

Contemporary Issues in Criminology

Posted on November 2, 2018

TAQ 1: Discuss the view that criminology has proved that the media not only distorts the reality of crime but is also capable of causing crime indirectly.

The revolutionary changes in the media today are creating ease for people as well as impacting negatively on millions of people. There are several ways to access the media, such as free services of social media that only require a valid internet connection. Now, television is not compulsory to get any information regarding national or international affairs or any knowledge. The use of social media is spread all over the world and increasing its users day by day. These new trends are impacting the ways media is used to present the crimes of a country to the general public. The media is considered a power source that generates the opinion of the public about crime. Media sources like news, reports, advertisements, political information, and crime information are delivered to the general public, and it makes their opinion about any certain event or topic. So, the accuracy of any event or any information is an important and required aspect. (HAN ER, 2014)

Unfortunately, the media presents a distorted image of criminal events and changes the reality of the crime just to enhance their viewers, for entertainment, and to promote their channels. The media presents small events or, many times, creates such events that have no concern with reality, and the media portrays these events extensively. For example, violent crimes such as sexual abuse, mass murder, or serial killer murders are the ones that are most seen or fascinated by the general people, so the media reports more about these crimes by adding several factors that do not belong to the actual crime just to attain and grab the attention of the viewers. These events are the ones that are overrepresented as compared to the other events like white color crimes. The media not only distorts the real information about the crime but also changes its facts, images, and statistics just to increase the list of their viewers and to fascinate them.

Mass media has a purpose in that its popularity, rating, sales, and ranking impact its profit positively or negatively. Many other purposes include that the media wants to make people aware of the criminal justice system and want to make any social change in society. But the media today, mostly wants that it will increase its profits and make money. Many times, the media shows the public violent crimes and murders to scare them and to produce fear in the general public. The reason behind these actions is that the public will consider the fact that every single person could become the victim of a crime easily in society. These efforts of the media are called moral panics. When the media

consistently starts showing the public that the community is not safe and many events are happening in the society, then it will increase the fear in the public sphere, which increases the chances of moral panics in the community. Research studies showed that moral panics are linked with the media consumption of the general public. It increases the chances that people form their own opinions about the criminals, and their lack of information leads them to link the crimes to certain individuals or certain minorities.

Media representation of crimes may sometimes lead to causing the crimes. This is because viewing the violence in the media leads to aggressive behavior, which could lead to criminal behavior and action. Media violence not only impacts the minds of general people but also influences the criminal behavior of the people. Media is responsible for making the perceptions of the people about the crimes, and it is increasing the chances that people adopt certain behaviors while watching the crime series continuously. Aggressive behavioral events and their broadcast on the media continuously lead to the development of the aggressive behavior of people in any society. The usage of video games and spread in the teens in the modern world, today impacts negatively on their minds when they use crime-related games. Many games that are based on certain violent actions are most popular among children and teach them to react violently even when it is not required. It encourages their criminal behavior and leads them to react violently and aggressively in certain situations. (Coyne, 2007)

Media is responsible for delivering the truth and real events to the general public, but in reality, it is not happening in most societies of the world today. The media is working to make profits rather than spread real information to the public. The media is encouraging crimes that are violent and severe just to increase the profit and the viewers who are fascinated by the criminal activities. It not only develops the aggressive and violent behavior of the people, but the consistent view about certain violent events leads to the spread of moral panic in society. People consider that they are not safe due to increasing criminal activities, and they start to distrust their criminal justice system. They start to believe that the criminal justice system is not working properly.

TAQ 2: “Killers are born, not made.” Outline and evaluate this statement concerning:

People who kill in self-defense

Serial killers

Terrorists

Also, provide theoretical explanations for each type of killer.

Murder is considered the most violent and wrong action in the criminal justice system. Taking anyone's life is the most violent and serious crime that leads to a sentence of death or a life sentence. Murders occur in almost every society in the world today, but some societies have an increased ratio, and some have a lower ratio of occurrence. Killers have three different types, including the ones who kill in self-defense, who are serial killers, and the ones who are terrorists.

Killers who kill anyone in self-defense are the ones who do not commit the crime with their intention. Self-defense killing means that a person wants to save his life from a killer or any other person, and as a result, he kills the one just to save himself. Self-defense is allowed in every society as the life of every person is important. In many cases, in criminal activities such as attempts of theft, rape, and murder, people try to save themselves from the criminals, and as a result, they end up murdering the person who tried to murder or rape them. For example, a woman who became a victim of rape surely tries to save herself. In some cases, when she tries to harm the other person by hitting his head with any material, it results in the murder of the abuser. This case is a case of self-defense, and the woman tried to save her life and honor, which made her a killer. Similarly, a person who became the victim of a murder attempt by another person surely tries to save his life, and as a result, it could lead to the death of the one who tried to kill the innocent one. These cases show that people who try to save their lives and, as a result, murder the attacker are innocent and not the killer who intentionally kills another person.

Serial killers are the ones who purposefully kill other people. It includes the ones who are rapists, the criminals, and the people having mental disorders. Rapists are the ones who intentionally try to abuse or rape the women, and many times, they kill them after raping them. These people are mostly sex addicts and become killers to satisfy their sexual needs. The criminals are the ones who have aggressive and violent natures. These people could be the ones who are thieves, and when they find the victim violent, they kill them just to save themselves and become murderers. Moreover, criminals are the ones who become murderers just for the sake of money. People who have mental disabilities also are the ones who murder other people due to their mental disabilities, such as rapists who are mentally disturbed and only want to fulfill their sexual desire and, after that, kill the victims.

(BBC.com, 2015)

Terrorists are the people who want to spread terror and fear in any society just for the sake of any ideology or any specific purpose. In the modern world today, many countries are facing issues that are created by these terrorist people. These people did the crimes and mass murder purposefully, and these are the ones who do not care about their lives. They mostly kill themselves in an attempt to kill several people.

Serial killers and terrorists are the ones who purposefully kill other people as compared to the ones

who become killers in self-defense.

“Killers are born, not made” is not a true statement. In the context of criminology, killers are both the ones who are born and the ones who are made. People with an aggressive and violent nature are the ones who are more likely to become killers. In the cases of self-defense, people want to save their lives, and that will lead them to kill other people, and it means that certain circumstances make a person killer. Moreover, scientists proved that some inherent gene structure creates a person killer, but that does not happen to every person who becomes a killer. Many killers who had a dark past and abusive childhood led them to become bad ones and to become criminals. Many times, certain circumstances and situations lead a person to act violently and to act aggressively. These traits encourage a person to become a criminal. People facing mental disabilities and mental disturbances are also the ones who become serial killers.

Killers are born and made. It depends on the lives of the killers. Many people who are innocent become killers due to their mental disabilities and due to situations of self-defense. Similarly, many people are born with the traits that lead them nothing but to become criminals and becoming killers. Moreover, many people who face severe circumstances such as abusive childhood, poverty, unemployment, rape, violence, parental abuse, the death of loved ones, and war situation and destruction also become killers and criminals. (Ehrenfeld, 2015)

TAQ 3:

What are some of the key factors that influence the seriousness of the effect of victimization?

Victimization is a phase of trauma that occurs in the lives of the victims in the aftermath of any crime. People suffer from mental, physical, and psychological trauma as an effect of victimization. The main factors that influence these effects include the severity of the crime that occurred. If it was not a severe event or happening, then the effects will not impact the victim for a longer period. But if it is an event that impacts the victim negatively, hurts him, or causes a mental and psychological traumatic phase, then it will last in the life of the victim for a longer period. Moreover, several important factors, including mental disturbance, mental tension, psychological distress, physical pain, disruptive or abnormal behavior, impaired occupational functioning, impaired parenting skills, and problematic behavior, are the ones that influence the effects of victimization. (Hanson et al., 2010)

Is the experience of victimization different for men and women?

Yes, the experience of victimization is different due to the different behavioral or emotional patterns of men and women. Women are more emotional, fearful, and sensitive as compared to men, and men are more emotionally strong, fearless, and not sensitive to women. So, their experiences of

victimization impact them differently. In case of rape or sexual violence, women require proper medical attention and treatment as well as proper mental treatment that help them to fight the traumatic phase. In case the case of men, if they become victims of sexual abuse, then they require less time as compared to women to recover from the traumatic phase.

What psychological factors help victims to recover more quickly from their experience of victimization?

Many psychological factors help the victims to recover quickly after victimization, but the most important ones are care and love. Love and care for people around them help a victim to recover very quickly. Moreover, the people have a strong will and ambition, and the ones who want to fight their fears with their efforts are the ones who recover very soon after the occurrence of victimization. Moreover, consistent care and affection for the victim and proper treatment by society are also significant factors that are important for the recovery phase of the victims. (National Institute of Justice, 2018; Victimsofcrime.org, 2018)

References

BBC.com (2015). Are murderers born or made?. [online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-31714853> [Accessed 27 Feb. 2018].

Coyne, S. (2007). Does Media Violence Cause Violent Crime?. *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research*, 13(3-4), pp.205-211.

Ehrenfeld, T. (2015). *Are Killers Born or Made? Both*. [online] Psychology Today. Available at: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/open-gently/201504/are-killers-born-or-made-both> [Accessed 27 Feb. 2018].

HAN ER, H. (2014). *MEDIA CONSTRUCTION OF CRIME*. [online] DailySabah. Available at: <https://www.dailysabah.com/opinion/2014/09/06/media-construction-of-crime> [Accessed 27 Feb. 2018].

Hanson, R., Sawyer, G., Begle, A. and Hubel, G. (2010). The impact of crime victimization on quality of life. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, [online] 23(2), pp.189-197. Available at: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2910433/>.

National Institute of Justice. (2018). *Victims and Victimization / National Institute of Justice*. [online] Available at: <https://www.nij.gov/topics/victims-victimization/Pages/welcome.aspx> [Accessed 27 Feb. 2018].

Victimsofcrime.org. (2018). *Trauma of Victimization*. [online] Available at: <http://victimsofcrime.org/help-for-crime-victims/get-help-bulletins-for-crime-victims/trauma-of-victimiz>

ation [Accessed 27 Feb. 2018].