

Assessing the difference between crime and defiance criminology essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Crime and Deviance, is a major topic which affects mostly every society in today's world. When defining crime and deviance, it will depend of the norms and values of a society. Many societies have many different values and norms. Norms of society, is where all society members are expected to conform to certain behaviours. Values of a society, is where a society values something which all society members conform to. For example, many societies value certain types of religion such as Christianity or Buddhism and many other types of religion.

Crime in society, is usually very specific, that it goes against the laws of society. People who commit crimes, are breaking the law and if caught, must be punished. People can be punished for committing crimes such as burglary, damage to people's property, murder and assault. People who are found guilty of committing crimes, must be punished by the courts of law.

Crime is a relative concept. This means that how a society views criminal acts, can differ. Criminal acts in one society, may not be seen as a criminal act in another society. Society may also differ in how to punish people for committing specific criminal acts. (Broom and Selznick, 1963 p 540, 541).

When looking at crime in society, it is important to look at the physiological and psychological approaches in relation to crime. These approaches have been criticised. Looking at the physiological approach, a biological theory was carried out by Cesare Lombroso. Cesare Lombroso, tried to find out if there was a connection between crime and biological causes. In 1876, Cesare Lombroso carried out research called " L'Uomo Delinquente".

Cesare Lombroso (1835 - 1909), came up with the suggestion that criminals could be identified using certain physical characteristics such as large jaws, low foreheads and excessive body hair. Cesare Lombroso's work was dismissed, because the theory was only focused on the criminals, in prison. This theory failed to take into account, why some people who have similar human attributes, are found throughout the world. The theory, failed to explain how certain physical human attributes distinguish criminals from people who do not commit criminal activities. (Macionis and Plummer, 1998. P207)

The psychological approach suggests that criminal behaviour, could be explained due to the individual's mental make up and processes such as personality, rather than the person's physical characteristics. Hans Eysenck, carried out research in " Crime and personality" in 1964.

Hans Eysenck, suggested that it was possible that certain personality traits that people have can make certain people " resistant to discipline than others".(Stephenson, 1992. Page 7). Hans Eysenck also suggested that people with certain personality characteristics would be more likely to commit criminal behaviours.(Stephenson, 1992. Page 7).

Overall, using the physiological and psychological approach has been criticised as it does not take into account some factors such as " exploring how conceptions of right and wrong initially rise,".(Macionis and Plummer, 1998. P208).

Deviance can be defined as behaviour which does not conform to certain norms of a specific society.(Haralambos & Holborn, 2008). Deviance can be <https://assignbuster.com/assessing-the-difference-between-crime-and-defiance-criminology-essay/>

explained as a more broader term than crime. It is not specific and deviant behaviour may not be criminal.

Deviant behaviour can be positive and the behaviour can be rewarded. An example of positive deviant behaviour can be soldiers fighting for their country. They may be rewarded for their bravery and courage. Deviant behaviour can also be negative. An example of negative deviant behaviour may include people who commit murder. This may go against the society's value of the worth of every individual and norms, resulting in severe punishment. Some deviant behaviour may be tolerated in today's society. The behaviour is not punished or rewarded, by society members.

(Haralambos & Holborn, 2008 P. 321).

Many societies have accepted same sex relationships and families, which would not have been accepted many years ago. They are not rewarded or punished, they are tolerated in the society.

Laws of society can change, which does depend on the norms and values of society members. As change can happen, crime and deviance can change as well.

It is very difficult to give full definition of deviance, as there is no complete way. It is a broad area of research. Behaviour which was viewed as unacceptable and deviant, may be accepted in today's society or in the future. For example, in some cultures in the past it was considered deviant for women to smoke and to wear make up in public places. Nowadays, women have more freedom to wear make up or to smoke in public places.

Another example is homosexuality. Before 1969, it was illegal for men to
<https://assignbuster.com/assessing-the-difference-between-crime-and-defiance-criminology-essay/>

have homosexual relations. As the laws changed in 1969, it was made legal that men over the age of twenty one could have homosexual relations. (Haralambos & Holborn, 2008. P322). The famous writer, Oscar Wilde was imprisoned for having an illegal relationship with Lord Alfred Douglas before the 1967 Sexual Offenses Act was passed. (Johnston, 2002.)

“ Deviance is culturally determined”(Haralambos & Holborn, 2008. P322). This means that deviant behaviour can change due to different cultures or some societies may accept certain types of behaviours, whereas other societies may find the behaviour unacceptable. (Haralambos & Holborn, 2008 p 322).

The functionalist theory in relation to the topic crime and deviance is functionalists see society as a whole, using a macro level approach. Functionalists focus on more on the sources of deviance in society, not how people commit deviant behaviour in a society. Functionalists suggest that crime and deviance can provide a a positive function in society. People may feel as part of a community and more part of a society. An example of this is when the Dunblane Tragedy occurred. This affected many people, which formed more of a closeness in society. Emile Durkheim suggested that a certain level of crime and deviance is necessary, in order for a society to function. The crime and deviance levels may become dysfunctional if crime rates increase. This can create a society whose social order is disrupted, which can create social chaos. If crime rates decrease, stagnation may occur where the society may not function properly. Robert Merton (1968) suggests that anomie, where people feel normlessness in a society, could happen if a society does not function properly. Emile Durkheim also suggested that <https://assignbuster.com/assessing-the-difference-between-crime-and-defiance-criminology-essay/>

some members of society, may rebel against society's norms and values.

Some people may have different views on the norms and values of society.

Functionalists also suggest the crime can produce employment for people in society. Functionalists suggest that without criminals, many people in the police force, prison workers, court workers would not have employment.

An example of a Functionalist theory on Crime and Deviance is Emile Durkheim's study of suicide(1897). Durkheim mainly focused on suicide rates to see if there was any social conditions which could influence or discourage people from committing suicide.

Emile Durkheim noticed that suicide rates seemed to rise more during periods of political hardship during 1848, around different European countries. Emile Durkheim recognised that suicide rates might be related to social stability and integration of society. Using this theory, Emile Durkheim used a different set of data, mainly from European countries. Observing the suicide rates in different European countries he noticed that they were comparably differences but began to notice a pattern. Most countries who practiced Protestant as their religion had the highest suicide rates than countries who mainly practiced Catholic as their religion. Main protestant countries had one hundred and ninety suicides per million people. These figures were compared to mixed protestant and catholic faith countries who had ninety six suicides per million people. Main catholic countries had fifty eight suicides per million people. Emile Durkheim began to wonder if there was a link between suicide and religion. Durkheim tried to look at other factors such as economic and cultural differences. After looking at the

suicide rates of Bavaria in Germany where mainly catholic people stayed there was a low number of suicides. Emile Durkheim then looked at the suicide rates of Prussia where mainly people had a protestant faith. He noted that Prussia had a higher suicide rate than Bavaria. Emile Durkheim then concluded that religion is related to suicide. Using this theory and the information he collected before, he concluded that suicide can be due to "Anomie". This means when a society is normlessness, where there is lack of social stability and integration. During political hardship, people may feel not a part of society and feel suicide is the only way out. Durkheim concluded that there is low suicide rates in Catholic countries because there was more social control and stability that the religion brings than the protestant countries. Durkheim concludes that social stability and integration acts as a protection for people in society from insecurity and suicide.

To evaluate the Functionalist perspective on crime and deviance, is that the functionalist theory provides a macro level approach. It looks at the bigger picture, giving more insight into how a society structures relating to crime and deviance. It gives a better debate, regarding how the biological theory relates to crime. Anomie, described in Robert Merton's theory (1968) gives more in depth sociological thinking, into today's society.

However, Emile Durkheim was criticised for using statistics that was unreliable in his study of suicide(1897). Durkheim's statistics, were only used in Europe. No other country's statistics was used, so the theory can not be related to other countries. The statistics did not disclose the circumstances of how the people committed suicide. Many deaths, were not ruled out as accidents or murder.

<https://assignbuster.com/assessing-the-difference-between-crime-and-deviance-criminology-essay/>

As the functionalist perspective only looks at the macro level approach, it does not include how people are affected by crime, individually.

Functionalists assume that crime, can bond communities together in society. Victims of crime, may withdraw from society or move away from society. The functionalist approach, does not take into account individual differences in society. Functionalists also suggests that crime and deviance to a certain extent, positively benefits everyone in society.

Marxists focuses on the capitalist system, but Marxists criticize that only some people in a certain group have only advantage. Other groups can be disadvantaged. The functionalist approach does not take into consideration, that society may have different groups. The functionalist theory mainly focuses on that society, as one big group.

Feminists suggest that some theories, conducted with malestream views will not be able to distinguish the connection between crime and gender.

Feminists can start to identify a number of issues between women and crime. Feminists such as Otto Pollak, the " masked" female offender, suggests that official statistics in relation to gender and crime, can be misleading. This is because the majority of police officers, court judges are male orientated. Women tend to be more leniently charged with crimes, compared to men due to their role in society.

Some feminists suggest the court laws can be biased against women. Many men may be more bias, because of how a women can break traditional roles in society.

Feminists such as Freda Adler(1975) suggests that because women have more freedom in society, this can cause an increase in how women can commit crimes. She suggests that this does not include the biological theory, that changes in society can change the way women behave.

Pat Carlen(1988) suggests that because women have more freedom in society, that they do not have the opportunity to commit crimes. Carlen suggests that women can be more supervised by males, throughout their lives. Women, who usually have the traditional role of cleaning, house making, childcare duties will have less opportunity to commit crimes than males.

An example of a Feminist theory, relating to crime and deviance is the study of *Delinquent Girls*(1981) by Anne Campbell. Anne Campbell carried out a study called " delinquent girls" in 1981. Anne Campbell suggested that more woman's behaviour was becoming increasingly delinquent and in some cases, violent. Although, she argued that the changes in women's role in society, the women's movement was not a direct cause.

Using primary research, Anne Campbell suggested that more young women were less prone to expressing their anger and aggression. They would more likely to keep it to themselves.

Anne Campbell then suggested that a number of social and economic reasons was the reason why so many women have equal rights in society. More women's freedom in contraception and employment did give women more freedom in society. Anne Campbell suggested that this leads to " a

reduction in sex-role disparity and a more active roles for girls in all activities-some of which many be delinquent." Anne Campbell, 1981

Anne Campbell noticed that most of the female offenders, did not think that they had any freedom in their society. They opposed to being independent and career orientated, so they had no women's freedom in society(liberation).

Anne Campbell then suggested that the rise in female delinquency, was due to the police attitudes towards young women and how the judicial systems perceives women in a society. She also looked at how women can be easily viewed by members of the public, fighting in public areas which showed an increase.

As a conclusion, Anne Campbell concluded that the impact of freedom of women in society could not be directly related to crimes which women commit.

To evaluate, that the feminist theory has raised more awareness of women in society. Changes in the law, where women have more equal rights. Crimes which mainly are affected by women such as rape or domestic abuse is dealt with more seriously with the police authorities. In society, women have more of a say in today's society. New laws such as the Equal Pay Act and the Sex Discrimination Act gives women more of a voice in today's society. It identifies more of an gender inequality, in crime and deviance.

The feminist theory can focus too much on gender. Factors such as class and ethnicity are not included. Feminist studies such as Delinquent Girls(1981)

<https://assignbuster.com/assessing-the-difference-between-crime-and-defiance-criminology-essay/>

by Anne Campbell more emphasizes on gender, Anne Campbell did not include class or ethnicity into the studies. Anne Campbell also used a small number of people which was suggested, did not represent other women in society.

The feminist theory, also does not include the differences of women. They assume that all women have the same circumstances or characteristics in society, they do not look at individual differences. An example is the study of Delinquent Girls, where Anne Campbell did not individualize the people in the study.

The Marxist approach is a conflict approach, which does not agree with the functionalist approach. Sociologists suggest that people who own production, have more power than the people in the ruling class (the working class). Marxists suggest there is a conflict in the capitalist system between the capitalists and the ruling class. Marxists also suggest that the laws made in society, protect the capitalists which gives them more social control in society. William Chambliss (1976) suggests that some laws are not needed in society. He suggested that property, made the most income and the people who owns the property, would become resources of economy. He suggests that laws are made, to protect the interest of the capitalists. Marxists also suggest that crime is mostly seen as a problem, mostly in the working class. The ruling class (capitalists), are more likely to get away with crime, than the working class. The Capitalists have more influence in society, so they are most unlikely to get in trouble for crime.

A Marxist perspective study was carried out by Laureen Snider in *The Politics of Corporate Crime*(1993) suggests areas which have capitalism are most unlikely to introduce laws, which might not attract businesses. Capitalist states, use a lot of money to invest in business. They are unlikely, to introduce laws which may discourage business.

Laureen Snider also suggests that most of the serious crimes are corporate crimes, committed in modern industrial countries. Laureen Snider, suggests that Corporate crime is much more serious than street crime such as drugs. This is because more money is spent and more people are killed in corporate crime than street crime. For example, Laureen Snider suggests that an estimation of 20, 000 people are killed because they were murdered.

Laureen Snider then suggests that 14, 000 people lost their lives due to industrial accidents, 30, 000 people died from using consumer products which are usually illegal and unsafe to use. 100, 000 people have died due to working conditions causing disease. Snider, suggests that corporate crime costs more people's lives than street crime.

Snider also suggests that, people who commit corporate crime usually have lenient penalties or charges. There are very few corporate crime cases, which proceed to legal court.

To evaluate, the Marxist perspective identifies that the Capitalists can be involved in crime, not just the ruling class using sociological studies such as *The Politics of Corporate Crime*(1993). Corporate crimes can affect people in society, not just street crimes. This is due to the statistics researched by Laureen Snider(1993). Highlights the inequality, that the ruling class faces

towards crime and deviance in society, because they do not have as much power, influence as the Capitalists. Lauren Snider, suggests the idea that Capitalists are less likely to enter court proceedings for corporate crime shows how powerful Capitalists can be in society.

The Marxist approach has been criticised for having a simple view on how power is divided between the capitalist societies. Some people suggest that capitalist societies does not always have increased levels of crime. Stephen Jones(2001) suggests that Switzerland, is a capitalist society which crime rates remain low. Whereas the Marxist approach mainly focuses on crime and deviance, it relates to the conflict theory of the Capitalists and the ruling class.