

Sociological Theory Concepts And Evidence Of Crime And Deviance

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Labeling Theory and the Social Construction of Deviance

Labeling Theory or Sociological theory derives from the “*social interaction*” approach in social psychology. Labelling theory is the most significant methodology for recognizing the behaviour of deviants and criminals. Labelling theoreticians are involved in why and how certain actions are described as criminal; no action is fundamentally criminal itself. For the labeling theoretician, no action is deviant in itself, deviance is a social concept. Therefore, a person or action only becomes deviant when people label it as deviant. Labelling theoreticians claim that social control agencies like police and courts influence the label of specific groups as criminals. Labelling theory declares that by labelling specific people as deviant or crime, society boosts them to become more so. The general idea behind this theory is that crime is socially created/constructed; agents of social control label the helpless as deviant and criminal based on conventional/orthodox assumptions, and this develops effects such as criminal career and deviancy amplification (Scimecca, 1977).

Howard Becker 1963 demonstrates how crime is the result of social communication by using the example of a dispute between two people. According to him, moral entrepreneurs (interactive groups) create deviance by creating rules and by relating those rules to specific people and labelling them as outdoors (Akers, 2011). Cohen introduced the term “*moral panic*” in order to show the effects of the coverage of media to make the persons categorize themselves as either rockers or mods, which really facilitated generated of the violence that took place among them, which further facilitated approval of them as violent in the views/eyes of the society (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 2010).

Labelling theory debates that criminal conduct happens as a result of the leading social group labelling minority groups who are observed to be performing actions that are against social values. When society gives undesirable/negative expressions to the person, this influences the individual to accept the label of a deviant by implementing the nature of a deviant person in order to approve the expectation of society.

Secondary Deviance, Social Inequality, and

Criminal Identity

Jock Young 1971 established the concept of secondary deviance in his learning of "*hippy marijuana peoples*" (Baron, 2003). Edwin Lemert 1972 established the concept of primary and secondary deviance to influence the truth that everyone is busy in deviant action, but only some individuals are trapped in being deviant and labelled as deviant (Akers, 2011). Primary deviance denotes actions that have not been widely labelled and are thus tiny reactions, while secondary deviance denotes deviance that is the consequence of others' feedback, which is significant. Edwin concluded that it was a social burden to express themselves better in society, which led to some persons having difficulties with stuttering (Akers, 2011).

In society, labelling can play a significant role in how people interact with other individuals daily. Labelling is the procedure of giving a single name/label that they have not selected for themselves. Labelling theory is related to the negative significance and usually turns around deviance. Therefore, deviant conduct is criminal, resulting in authorized issues/ramifications. The best example of negative deviance is Hunger Games. Basically, Hunger Games is an interesting movie in which a single person has to kill and fight each other until only one individual is left, who will be the champion, providing assets for his/her district and making them rich. Peeta and Katniss were the last two people; they went against the system of the games, and that single deed changed the entire game. In Hunger Games, both performed in a way that was unsuccessful in achieving the accepted values. In the opinion of society and the government, they were showing negative deviance. They refused to approve of the rules even though everyone else did what society said. They refused both the established cultural objectives and the established means of obtaining those goals. Hunger Games encourages the purpose of encouraging change related to social and elucidating norms because they are determined not to approve in order to express that they will not fight to murder each other just for their own fun.

Nick Cohen said, "*One law for the rich, no law for the poor*". Law is not applied equally to all because the system of justice does not protect the weak against the strong. On the other hand, in backward areas, these same events might be viewed as bent to juvenile delinquency, which recommends that "*discrimination of race and class*" plays an important part in the procedure of allocating labels of deviance. Likewise, statistics express that police murder Black people in a greater numbers than Whites, even when they are defenceless and have performed no crime, suggesting that the misuse of deviant labels as a result of ethnic stereotypes is a tragedy (Stevens, 2007).

Strengths, Limitations, and Continuing Relevance of Labeling Theory

There are many strength factors of the labelling theory. Firstly, sociological and labelling theories have helped to produce a great deal of successive research into the results of labelling, e.g., Rist in

1970 exposed how the expectations of the negative teacher positioned on the working class guide to anti-school subgroups. This recommends that the ideas of sociologists have played the main role in the learning of deviance and crime. Secondly, sociological and labelling theories achieved experimental support, e.g., Goffman 1968 presented how the medication of the mentally sick leads to humiliation. This recommends that there is some legitimacy in the sociologist's thoughts. Thirdly, labelling theories emphasize the causes for distinctions in deviances between societies. Fourthly, this theory also presents that law is often imposed in a biased way. Lastly, Cultural efforts to limit deviance can generate further deviance (Innes, 2004).

There are a lot of critical factors in the labelling theory. Firstly, labelling theory becomes unsuccessful in demonstrating why persons perform primary deviance. Secondly, ignores that person who energetically continues deviance. Thirdly, it provides the victim status to the offender and ignores the actual victim/criminal of the crime, i.e., the sexual assaulter is not a victim. Fourthly, labelling theory highlights the communication procedure of labelling and ignores the structures and procedures that guide deviant action. Such procedures might contain differences in behaviours, opportunities, socialization, and how economic and social structures influence these. Lastly, learning theory has been argued on a theoretical theory; while Marxist theory admits that labelling theory points out important and valid questions, they discuss that the theoretical has a weak opinion of social and power control, e.g., the theory becomes unsuccessful in clarifying why the extent and nature of deviance and crime are socially created. They also argue that socialists become unsuccessful in focusing on the vast structural origins of deviance and crime. This recommends that labelling theory only suggests a partial opinion on deviance and crime (Spitzer, 1975).

Labeling Theory derives from the "*social interaction*". Labelling theory is the most appropriate method to recognize the behaviour of the deviant and criminal. In society, labelling can play a significant role in how people interact with other individuals daily. Labelling is the procedure of giving a single name/label that they have not selected for themselves. Labelling theory suggests that we should avoid '*shaming and naming*' criminals since this is expected to build an opinion of them as evil outdoors, and by eliminating them from society, we can induce them into more deviance. Goffman used the term stigma in labelling theory. He used this term because offenders are stigmatized, and this encourages them to perform criminal actions according to labels titled to them (Innes, 2004). In order to eliminate crime, we should eliminate the negative consequences that are given to people, specifically offenders/criminals. Society/culture should take crime as an error committed by an individual, which should be overturned through therapy/rehabilitation rather than confessing that crime is the nature of the individual.

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