

Crime theory is a very
complex area



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Crimethory is a very complex area since the way crime is understood is continually changing and new theories are always being proposed and tested.

The way criminologists view crime can be separated into two main groups including the orthodox view and the radical view. The orthodox perspective takes a legalistic viewpoint and focuses on crimes that are defined as crimes by the legal system. While the orthodox viewpoint claims to encompass behaviors defined as criminal by the legal system, the main area of study is on street crimes and not white-collar crimes (Lynch and Michalowski, 2010, p66-67).

The Radical viewpoint on the other hand, does not limit the focus to behaviors that are defined as criminal by the legal system, but includes behaviors that may not be defined as criminal, but still cause harm. Radical criminologists also focus on white-collar crimes and crimes against the powerless carried out by the powerful. Understanding why some behaviors are defined as criminal and punished while others are not, is another way the radical viewpoint differs from the orthodox (Lynch and Michalowski, 2010, p 67-69). While both street crime and white-collar crime cause harm and need to be studied, the difference in the amount of focus put on these crimes may not be proportional to the amount of harm caused by these crimes. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Report's (UCR) 2016 published data, violent crime includes murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault while property crimes include burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. It is estimated by the US Department of Justice that serious street crimes annually have a financial cost of around \$17 billion while the costs of fraud by businesses is around

\$400 billion as estimated by the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (Lynch and Michalowski, 2010, p 70-71).

These estimates on crime rates can influence prevention, detection, and policies aimed at reducing crimes. The costs of occupational crime on businesses have been well documented, however, this area has not seen very much empirical research by criminologists. The crimes committed by those in positions of power have received the most attention by criminologists and many occupational studies emphasize features of occupational offenders (Van Gelder, & de Vries, 2016). Radical criminologists have understood white-collar crime as crimes committed by those in positions of power. The phrase white-collar crime was originally attributed to Sutherland who focused on the high-class nature of the white-collar criminal which was opposed to the popular explanation of crime that focused on poverty (Dorminey, Fleming, Kranacher, & Riley Jr., 2012).

While many white-collar crimes are committed by those in power, the scope of understanding must be widened to encompass many other types of white collar crimes. An example of this can be seen in occupation crime “ The Term Occupational Crime refers to crimes committed through opportunities created in the course of a legal occupation” (Cromwell, & Birzer, 2013, p193).

Occupational Crime is a type of white collar crime but can be committed by an employee at any level and not just corporate elites. Fraud Theories

There are many theories used that have been proposed to explain fraud and these theories have evolved over time. While Sutherland is given credit for the term white-collar crime, an individual he was mentoring came up with the fraud triangle to explain how fraud occurs. Cressey argues that for an individual to

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commit a fraudulent act, there is a financial pressure, a way that an individual believes they can commit the fraud, and the act of excusing the behavior to the point that the perceived action is not seen as breaking any trust (Dorminey et, al.

, 2012). Whereas the fraud triangle explains the circumstances surrounding fraudulent acts, the triangle of fraud action explains what steps that are taken when committing a fraudulent act. The triangle of fraud action proposes that for a fraudulent action to occur, there must be the act and how it was committed, concealment which includes covering up the fraudulent action, and conversion which includes making it seem as if the fraudulent act was legitimate (Dorminey et, al.

, 2012). Moving past the fraud triangle, the author discusses the fraud scale which was based on an analysis of fraud conducted by Albrecht in the 1980's. Albrecht claimed that those who commit occupational fraud were not easy to put into specific groups or identify characteristics of them and that fraud as a whole is not an easy crime to anticipate. The fraud scale proposes that the higher the pressure on an individual, the greater the opportunity to commit fraud, and the lower an individual's personal integrity is, the greater the risk an individual will commit fraud. The fraud scale also proposed that when pressure is low, there are fewer opportunities to commit fraud, and when personal integrity is high, the chances of an individual committing fraud are lower (Dorminey et, al.

, 2012). The acronym M. I. C. E. or money, ideology, coercion, and ego has also been used to explain fraud. While the desire for money and ego or

entitlement are self-explanatory, ideology refers to individuals who believe that they are committing the fraud for a higher cause or for a higher reason and the reasons for committing the fraud justifies why they commit it.

Coercion is used as an excuse for committing fraud and suggests that the only reason the individual committed the fraud is because they were pressured into it by someone else (Dorminey et al.,

, 2012). The fraud diamond has more layers than the previous theories discussed and includes the abilities that different individuals who commit fraud have. The fraud diamond seeks to further the fraud triangle by adding in the different attributes that may increase an individual's ability to commit fraud. The fraud diamond includes the benefits individuals receive by committing fraud, the role that chances open to an individual to commit fraud play, and how individuals justify the crime, but also places emphasis on the ways an individual's traits play a role (Dorminey et al., 2012). The A-B-C model for fraud looks at three different types of fraud by starting with the individual and ending with societal explanations of fraud.

The A-B-C model starts with the individual or the bad apple, then a bad bushel or group, and bad crop or culture. The individual or bad apple focuses on the type of person who commits fraud while the bad bushel addresses the characteristics of groups that can increase or decrease the chances of fraud. The bad crop on the other hand is centered around higher-level issues such as a societal or business culture affect fraud (Dorminey et al., 2012).

Using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design to Explain

Occupational Crime Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a crime theory that focuses on the environment in which crimes

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take place and uses an analytical or problem-solving techniques reduce crime. CPTED is unique because it encompasses multiple theories and seeks to bring multiple parties in addition to law enforcement in order to reduce crime or unwanted behavior. A goal of CPTED is to change various aspects of setting where crime can take place which included determining who is able to be in an area, ways to open space so that people in an area can be watched by others, and clearly define who has control over an area and make sure the area is well sustained (Zahm, 2007). CPTED has been used to reduce street crimes such as robberies and there is evidence to suggest that it can be successful in these areas (Casteel & Peek-Asa 2000).

If there is research to suggest that CPTED can be useful in preventing robberies, then it may be useful for reducing occupational fraud.

The environment is a key part of CPTED and controlling what is being done in the area, who has access to the area, and making sure there are individuals who will protect the area. Examples of this includes using paths, fences, gates, doors that limit access, signs, and guards to reduce crime in an area.

(Zahm, 2007). While these examples focus is on street crime prevention, the same techniques can be applied to occupational fraud. Employees access to various financial systems can be controlled, preventing access to systems when there are no guardians around, and making sure only employees who need access have access to areas that are susceptible to fraudulent activity. Designing areas for individuals to be in the open using lighting, windows, and landscaping are ways CPTED can be used to prevent crime. (Zahm, 2007).

These same tactics can be used when combating occupational fraud through the use of multiple levels of approval for financial payments, oversight of what sites individuals are enduring work, setting up desks so that coworkers can see what employees are doing. CPTED seeks to prevent crime by keeping areas clearly defined and preventing areas from becoming run down (Zahm, 2007). This strategy can be applied to occupational fraud by making sure that systems are continually updated so they are not susceptible to fraud, clearly designating who has access to various systems and areas, and adding in cameras, locks, and alarms where they are needed.

Conclusion There are many different theories on how to prevent crime and many strategies for using theory to reduce crime. New theories are being developed, tested, and changed continually and strategies for implementing them go through a similar process. If there is research to support a crime prevention theory on one area or for one type of crime, then it is possible that it may work in other areas or for other types of crime and research should be done to test them.

This paper sought to expose a gap in the research for fraud theory and propose using a CPTED model for reducing occupational fraud. Given how criminologists evaluate crimes and the harm they cause, it is important to innovate and fill the gaps in research while strengthening prior research.