

Theory of anomie essay



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The sociological theory of anomie may hold some sociological fact but certainly does not explain the subject of deviance as it relates to gender differences. It therefore gives no direct support to my view about female motherliness. According to this theory, the conflicts that exist in the social norms of any society result in confusions that may necessitate the emergence of deviant behavior. Furthermore, the differential levels of socially acceptable goals and the availability of means to achieve these goals define how deviant behavior arises in any aspect of the society. For instance, it is every American's dream to acquire wealth and there is indeed a lot of social pressure on every adult member of the society to be able to fend for those who depend on them. This kind of confusion can drive any member of the society into crime as an attempt to possess socially acceptable amount of wealth. This phenomenon is often summed up as "the end justifies the means". Notably, this phenomenon is vague on the subject of gender relativities. It would be more perfectly befitting if the theory could explain the gender differences that certainly exist among members of a criminal gang. According to this theory, all members of the society exposed to the same social confusions will develop a similar degree of deviant behavior. However, this is never the case as women are often more lenient on their victims. (Thomson, 2004)

Moreover, the aspect of social obstacles that stand in the way of members of the society actually contradicts the existing the situation on the ground that female criminals are more humane. According to the anomie theory, the minority groups in the society often experience a greater amount of obstacles in their pursuit of the socially accepted living status. When this

happens, the members of these groups become more deviant in their behavior to retaliate against the society or simply to prove a point to the majority groups. (Clinard & Meier, 1968). If it was true, female criminals would exhibit much more deviant behavior considering the fact that meet greater challenges in the society as they pursue social excellence. For instance, the areas of the economy that the society expect women to venture into so that they can meet their financial goals are very few. Informal sectors like metal work are socially considered a no go zone for women. Moreover, a woman who decides to venture let us say the mining sector may be labeled as unfeminine to the extent of causing social isolation. Such situations are conventionally supposed to make women more deviant. However, that is never the case because all social statistics point to the fact that women are less deviant than men. In light of this contradiction, the theory of self control remains the only relevant explanation to the question of relativity in gender deviance. (Travies, 2009)

The theory of labeling clearly misses the mark in as far as the question of relativity of gender deviance holds to the effect of female humanity. According to this theory, a pattern of behavior only becomes deviant when the society thinks of them as such. This implies that members of the society who are considered by the society to conform to the social norms are the ones that define the parameters for deviance and by extension attach these labels on people as either being deviant or non deviant. Realistically, this would mean that levels of deviance among members of the society would be the same for both genders. But this is never the case as implied by the control theory. Another thing that appears conspicuously is the fact that

women would look on men as being deviant and vice versa. This is because women generally behave similarly and much distinctly from men. In this respect, men would consider their behavior as such that is in conformity with the social norms and regard women deviant. The same would apply to the women who would try to avoid men so they do not identify their deviant behavior. This makes the theory quite superficial and certainly not able to answer the tough sociological questions of relative deviance. (Thomson, 2004)

In accordance with this theory, it is postulated that powerful members of any society including the political class and the clergy, impose labels on people according to what they think is not socially appropriate. These labeled groups may include drug addicts, sex offenders and criminals. This may inject some feelings of inferiority, low self-esteem and poor self-image into the minds of the labeled individuals. As a result, they may choose to go underground so that the concerned persons may not have time to watch their deviant behavior. This kind of postulation similarly gives an otherwise obvious insight into the complex question of deviance. No meaningful conclusions can be made from this kind of sociological reasoning as it has no scientifically justifiable grounds. Ideally, if this line of reasoning held women would be considered deviant in most societies because most of the social elites belonged to the male gender. For instance, pastoral practice as well as medical professions was a preserve of the men for a very long time in the society. In light of this, the fact that these people had the responsibility to define deviance for their respective societies would probably mean the society would end up in a situation whereby the social norms are inclined

towards the men. However, this is never the case as the opposite as women members of any criminal gang often exhibit less deviant behavior as compared to their male counterparts. This serves to almost totally eliminate the theory of labeling as a possible source of sociological explanation for the relativity of deviance as concerns gender. Consequently, the idea of environment as the major factor that defines human behavior remains the only sound reason. (Travies, 2009)

The other theory that comes close to explaining the actual fact of women being naturally less deviant but still slightly misses the mark is the conflict theory. According to this theory, the society functions in such a way that each individual participant is engaged in a struggle to make the best of what the society can provide. Eventually, this kind of strife contributes to sociological changes including crime and politics. The established institutions define deviance such that the members of the society who do not act in line with the social provisions of the institutions would be regarded as being deviant. Again, this is quite superfluous because in most of the societies of the past all the social institutions were dominated by men. Right from the institution of marriage, the men had a stronger say on what happens. If indeed they were to be the ones to draw the line of acceptable social behaviors then these behaviors would certainly be tilted towards men. This would be expected because men are generally exposed to the same social challenges and therefore grow to cherish the same values that are quite distinct from that of women. Again, the fact that men themselves consider women less deviant suggests otherwise. Indeed, the situation as it exists

would only be possible if the women had a greater say in the social institutions. (Douglas & Waksler, 1982)

Essentially, the control theory seems to be the only theory that conforms to my view of the social reality on the ground that women behave more humanly even in criminal gangs. Their encounters with their child bearing mothers teaches them much early in life about being gentle. That is why you would quite easily single out a female member of a gang as they would be much less ruthless and ready to harm as compared to the male counterparts who may look quite heartless. This certainly proves the theory of control as the most viable one. According to the theory, a girl child develops a deeper sense of self-control with the help of her mother as opposed to boys who spend most of their times with their fathers engaging in more destructive activities. (Jensen, 2007)