

ASSIGNMENT

Deviance and Crime

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Deviance and Crime

Definition of Deviance

In sociology, deviance describes actions or behaviors that violate social norms, including formally enacted rules as well as informal violations of social norms (rejecting folkways and mores). It is the purview of sociologists, psychologists, psychiatrists, and criminologists to study how these norms are created, how they change over time and how they are enforced.

Examples of Deviation

Deviant behavior is found in common criminals and people who commit more tragic crimes such as rape and murder. Some examples of deviant behavior are pedophiles raping their young victims, husbands stabbing their wives to death, and mothers killing their children. In the early to late 1900's, these people that showed types of deviant behavior were sent to mental institutions to be cured. They were not cured, they were experimented on. Many had lobotomy's that failed and left the person damaged and sometimes even dead.

Reference:

Definition of Crime

In ordinary language, the term crime denotes an unlawful act punishable by a state. The term crime does not, in modern criminal law, have any simple and universally accepted definition, though statutory definitions have been provided for certain purposes. The most popular view is that crime is a category created by law (something is a crime if applicable law says that it is). One proposed definition is that a crime, also called an offence or a criminal offence, is an act harmful not only to some individual, but also to the community or the state (a public wrong). Such acts are forbidden and punishable by law.

Example of Crime

In addition to homicide, other crimes against persons include rape, assault with a weapon, malicious wounding, robbery, kidnapping, extortion, stalking, assault and battery, hazing, and threatening someone.

Difference between Crime and Deviance

Crime verse Deviance

Man is a social animal and has been living in societies since the beginning of civilizations. Every society has its own culture made up of social norms and values that ensure peace and order among the people. Compliance to these norms by the people is a feature of a society. However, there have always been people who defy norms and exhibit behavior that is considered deviant or one that departs from the normal. To ensure compliance, there is also a written law to deal with criminal behavior that comes within deviance. However, despite similarities, there are differences between crime and deviance,

Deviance

To have control over the actions and behaviors of individuals and groups in a society, there are system of social norms and mores that are as old as civilizations themselves. These social norms got developed in place of taboos that were used in primitive societies, to keep people away from certain behaviors that were considered dangerous for the society on the whole. Social norms are mostly cultural and usually have religious sanctions though there are also social norms that form the basis of interaction and communication between the members of the society. Deviance is a concept that tells us about the behaviors that depart from the normal and are looked down upon by the society to make people desist from these behaviors.

Fear of God's curse and punishment in hell are supposed to keep people behave according to social norms as there is no written law to deal with deviant behavior. Societal boycott and ostracism are the ways through which society normally deals with deviance.

Crime

All modern societies are governed by the rule of law which means that there are written and codified rules and regulations that are to be followed by all the people of the society. These laws are made by the elected legislators in the assembly. After much deliberation and debate, the legislations are passed and become laws of the land. These laws have the backing of the coercive power of the police and the law courts. People violating these laws can be punished using this coercive power. Any action or behavior that violates these laws is considered as a crime punishable by a court of law.

There are many behaviors that were earlier strictly considered as crimes but with the passage of time and changes in the social perspectives of the society, many of these behaviors today are merely deviances. Examples include prostitution, alcoholism, going nude in public, stealing etc. There are crimes of all sorts and a crime can be petty shoplifting to a serious embezzlement of huge sums of money from the exchequer or the system. There are social crimes like illicit relationships and thefts and also murders and rapes. To deal with different types of crimes, various laws are made to empower courts and police to apprehend criminals and sentence them to prisons according to the provisions of the law.

What is the difference between Crime and Deviance?

- Deviance is violation of social norms whereas crime is violation of laws of the land.
- Agents of control for deviance are societal pressure and fear of Gods whereas agents of control for crime are police and judiciary.
- Society has no coercive power to deal with deviance but governments have the power of punishment to tackle crime.
- Deviance can be criminal or non criminal, but crime is always criminal in nature.
- Many behaviors that were crimes earlier have today become deviant behaviors.
- Violation of law makes deviance a crime.
- Deviance is not considered as severe as a crime.

Relative Phenomena or Cross Cultural Communication

East Asian	United States	Canada	United States	United States
Avoiding eye contact is considered polite	The O.K. signal expresses approval	Thumbs up-used for hitch hiking, or approving of something	Someone may whistle when happy.	Whistling can express approval, as in cheering at a public event.
United States	Japan	United States	Nigeria	Europe
When saying hello or talking to someone it is impolite to not look directly at the person.	The O.K. signal means that you are asking for money.	Using your middle finger is very offensive. Used in place of swearing or deliberately offensive verbal language.	This is a rude gesture in Nigeria.	Whistling may be a sign of disapproval at public events.

Types of Deviance and Crime

Four Types of Deviance and Crime

1. Social diversions:

Are minor acts of deviance that are generally perceived as relatively harmless and that evoke, at most, a mild societal reaction, such as amusement or disdain?

2. Social deviations:

Are noncriminal departures from norms that are nonetheless subject to official control?

•Some members of the public regard them as somewhat harmful while other members of the public do not

3. Conflict crimes:

Are illegal acts that many people consider harmful to society, but other people think they are not very harmful

- Are punishable by the state

4. Consensus crimes: Are illegal acts that nearly all people agree are bad in themselves and harm society greatly

- The state inflicts severe punishment for consensus crime

Types of Deviance

Primary deviance is the first stage in a theory of deviant identity formation. Lemert (1967) conceptualized primary deviance as engaging in the initial act of deviance. This is very common throughout society, as everyone takes part in basic form violation. Primary deviance does not result in a person internalizing a deviant identity, so one does not alter their self-concept to include this deviant identity. It is not until the act becomes labeled or tagged, that secondary deviation may materialize.

Secondary deviance is a stage in a theory of deviant identity formation. Lemert (1967) conceptualized primary deviance as engaging in the initial act of deviance and then posited secondary deviance as the stage in which one internalizes a deviant identity by integrating it into their self-concept.

Tertiary Deviance is when a person tries to normalize a deviant behavior by labeling it "non-deviant." For ex. stealing one's wallet and saying it wasn't wrong because no one saw me do it, or saying you would have done the same thing.

Reference:

1. Lemert, Edwin. 1967. *Human Deviance, Social Problems and Social Control*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall
2. Grady, William. 2011. *Crime in Canadian Context*. Ontario: Oxford University Press
3. Lemert, Edwin. 1967. *Human Deviance, Social Problems and Social Control*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall