

Sample research paper on criminology

[Law](#), [Criminology](#)



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Term Month and Year

Criminology is the study of the nature, level, organization, control, concerns and prevention of any form of behavior deemed criminal either from an individual or from the society as a whole. Criminology is essentially categorized as a behavioral science that seeks to act on the research carried out by scholars of the law, sociologists, psychologists, psychiatrists and even social anthropologists. Crime is viewed as an act that has violated the basic belied system and the values that governs a particular society. Each society has a set of laws and regulations that they have agreed upon. Once these regulations are not adhered to then there are consequences (Deflem, 2006). Laws can either be the natural order laws which govern multiple societies and are meant to guard people against harm. Statutes are the laws enacted by the legislative body in the societies' government and they reflect the current society social standing. They change from one society to another and may cause conflict with another culture.

The area of criminology will be reliant on the studies conducted to determine the outcome of certain theories brought to the table as cases are being discussed and reviewed. There are many areas of study in the field of criminology and for each of these subtopics there is need for accurate and non-biased information that will lead to a well thought out argument that will determine the outcome of a certain situation. Some of the research methods used will include peer reviewed articles, mass media reports that include the newspapers articles published in major newspaper outlets and electronic media, government documents such as those published by relevant authorities involved in the prevention and control of criminal activities (Hester, 1992).

Peer Reviewed Journals

Peer review is simply put as the process by which editors of journals will gather the reactions of certain articles brought to them by unknown sources conclusion and suggestions will be from these select group of people. There are several advantages to the use of peer reviewed articles;

It is important to note that the reviewers are experts in their fields of study and that they have been previously been involved in peer reviewing, for this reason they are bound to give accurate information based on their years of research in the field of criminology and are in tune to the changes that have occurred in the recent past with regard to the field (Wayne, 2011).

- It allows for a varying class of persons to be brought and make their understanding known. The diverse nature of the reviewers selected to be in the panel will be helpful in removing any prejudiced conclusions based on a pre-set ideology.

- The journals that use the peer review method are often highly regarded in the field of criminology. They are trusted by the experts to bring forth reliable information and will indeed be used to educate all those involved in this field of study. This is also the reason that will see all the top researchers and experts in the field criminology bring forward their papers for review and publishing (Crawford, 2014)
- Poor and low quality work is removed by the editors and it saves on the resources that would have been used to verify the information. It ensures that the works published are up to standard. Since the reviewers selected are well acquainted with the recent developments in the field of criminology they are more likely to reject substandard work or that that has errors and has been plagiarized (Shuttleworth, April 2009).

The weaknesses of using this research method will include;

- The peer review process is marred by the double blind system which will see the papers submitted judged by the reputation of the author than the merit and content of the paper. A paper submitted by a renowned researcher which is questionable maybe approved over another which is excellent and is by a relatively new scientist
- The process itself is very expensive and consumes quite a bit of time and this may hamper the progress of the research process especially if the researcher is relying upon this information to complete the research
- The editors have autonomy when it comes to the decision making with regard to the papers submitted. At times this can lead to misuse of power.
- There are no quality controls in this process, it is entirely dependent on the finding of the editors (Shuttleworth, April 2009).

Mass Media

Other methods of research will include mass media and electronic media. The link between media and criminology has changed vastly through the years (Newburn, 2007). The advent of new media such as television, radio, the World Wide Web has seen the influence of media wide spread. The field of criminology is gathering more reach as the articles published as easier accessed and one does not need to be a member of a secret society but criminologists all over the world can now share findings and research at the click of a button. Some of the methods used in mass media will include interviews, documentation, investigation, comparative methods that will give both sides of the story (McQuail, 2010). It will also be a vital platform in publishing the latest technologies and research from renowned researchers and even those new to the field.

The demerits with this is that at times the information provided may not be accurate as the media house may focus more on the viewership than the content being put forward. As such it will be a detriment to the field with the less than accurate works being published. It may also be inflicted with incidences of plagiarism. It is easier to access information from the internet and this will see rogue researcher who are not willing to put in the time needed to have original and quality work pick out other already published works and present this as their own (Greer, 2009).

Government documents and reports

The greatest merit of using government documents is that one is able to easily access information that they would have been able to by other means. When researching for cases one may find the persons by using government

involved may not be willing to voluntarily come forward with the information. By using government sanctioned documents one is able to get this individuals to reveal any information pertaining a particular case or cases. The use of government documents during research will eliminate any factors that may inhibit the process. At times it is possible for individuals to be restricted and prejudiced based on their race, color, beliefs, age, sex, physical appearance, among other may have an impact on the research process. Persons may be forthcoming or refuse to cooperate based on these factors. Government documentation does not look into these factors but will deal with an individual as just that, an individual.

Another merit in the use of government documentation is that one is able to track the change of information regardless of the time period. Research can be conducted forwards or backwards. The government usually has better resources and is better equipped in the collection and retention of data (Ross, 2000).

The demerit to this method will be the bureaucracy that surrounds the access to this information. There is a lot of red tape that one has to go through before gaining access to this information. The information may be incomplete or cannot be understood due to the manner in which the documentation was one. Some of the documents obtained may differ in their quality. It may seem that a case that should have merited more details wasn't followed through accordingly and this will pose a difficulty as the information has to be relayed once more (Barak, 1991).

Some of the documents may be misfiled or not filed at all. It is also possible that information is deleted after a certain period of time and therefore the

researcher has to find other means of collecting information. All of these demerits will greatly hamper the process of research and gathering of information and it will require more time and resources being allocated to the process (Ross, 2000).

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