

The police and crime



History of Criminal Investigation:

The investigation of crime involves the study of various facts and findings, with the intention of finding whether an individual is guilty or not, for an offence. This process involves the use of a variety of techniques, which includes interviews, interrogations, forensic analysis, etc (Fisher & Fisher, 2012). The investigation of crime is a concept that has a long history, and the function of detectives was able to develop gradually. However, it is important to explain that, it is the CID who had the responsibility of investigating crime. This was a specialized unit, responsible for investigating crime, and could be found in all police stations in the United Kingdom (Beauregard and Martineau, 2014). However, the powers of investigators were ambiguous.

This is because there wasn't any law that was able to spell out the role of investigators, and the rights of the people under investigation (Rossmo and Summers, 2015). This was a major challenge to the investigatory process, basically because the detectives could breach on the rights of people, because of the absence of a clear guideline on how to investigate (Taylor, Fritsch and Liederbach, 2014). Furthermore, investigators had very limited training. This had an impact of negatively affecting the efficiency of their investigations, hence the results. It is because of these limited training, that the status of investigatory officers was able to rise up very slowly.

Organizational Processes:

Crown Prosecution Service:

Until 1984, it was the police department that was in charge of the investigation of criminal activities. The introduction of the *1984, law of Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE)* is significant, because it was able to identify the role of the police officers, and the rights that the public had. This is with the intention of protecting the citizens from abuses by the police. Until 1986, it is the police who were responsible for investigating crime, and prosecuting crime. However, this responsibility and duties changed in the year 1986. This is basically because of the emergence of the Crown Prosecution Office. This came into being with the enactment of the *1985 Prosecution Offences Act*. The Crown Prosecution Office has the responsibility of prosecuting every criminal charge, brought against an individual (Newburn, 2012).

This office is very important because it ensures that the police would not be the prosecutors, as well as the investigators of a criminal offence. This helps in protecting the citizens from abuses by police officers, who may carry out inadequate investigation, and press charges with limited evidence (Carr-Hill & Stern, 2014). The impact of this situation is that the police officers may prosecute an innocent person, or they may fail to get justice to the victim, because of the inability of successfully prosecuting the case, leading to a conviction. The Crown Prosecution Service is therefore important, basically because it would ensure that the quality of investigation is high, and cases are brought to the courts, if there is sufficient evidence warranting their prosecution (Baker, 2013). This has therefore helped in solving issues pertaining to poor investigation of an offence.

Volume Crimes:

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In as much as there is the existence of the crown prosecution service, it is very difficult to solve and investigate volume crimes (Beauregard and Martineau, 2014). These are the majority of offences that are committed in England and Wales. These criminal activities are very difficult to solve, hence on most occasions, their victims normally do not get justice. Because of their large number, the criminal department is overwhelmed in investigating these criminal activities. This means that there are not enough personnel who can help in investigating these criminal activities. This is a major challenge facing investigators (Lister, 2013). To solve on this situation, there is a need of hiring more personnel, and training them on the best methods of investigating this type of crime.

Serious Crimes

The investigation of serious crimes is also has challenges. The CID has a monopoly in this area, and it makes it difficult for other organs of the police force to demand for accountability in the manner which these criminal activities are investigated. Furthermore, the media has portrayed the investigation of these types of offences as glorious, and this limits the effectiveness of investigators. An example is the Sherlock Holmes series of investigations, where the media glorifies the activities of detective Holmes (Taylor, Fritsch and Liederbach, 2014). This is a misconception portrayed by the media.

Risk Factors:

Furthermore, the quality of investigation is affected by the risks that are placed on police officers to perform. This is in circumstances when there is a

public outcry on the rise of insecurity in certain areas of the country. Too much pressure has the capability of affecting the quality of an investigation (Griffiths, 2014).

There is also too much reliance on interviews and this is a challenge because people may lie while being interviewed. Furthermore, it is possible to categorize such kinds of evidence as hearsay by the courts. This means that they will not be admissible (Kassin et al, 2014).

Investigators, also have a close relationship with criminals. This is basically because it is difficult to crack an underground crime organization without the help of criminals' officers. This is unethical practice, because it is wrong to associate with people, that they are tasked to fight against.

Detection Rates:

Detection rates also present a challenge to investigation of crime. This refers to the criminal activities that have been successfully solved. This is always a political process, and the judges and the courts may be influenced. This is based on the perception of the society.

Forensic Science and the Media:

The emergence of the media has played a role in blurring reality, with fiction. This means that it has an influence in making some fictional activities to be reality, hence affecting the quality of investigation. Take for example, the investigative ability of Sherlock Holmes. He is a fictional character, depicted as being highly talented. Some of his skills are not realistic, and cannot be implemented. Furthermore, lack of high quality technologies plays a role in

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limiting the results of investigation. Debate arises in the United Kingdom, on the need of reviewing some cases that were prosecuted in 1980s, and early 1990s, with the use of technology, for purposes of solving them.

Furthermore, because of inadequate skills, there is poor use of forensic technology, for purposes of determining the real culprit of a criminal offence. Poor communication of its use is also a factor affecting the quality of investigations.

Conclusion

There are a lot of challenges facing the investigations of criminal offences. As discussed earlier, one of the crimes that police are unable to investigate adequately are voluminous crimes. This is because of the lack of enough personnel, who can investigate these criminal activities. Furthermore, the monopoly of the CID over serious crimes makes it to be unaccountable to any policing department. In as much as these challenges exist, with proper reforms and policies, there is a possibility of overcoming them.

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