free will
- Sick behaviour rather than bad
- Most actions are defined as deviant which are carried by people who are physically normal

Y chromosome theory:

- This person is referred as super male.
- Some studies have found that the proportion of XYY males in prison population is higher than general male population.

4. CASE LAWS REFERENCE:

1 NITHARI CASE

December 2006, Noida Sector 31, 17 children were kidnapped and murdered. They were cut into pieces and were cooked and eaten and rest of the bodies were thrown in sewage systems.

2 ARUNA SHAUBAUG V. UNION OF INDIA

She was sexually molested and spent 36 years in coma where Pinki Virani filed a writ petition in Supreme Court to allow her passive euthanasia as she was beyond revival.