

Gender based theories of crime



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Abstract

The swift change in power is constant in today's society. While some researchers do claim that men have a tight grip over the standards of living, women are making a drastic upturn in control and dominance. Since societies have been changing with the understandings of rights and privileges, the conflict of authority arises between genders where one will feed off of the other's emotions to enable specific behaviors, like criminality and delinquency. By seeing certain issues with society between men and women, one can identify gender as another common source to defining the true criminal deviant. This paper will explain several gender-based theories, the variables influencing the studies, the aspects of these theories, and the policy implications that can assist conflicted individuals.

Keyword(s): gender-based theory, men, women, criminality, dominance, feminism

Criminological Theory: Chapter Ten**Gender-Based Theories**

Since the dawn of time and development of all forms of recording history, men have been the dominant class in society. With the use of weapons, fighting for honor and glory, and being seen as a peacekeeper for home and country, men are revered as the solid ground at the heart of the nation. However, with the rise of women in the archetypal ladder of power, a conflict with gender control has been constant throughout time. Because of this instability to have a dominant gender, many theorists have tried to rationalize behaviors for both, but the bias between one another has created issues between patriarchal living and feminism.

<https://assignbuster.com/gender-based-theories-of-crime/>

Main Idea of Gender-Based Theories

The main idea of the gender-based theories is that society, as a whole, is considered to be patriarchal, or male-based. This establishes that society empowers males in every aspect of social interaction. For many societies like the United States and England, this is proven to be true due to the implementation of human rights by men, the translation of various texts including the Holy Bible by men, and most criminological theories being researched and conducted by men. This allows men to be higher in power over women, and have more to say within society towards contributions and changes with their developmental background. However, feminist perspectives of these theories believe that males do not understand the importance of gender and sex roles in society (Williams & McShane, 2014).

Complex or Abstract?

The perspectives of the gender-based theories would be categorized as complex due to the variety of ideas concerning these theories. For example, the five developments in the perspectives of criminology involve varying viewpoints in radical, liberal, Marxist, socialist, and post-modern feminism. These developments have been applied to criminology to make attempts and summarize existing criminological work into these perspectives (Williams & McShane, 2014). However, the main assumption towards a link between liberation and crime has never been fully established and proven. There may be opportunities to liberation from crime, but the offender must be able to work for those goals, and attempt to change themselves as a dual-edged sword: liberating one's heart to liberate one's mind and conscience, freeing them from guilt and any form of shame after the crime has already been committed.

What Are We Studying?

The interdisciplinary natures of this theory involve studies conducted by notable scholars like Freda Alder. Alder believed when woman obtained better positions in society and took on more traditionally “ male” roles, they will experience a shift in behaviors towards masculinity (Williams & McShane, 2014). She determined that this would be the result of women committing more traditional male crimes like violent crimes and white collar crimes. Despite her ideas being interesting to common public, research has not found much evidence to support her claim. In 1979, however, researchers Stephen Cernkovich and Peggy Giordano observed delinquent behavior and attitudes supporting women’s liberation and did not find a relationship. Instead, they found juveniles with the most liberated attitudes were less delinquent (Williams & McShane, 2014). This would assume that prison systems relying on rehabilitation are proven to work, those offenders who are given a second chance can be successful in the real world after committing a crime at a young age.

Theorists of Gender-Based Theory

There are many theorists that contributed to gender-based theories, but one prominent theorist was Freda Alder. After receiving her various degrees, including her Ph. D. in sociology, from the University of Pennsylvania, Alder taught for many years at Rutgers University and helped establish one of the first schools of criminal justice (Williams & McShane, 2014). Through all of her prestigious awards and acknowledgements, she helped develop a basis for gender-based theories, but also to the differences between paternalism and feminism within society. Although research has yet to prove her claims,

female criminality is a prominent field of criminology advancing in today's society, where constant change flourishes.

Variables of Gender-Based Theory

The dependent variable in this instance, or theory, is the person being studied. The independent variable, however, would be heading towards differences in gender. For example, when a woman strives for equal treatment in all aspects of life, this would lead towards the radical feminist perspective of the theory. The woman needs to decide to act properly with the new, equal status in life, and as a result, can continue to gain momentum in life. On the other hand, she can decide to deviate from what is right and normal, becoming greedy and resulting in criminal behavior.

Qualitative Versus Quantitative

Based on the information provided from the text and the research gathered, this theory would be considered qualitative. There are many perspectives studied within the gender-based theories. Studied conducted by Klein in 1973 show that females' behavior were explained by simple concept and motives. However, there is no substantial evidence proving that females are less complex than males in committing crimes. Several theorists have maintained that females are basically non-criminal, but gender is one of the least researched areas of criminology (Williams & McShane, 2014). This is proven to be a qualitative characteristic of all research as no statistics are shown and the observation is shown through data collection and analysis.

Gender-Based Theory: The Good and the Bad

When reflecting on the gender-based theories, one positive to society is making people aware, or sensitizing them, to criminological behaviors from a <https://assignbuster.com/gender-based-theories-of-crime/>

man's perspective. This is generally admissible to prove how a criminal thinks, and it can also gather data on the person most associated with being an offender. However, when using only a man's point of view, the determination of criminological behaviors is strictly biased away from women, where criminal behaviors are increasing every year. In essence, taking account of the feminist perspective and analyzing criminal behaviors is important as women are committing more crimes where police work expands to all forms of law enforcement, and where the criminal is more diverse to the community instead of being towards one stereotype.

Macro-Theory Versus Micro-Theory

This theory is to be viewed as a micro-theory. A variety of theorists have conducted studies in this perspective of gender. There are many aspects of gender theory, but it is unrealistic to place it in the accurate classifications as other theories discussed earlier. Gender theories may be considered structural because they try to explain the differences in the rates of male and female crime. What can be established is the relationship between gender and crime, but also how gender-based theories are conflict-oriented, where the problems exist within the individual to determine the crime (Williams & McShane, 2014). A majority of these theorists, however, have tried to explain crime from a deterministic point of view. This would maintain that predestination exists within the individual, and there is no free will to make that person decide towards or away from criminal behavior (Williams & McShane, 2014). This conflict-oriented bias within gender-based theories gives men and women the assumption that resistance from criminal behavior

is futile, but also that they have no true correlation with positivist theories mentioned in earlier chapters.

Personal Reflection

In my opinion, there are some good and bad points to the concepts or philosophies of the feminist movements. It is a good thing that the feminist movement has made some leaps and bounds over the past several years. Increases have been made in employment and wages, which narrow the gap in the differences of men and women while occupations are the same standard for their field of work. However, where do we, as a diverse and adapting society, draw the line? For example, in today's society, we have many people - men and women - giving their lives to fight for their country whereas most women during World War II were at home or in the textile factory working like the men to support the war and promote positive morale for the soldiers fighting overseas. Men and women are innately different in physical capabilities as well as behavioral mindset. Men are typically seen as stronger, more composed soldiers for the country's army, but not all men are aggressive or courageous to step onto the battlefield. Women, at the same time, are given the opportunity to be treated equally in every aspect of life. I do not think it is realistic because society, as a whole, was raised with the chivalrous brutality enforced by their fathers while women were taught to be delicate and needed to be treated accordingly. If a man was unable to give respect for the woman, then shame would be brought upon that man until he does so with kindness and respect.

Policy Implications

The general consensus is the reforming of society to abolish patriarchal domination could result in improved conditions for all, including women, and that crime would lessen as a result to changes in authority in society.

Feminists would be able to provide many provisions and access to opportunities like education and employment, and other countermeasures would be created as a result. This would include modifications to economic structures by strengthening and enforcing child support measures, teen pregnancy intervention methods, child care socialization, amending marriage laws, and emphasizing the importance of gender relations (Williams & McShane, 2014).

One progressive method to enforcing change within genders is the use of alternate homes and residential treatment centers. Studies have suggested that young women express relief at being removed from abusive homes, but many people resort to “ out-of-home” placement for girls than boys (Williams & McShane, 2014). With the works of the Alternative House, a program stationed in Virginia, their goal is to “ keep young people safe [while] providing them with the opportunity to grow and achieve their full potential” (Alternative House, 2014). This would include methods of education and employment until adulthood occurs, and the factors of a better childhood are presented to them in various ways like therapy and crisis intervention hotlines. Like other countermeasures to fighting delinquency, the Alternative House approaches youths who are most likely to deviate into criminal behavior in order to deter them from that lifestyle.

Another resourceful method to deterring delinquency for genders is the use of local intervention methods for helping pregnant teens. From a local perspective, the one common outreach program is the Florence Crittenton program, where provision are given to young, at-risk pregnant women in hopes to “ help them become self-sufficient and responsible mothers” (Florence Crittenton Programs of South Carolina [FCPSC], 2014). This proves to be reaching out to one method of community-oriented outreach, but also as a way to provide assistance to at-risk women within a society dominated by patriarchal control. By providing assistance like medical care and pre-natal care for the woman and the child, a family can be started, and the outlook for that family is ten times greater than before.

References

Alternative House. (2014). Alternative House Mission & Vision. Retrieved from <http://www.thealternativehouse.org/>

Florence Crittenton Programs of South Carolina. (2014). “ Our Mission-Help for Pregnant Teens.” Retrieved from <http://florencecrittentonsc.org/about-us/pregnant-teens/our-mission/>

Williams III, F. P. & McShane, M. D. (2014). Criminological Theory (6th Ed.). Upper Saddle River: Pearson/Prentice Hall.