

How do modern psychologists explain juvenile delinquency

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Juvenile delinquency as a term used by modern psychologists has many interpretations. However, there is a general perception of the delinquency that overruns all psychologists' explanations. This is the behavior of children, including adolescents, which the entire society disapproves. The behavior brings forth some form of punishment, admonishment, or preventive measures instilled by respective members of the society. Through a proper understanding of juvenile delinquency, the society in general may come to a consensus on the way to prevent or deal with delinquency.

Certainly, the offender's treatment basis should be upon a thorough understanding of the mechanisms relevant in handling the situation. Modern psychologists have employed many methods in an attempt to explain juvenile delinquency. This is the main description of this paper giving the nature vs. nurture perspectives of understanding juvenile delinquency. How do modern psychologists use theories in explaining delinquency? There are three common theories that modern psychologists rely on when coming into terms with an understanding of the delinquency.

These theories include General Strain Theory, Social Learning Theory and Behavioral Theory. From the perspective of social learning theory, Albert Bandura who studied at Stanford University and was a psychology professor argued that human learning is actually a constant reciprocal relation of behavioral, cognitive, and environmental factors. The modern psychologists use this as a great base in argumentative description of juvenile delinquency. This is also known as observational learning. The theory focuses on the modeling of human behavior.

In this case, the child who is fast in learning makes some observations and he or she imitates the behavior from the close adults or even other children. Bandura was quick to conduct a research on mass media related violence where he portrayed a negative impact that the media had on the children's behavior. This is under the nurturing process of these children. Juvenile delinquency in this case comes in through watching the violent shows in televisions and imitating the characters. This is the most prevalent form of juvenile delinquency in the modern days. It is prevalent because of the high rates of technological developments.

The new technology brings forth innovations including the internet, print media and all these contribute to juvenile delinquency. Children are absorbed into this technology and they are being nurtured into criminal and illegal acts leading to juvenile delinquency acts. Agnew's (1992) came up with the general strain theory. This is also a strong point of argument for modern psychologists in understanding juvenile delinquency. It has a comprehensive framework to help understand juvenile delinquency. From his point of view, humans experience a type of strain.

This includes an experience of unpleasant events or even unpleasant circumstances. It might be aversive situations or in the process of interactions. The situations come forth with violence and arguments between the parties. The theories proposal explains that juvenile delinquency starts with negative reactions from the children at their age. This is after they experience aversive situations within their surroundings.

Most likely, these children are in no position of escaping from the situation. They do not have a choice rather than to survive in such aggressive and humiliating situations. The blockage angers the adolescents who always have the zeal to conduct things their own way. As a result, desperate avoidance develops to be anger-based juvenile delinquency. This is nurture in terms of occurrence. The modern youth experiences hard times to come in terms with restrictions from their seniors.

Because of the high rates of moral values compromise, the adolescents have grown to be independent. They practice things their own way. An attempt to change the behaviors of these adolescents leads to reactions and obviously, it ends up in negative behaviors. This grows to extremities leading to development of severe and frequent delinquency among the adolescents. Behavioral theory instituted by B.

F. Skinner, J. Watson and I. Pavlov is also a base of argument for modern psychologists. The theory describes the results of a certain behavior. This is mostly a portrayal of the future occurrence emanating from the current behavior.

It is nature in occurrence. Operant conditioning is a concept brought forth by Skinner. It is a great learning method in understanding delinquency. The concept explains that a behavior either increases or decreases depending on external reinforcement for instance punishment. A positive reinforcement is great in reducing negative behavior and promoting positive character.

Negative reinforcement induces zeal to act negatively even when given a choice of positive behavior. Positive and Negative reinforcements are therefore great in influencing the strength of certain behaviors in the respective individuals. Punishment has been a routine used all over the world as an operant conditioning strategy. The idea behind punishment is reduction of certain negative behavior apparent to the individuals.

Behavioral theory is therefore part of the conditioning leading to some behavioral pattern among the juvenile offenders.

This has ignited debates on the modes of punishments that respective states use in various aspects of crime. Many modern psychologists believe that the form of conditioning used in many countries adds to juvenile delinquency. The adolescents tend to engage in negative behaviors because of a feeling of unfair punishment for a previous behavior. The modern psychologists strongly oppose harsh treatments as a form of behavior control adding that it is igniting bad behavior among these adolescents bringing in more of juvenile delinquency. Among other modern psychologist explanations relies on an additional theory by Merton (1957). He is a theorist who formulated the social strain theory.

His proposal is that instillation of citizenry aspirations happens within a society. There is a tendency of individuals to adopt an upward mobility as well as succeed in their selected goals. However, there are times when these legitimate avenues of achieving their goals hit a dead end. As a result, strain or anomie sets in. The result is the compelling of the individual to act violently and violate present law in pursuit of attaining these goals. Most

likely, this happens in lower classes persons are who are more susceptible to such situations.

His assumption was that naturally, humans are conforming organisms. They violate the present laws when there is a disjunction between goals and possible means of attaining these goals. The individuals feel pressured and reason that the only way to get their goal achievements is through illegitimate channels. This is why juvenile delinquency sustains because the juveniles want to express their need to achieve individual goals yet the society keeps on denying them a chance. How do modern psychologists view juvenile delinquency emanating from nature? Nature has not been a favorite of modern psychologists in explaining juvenile delinquency. The biological theory continues to receive critics.

The close relationship between psychological factors and organic-constitutional has not being realized adequately. The biological understanding takes the assumption that the juveniles involved in crime are different from the respective normal human beings. This is in terms of organic structure and the belief is that it determines the criminal action. Organic defect because of heredity for instance mental deficiency also comes in as a cause of delinquency. Other defects in the structure of the body for instance deafness, lameness and blindness have also been valued to be major contributors of the delinquent behaviors. The biological explanation is that, these defects lead to subjective responses leading to negative acts by the juveniles.

However, modern psychologists attribute all these to sociological perspective than the biological point of view. What are some of the interventions that psychologist propose in curbing juvenile delinquency? In understanding juvenile delinquency, modern psychologists also try to come up with solutions to the problem at hand. The psychologists propose preventive programs as a base in handling delinquency emanating from social learning theory. The intervention requires the placement of the individual in some favorable environment. This is where there are lesser temptations to imitate some violent behavior for instance the moments in church.

It is best in adding positive values to the adolescents and up bring positive morals. Contemporary religions according to the psychologists aids in preventing he delinquency. However, they do not cease to state that, the level of religious inscription in adolescents has gone down tremendously. There have been introduction of other negative religions within the society igniting delinquency rather than providing a solution. What can the community do to prevent juvenile delinquency? Community behavior is another major influence to the adolescent's behavior.

Community organizations in this case have a call to come up with a better planning to control negative behaviors in the community and promote positive behavior. The aim is to reduce all significant possibilities of the development of negative attitudes bringing in delinquency-detering measures. To provide a solution to delinquency emanating from a reaction of aversive situations, the psychologists concentrate on schools and homes. This is where the adolescents have to grow in certain environments

conducive and free of any provoking eventualities. The hostilities, emotional atmosphere and the inadequacies present in the parent-child relationships are subject to control is the delinquency control will apply.

Therefore, the only way to come up with better control of delinquency is promotion of harmony especially within the family setting. The responsibility to control juvenile delinquency lies on every member of the community. It is from the adult, child, leader, non-leader, organizations or any institution present in that community. Among other interventions possible in controlling the delinquency, include family counseling. This has been a practice by many modern institutions to curb the negative and damaging acts. There have been individual practitioners including clinics offering these counseling services and have been a major contributor of success (Gordon, 2001).

The psychologists propose other provisions in the community. This handles the individuals who have the feeling that they need advice on certain matters. Family attorneys, physicians or friends have this major role to play in controlling juvenile delinquency. Formal education in schools will also help in coming up with better measures of controlling the delinquency. From this perspective, the modern psychologists feel that the juvenile delinquency concept would be obsolete in any society if the preventative measures were taken seriously.

From the psychologists' perspective, juvenile delinquency persists and will always be within the society. The only solution is for the society to learn how to deal with it.