

# Relationship between crime and deviance essay

[Law](#), [Criminal Justice](#)



Crime is the act of failing to honour rules and laws that govern an authority. Committing a crime usually leads to conviction. There are many crimes that usually go unreported, unrecorded, not followed through or even not able to be proved. Deviance on the other hand means violation of cultural norms which may also include formally enacted rules. There is a very close relationship between crime and deviance. (Holborn et al 2009: 16)

## **Crime**

Crime can be viewed as a deviant behaviour which violates the current prevailing cultural/ ethical standards which prescribe how humans should behave. Criminalization is a procedure that is deployed by a society in order to deal with the criminals and reduce its effect to the society. (Holborn et al 2009: 16) The costs of criminalising are far much more than the cost of not criminalising. The society therefore needs to move in speed in order to ensure that anyone who commits a crime is brought to justice. This is done by limiting/restricting liberty to the offenders.

## **The state needs to be concerned about the process of criminalising because:**

Victims of crime cannot investigate and acquire legal redress for the injuries suffered due to lack of resources to perform the same. There are experts who are employed by the state to perform the process of criminalising to ensure that the victims get justice.

Victims of crimes may be deterred from taking any form of action due to fear of retaliation. When the state performs the operation, it will not be viably possible to issue threats or jeopardise the process of seeking justice

The victims may not have the capabilities of getting fines from the offenders.

The state has mechanisms which can be used to perform all the legal operations.

### **Natural law theory**

This was one of the earliest justifications of the state's use of force to pressurise the compliance with the law of the state. The theory states that the nature of morality is the reason why people should behave well. (Holborn et al 2009: 17)The theory states that human beings are naturally rational beings. Therefore everyone or any law must be able to comply with the human being's rational nature. Therefore forcing people to conform to the law is morally acceptable. (Haralambos, 2004: 28)

There are several types of crimes. They include:

- Property crime
- Public order crime
- Violent crimes

Some other types of minor offences in the UK include:

- Felonies
- Summary offences
- Infractions
- Indictable offences
- Deviance

### **Biological theories of Deviance**

Genetic reasons are the most likely contributors of social deviance. This theory states that some people are naturally predisposed to criminal

behaviour. This theory is based on the principles of Charles Darwin and his Evolution theory. The theory observes that people who were born criminals are less evolved human beings who were biologically more related to the ancient apes who had a lot of animalistic urges. (Holborn et al 2009: 17)

### **Labelling theory**

Labelling theory is a core facet of symbolic interactionism. It is also called Tannenbaum's "dramatization of evil." The process of labelling involves social reaction by the social audience. This theory suggests that deviance is caused by the deviant's being labelled as morally inferior. (Holborn et al 2009: 17) This theory is symbolically interactionist which also has elements of conflict theory. Deviance is actually not a quality of the act a person commits but it is a consequence of the application by others. (Haralambos, 2004: 31)

### **Marx theory**

Marx was not really interested in the deviant behaviour but was more interested in alienation. Most Marxist writers use the theory of capitalist state in their arguments. The theory also states that the modern society easily accepts difference but labels those that it does not want as deviant and then punishes and persecutes them. (Holborn et al 2009: 17)

One of the most common types of deviance is the taboo. There are some forms of taboos which are prohibited under law and transgressions may lead to severe penalties. There are other forms of taboos which result into shame and humiliation. Different societies have different taboos.

Discussion

Crime and deviance are closely related and there is much overlap in terms of their effects and meanings. Criminologists have put much emphasis on legality and crime related phenomena whereas students of deviance have studied crime and a wider range of behaviors that depict deviance. There is a general perception that illegal acts are the same as legal but defiant acts. Many scholars have made proposals that defiance and criminology be merged since they are closely related. (Haralambos, 2004: 31) However, this has not gone well since there are some barriers that hinder this kind of merger. The main reasons are; some criminal behaviors are not defiant and there are some criminal behaviors which keep on shifting from defiant to non-defiant. Defiance and criminology can be done closely but none should surpass the other or tend to gain prevalence of the other as they occupy different parts of human life. (Richard, 2010: 151)

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