

Why are crime  
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First of all to find out whether crime statistics are actually a misleading indication of crime in society we need to define what crime is first, in different societies there are different concepts and ideas of what crime is defined as, as legal meanings and shared social understandings differ from societies, most societies or individuals would agree that crime should be defined as an evil act or behaviour that goes rebels against the law. The lists of acts that are defined as crime e. g.

murder, rape, suicide etc are constantly changing e. g. rape was considered to be ok for a man to commit on their wife, it wasn't until 1992 that it was defined as a crime. Therefore Crimes may be classified in various ways, what is considered as a crime changes over time as a result of governments. Also another difficulty with crime is that of measuring it, as most official measurements are presumably made by the Home Office it raises questions such as who actually produces the stats?, what is counted? How are these stats counted? Is there anything in the stats that are left out? The British Crime Survey is an annual victimisation survey carried out by the Home Office which is an institute in charge of criminal justice issues, they produce official statistics, official statistics are particularly useful since they have been collected since 1857 and so provide us with an overview of the changing trends of crime over time, it also provides an accurate view of the way the criminal justice system prosecutes offenders through arrests, trials, punishments, and so on, these are produced for improvements in accuracy and corrections of bias, the purpose for these surveys is to use the statistics as an index of the amount of crime occurring in society. Official statistics is data that is produced usually through high authorities that prevent crime in

this case the police, local authorities, government etc, if they see an act that they see as a crime then they will report it, which is then categorised by the police as to which crime it is and then produced as official statistics, although crime is reported to police, some crimes are not recorded by the police as they may feel its not worth recording for several reasons, so therefore if some crimes aren't reported then maybe official statistics are misleading and not accurate? Positivists are a group of thinkers who say that crime statistics are an objective measure of the state of crime and society.

Alongside the positivists there are also some of the public, media and politicians who may support this idea. These groups would want to use crime statistics as a reflection of state crime in society. However, Cicourel had a completely different concept of official statistics he believed it had no relevance as to how much crime there was in society as he argued that official statistics can only be understood by the way in which agencies responsible for them carried out their work into official statistics. So in conclusion to Cicourel he argued that official statistics tells us more about the organisations that produce them than that of what they are supposed to measure in this case crime as they are social constructs. Also another group who think that crime statistics are not a true reflection of how much crime is taken place in society are that of the 'impossibilists' they not only think that crime statistics are incorrect but they also argue that crime statistics are not accurate since they have failed to define what a crime is as different societies and culture have different meanings to what a 'crime' is, in this case how can it be amendable to statistical measurements, so they also argue that definitions and also meanings of crime are impossible to define.

The British Crime Survey has many methods of recording official statistics they mainly record victim survey this is very important in recording the offences of crime seen as the police never record these statistics. This is where a survey is taken by the victim who might have been a victim of crime. Also some crimes may not be reported because of several of reasons for example some people may not report crimes because they might have been involved in violence e. g. domestic violence where it keeps occurring occasionally and may receive threats or else for other reasons such as rape, therefore some crimes go unnoticed so crimes that are reported does not really reflect how much crime there is since there are still crimes hat are not reported. Other reasons may include that some people might not want to get the police involved so these crimes aren't included in the British Crime Survey.

However, both official and unofficial statistics can be misleading and sometimes incorrect as the British Crime Survey doesn't collect any data or information on crimes committed by under offenders under the age of 16, so how is do British Crime Surveys reflect crime in society? In conclusion criminologists will continue to use official statistics as governments use them as these stats for measuring agencies that serve to protect society e. g. police, also these stats can be compared and contrasted overtime and can also be related to other state statistics.