

# Peer review journal article

Law



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**DETERRENCE THEORY** Prevention strategy This study will focus on the deterrent theory on how it can be used to deter people from committing crime and try to study major causes of the crime in the united state of America.

#### Problem identification

This theory is majorly used in food stamp fraud in America. Entitlement was a social support program which was introduced in united State to help the people who do not contribute revenue either through tax or by working. It is a support system developed by the government to support the less fortunate in the society. When the congress created this law, it was a noble course, but currently has changed to be where people commit crimes. Parker (1997) gave an account where welfare groups as been used as a platform of making fraudulent money. People like Dorothy Woods were jailed for almost twelve accounts of welfare fraud. The data showing welfare fraud states that 43. 6 million people are in poverty line in USA, while 9. 2% were unemployed and is the place where the governments as allocated a huge budget share.

#### Strategy identification and prevention

Due to this, government came up with Electronic Benefit Transfer where people are given debit cards which they can use to buy food staffs and other basic commodities, this idea also resulted to more fraudulent activities as the debit cards were in the hands of irresponsible people who could not even take care of their own families.

The study out comes and results.

Deterrence theory is one in particular which makes assumptions about human behavior in order to reduce crime. Humans are normally assumed to be hedonistic, rational and calculate prior steps to committing crime. To

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some extent these assumption are true because human being are thinking machines and usually beliefs and prefer pleasure than pain. He or she must calculate and weigh carefully the option or cost of doing a crime and being caught in it or committing a crime successfully. The cost benefit analysis is a pre-requisite which always in human mind. Punishment or the consequences involve in committing a crime if outweigh the benefits then punishment will deter a person from committing the crime. In actual sense, for these sanction threats to work and deter a person from committing a crime, he must perceive and believe that the punishment would be most likely to be imposed that is to say there must be high chances of being caught up in the crime then sanction being imposed quickly after detection, and that the sanction will be more severe. In short, if the assumptions of deterrence theory are to be correct then it must be seen that cost of committing crime is higher than the benefits.

The analysis of the data categorizes the crimes using the degree of deterrability of the crime

Low deterrability

High deterreblity

Expressive

Goal oriented

Mala in se

Mala prohibiti

Private

Public

Irrational

Rational

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In this case deterrential effect is based on the type of the crime to be committed.

Another analysis gives the level of deterrential using characteristics of the person involve in a crime and here is below

Low Deterrability

High Deterrability

Professional crime involvement

Amateur crime involvement

Young person

Older person

Male

Female

Deliberate

Impulsive

Policy implication, criticism and conclusion

The government has several alternatives to use in order to curb the fraudulent activities and they include; increasing the number of fraud investigation officers which will help in crime detection and reducing the cases of fraud reported. Compiling tax revenue data for the companies and individuals will give useful information to policy makers. Another option is by regulating the operation in the business by reducing players and tough requirement and lastly welfare hot lines to report the fraudulent individuals.

There other areas the theory ought to have checked like the cause of the crime one is committing as the discussion above, the crime is being committed by the business class who are well educated and have the

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resources yet the help aims at the vulnerable people in the society. The theory should consider the option of ethics and morals in society which will actually improve the level of responsibility at individual level.

Otherwise the theory can hold water to some level if we consider the all aspect of the people in society. The theory can be used to deter people from committing crimes if properly implemented as most people fear negative outcome in their lives hence will tend to do things which will only bring or give positive outcome.

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