

Criminology



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CRIMINOLOGY A crime is an act, either of commission or of omission that amounts to legal action. Criminology is on the other hand the study of crimes and criminals. This paper seeks to discuss criminology. The paper will explore two aspects of criminology, causes of crimes and prevention of crimes.

Causes of crimes

Crime, being an action, is a factor of a condition or a situation. A force therefore exists that drives a person into an act or thought of committing a crime. Messner explores causes of crimes from three perspectives, "social and economic developments," "cultural level," and "psychological or biological level" (2001, p. 59, 60). Social and economic factors in a person's life play a significant role in the person's perception on crime. People from respectable social classes will for example perceive crimes as unethical activities that can lead to loss of social ties with friends and relatives. As a result, these individuals will most likely refrain from involvement in criminal activities. A person with poor social conscience will however not care about the society's perception over his or her criminal activities. Economic factors are also major causes of crimes. Poverty and unemployment for instance limits people's capacity to provide for their basic needs and wants. As a result, some people engage in criminal activities in order to get finances for the needs (Messner, 2001).

Cultural factors, influenced by peer pressure, are other causes of crime in the society. Association with groups with rebellious characteristics particularly transforms people to behaviors of such cultural groups. With a deviant behavior, a person is likely to disobey law and law enforcement officers resulting in criminal activities. Psychological factors also play a role

in a person's decision towards involvement in a criminal activity. The level of motivation in a person for example defines a person's objectives and economic initiatives that the individual will engage in. While highly motivated individuals will work hard to develop decent professions, poorly motivated individuals lack the drive. As a result, they fail to establish reliable financial background and resort to criminal activities for survival. Negative aspects of "social, economic, cultural, and psychological" factors therefore cause criminal activities (Messner, 2001, p. 59, 60).

Prevention of crime

A number of factors such as "cracking down on crime, education, administration, construction, and correction" prevent crimes (Messner, 2001, p. 60). Cracking down criminal activities, which involves justice against criminals, facilitates prevention by discouraging the criminals and other people from involvement in criminal activities. Educating the public on disadvantages of engagement in criminal activities also prevents involvements in crimes by discouraging criminal intentions and promoting alternative activities to crimes such as enterprising. An administrative role of authorities that includes strengthening of structures for controlling crimes is also an effective action towards preventing crimes. Availability of security personnel to protect citizens and property from criminal activities is particularly important in reducing opportunities for criminal activities. This initiative also strengthens cracking down of crimes as it provides evidence for prosecution of criminals. Establishment of rehabilitation centers and facilities for hardcore criminals also helps in reforming them from criminal activities (Messner, 2001).

Reference

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Messner, S. (2001). *Crime and social control in a changing China*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group