

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK

AN AFRICANIST PERSPECTIVE

Edited by

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CHAPTER NINE

CRIME, DEVIANCE AND SOCIAL CONTROL

Abdullahi K. Ibrahim & Monsurat Isiaka

Every group or society, regardless of its size, nature or composition, holds certain standards to which its members are expected to conform (Smith-Lovin & Heise, 2016). It is the violation or non-compliance with the defined expectations at any point in time that essentially constitutes crime or deviance or both (Smith & Malinowski, 2018; Davidson, 2019). Crime and deviance are universal and common phenomena existing in all known societies (Quinney & Shelden, 2018). Crime and deviance are regarded as unacceptable behaviours in all countries of the world (Zehr, 2019). While criminal and deviant behaviours are universal, they are also relative because their interpretations vary from one society or generation to the other (Silver, 2017).In other words, both concepts do not have a general definition because the acts that are defined criminal or deviant differs with time and space (Thomas, 2015). An act that is regarded as a crime in a society might not be considered as a crime in another society. Similarly, an act that is defined as a crime at one time may not be defined as a crime at another time (Davidson, 2019).

Crimes are rampant in Nigeria today (Oguntunde & Ojo, 2018). No day passes without the national dailies carrying reports of one form of crime or another ranging from murder, rape, aggravated assault, kidnapping, robbery, burglary, motor vehicle theft to arson (Oguntunde & Ojo, 2018).Consequently, institutions are established for the purpose of curtailing crimes. These institutions (e.g. correctional facilities, prisons, and juvenile homes, among others), serve as agents of social control (Okunola, 2002; Kornblum & Julian, 2004; Alemika, 1997; Dambazau, 1994; Hale, 2004; Badiora *et al.* 2018; Alabi & Durowaiye, 2018). This chapter discusses crime, deviance and social control in contemporary Nigeria. The essence of this chapter is to educate readers on the dynamics of crime, deviance and social control from an African perspective.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

In this section, we define concepts that are important to this discourse. They are social norms, deviance, crime and conformity.

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- **Social Norms**

Norms are specific rules shared by a group of individuals that guide their interactions and relationship with others (Eiya *et al.*, 2016). Thus, a social norm is generally an accepted way of thinking, feeling or acting, emphasised and expected by members of a particular community or social group since it is considered the right thing to do (Turner, 1991). It is the standard of reference for judging what is correct and appropriate to do in specific situations; providing people with criteria of validity and reducing their sense of uncertainty. Therefore, norms exercise their own influence on people in terms of how to perceive social reality (the function of understanding) and how to behave within social reality (axiological function). Social norms define appropriate acts and conditions for society's members (Weitzer 2002).

Norms are both prescriptive and proscriptive. It is prescriptive when it dictates to people what they ought to do (Akanni, Omisile & Oduaran, 2018) and proscriptive when it tells people what not to do. Both prescriptive and proscriptive norms come in pairs. That is, people are required to do something and forbidden not to do some other things. For example, we are required to wear clothes in our society and forbidden to go naked on the streets. The tendency to conform often occurs in small groups and/or society as a whole, and may result from subtle unconscious influences or direct and overt social pressure.

- **Deviance**

The term, deviance, has different definitions as it is seen from the point of view of different scholars from different fields of study (Oboqua & Nwoye, 2017). That is why Adler (2000) argues that differences in opinion exist regarding the definition of deviance. Deviance simply means going astray from approved norms (Out & Nnam, 2018). They are behaviours or characteristics that violate significant social norms and expectations and are negatively valued by a large number of people (Garry 2007). Deviance is any behaviour, belief or condition that violates significant social norms in the society or group within which it occurs (Kendall, 2003). Similarly, Macionis (1997) explained that deviance is the recognised violation of cultural norms which serve as guideline for virtually all human activities. Thus, the term, deviance also refers to those behaviours which are not considered normal, at least, by the good majority of a society, community, or social group, irrespective of the direction from which those behaviours deviate from the norm (normal) (Bishop, Okagbue, Oludayo, Agboola, Agarana, & Adamu, 2018). It ranges from simple acts that violate social norms to serious criminal acts that are clearly illegal (Olofinbiyi, Olofinbiyi &

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Oyefara, 2016). A good example of deviance is the recent case of a primary school boy in Lagos who makes public proclamation of his intention to engage in Internet fraud (*Mo fe sha she*) (Ayodele, Adeleke, Kazeem & Gandonu, 2018). Some other examples of deviance include sagging, shouting while making calls, driving at high speed, driving without head lamp, arson, murder and tax evasion (Oke, 2018). Deviant behaviour, therefore, means any behaviour that is viewed negatively and condemned (Balogun & Komolafe, 2016). It could be considered abnormal, offensive, immoral, harmful or reprehensible (Weitzer, 2002).

- **Crime**

There is no consensus on what a crime is. Crime is a social construction (Banks, 2017). Its meaning is profoundly influenced by time and space (Brantingham & Brantingham, 2017). Its construction is based upon the interactions of four key elements: (i) victims (ii) offenders (iii) the state and (iv) the public (Lewis, 2017). However, some scholarly definitions of crime will be presented and considered. Dambazzau (2007) sees crime as a breach of criminal law. Albert (2013) sees it as an act that is harmful at a particular time in a particular society, which, if allowed to go unpunished or without any prevention, could threaten public order through the breakdown of public security. For LaFree (2018), crime is an act or omission which attracts sanctions such as fines, imprisonment or death. Many years ago, Onoge (1993) defined crime as an act or omission which renders the person doing it or making the omission liable to punishment under any order-in-council, ordinance, law or statute. Dambazau (1994, p. 24) further corroborated that by defining crime is "an act or omission against public interest, and which is prescribed by law enacted by the legislature in the overall interest of the society, and to which prescribed punishment is attached in the event of violation and it involves four major principles which are public wrong, moral wrong, law and punishment for the criminal". Similarly, Adler, Muellier, & Lauifer (2001) see crime as any human conduct that violates criminal laws and is subject to punishment. Schmallenger (2004) argued that crime is a conduct violating the criminal laws of a state, the federal government, or a local jurisdiction, for which there is no legally acceptable justification or excuse.

From the above definitions, it is clear that no matter how reprehensible an act or the omission of an act may be, a crime has not been committed unless a specific law has been violated. Moreover, the violation must be either intentional or due to negligence. However, in spite of the differences in the definitions given by those authors the fact remains that a crime (i) is an act or omission which is (ii) proscribed by the state; and (iii) has a punishment for its occurrence (O'Malley, 2017). Crime has two major elements: (i) the criminal act, which is either a

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commission or an omission; and (ii) the mental element, which is called the criminal intent (Robinson, 2017). Both elements may pose serious threat to the physical and mental health and the life and property of the people (Kneer &Bourgeois-Gironde, 2017). Therefore, crimes must have these two elements and if any of them is lacking, then there may not be crime (Sarch, 2015).

- **Deviance and Crime**

According to Aderinto & Ojedokun (2014), deviance and crime are mostly used interchangeably. This is because deviance is an all-round term that covers not only acts that are outrightly proscribed in the criminal law, but also includes behaviours that depart from the social norms of the society. Unlike criminal behaviours that are statute-barred, deviant acts encapsulate all criminal behaviours. In other words, deviance is wider and larger in scope than crime. Criminal acts such as murder, arson, rape, robbery, burglary and larceny are totally unacceptable and condemnable simply because they involve victims. These acts are labeled as crimes and their violation of the public order is so severe that they must be handled punitively and coercively by social institutions like the police, the courts, and prisons (Adler, et. *al*., 2002). Most of these and other unmentioned criminal acts are considered deviant behaviours. Included within the confine of deviant acts are behaviours like being a nudist, pregnancy outside wedlock and farting in a public place (Siegel 1983). However, to argue that all crimes are behaviours that depart from the norms of society is probably erroneous. Many deviant acts are not criminal, even though they may be shocking or depraved (Siegel 2011). For example, suppose someone sees an accident victim but makes no effort to rescue him or her. The person could not be legally considered a criminal. However, society would probably condemn the person's behaviour as immoral and deviant but can not take legal action. It is therefore correct to say that all criminal acts are deviant acts but not all deviant acts are criminal acts.

It must also be noted that deviance is not static. It changes constantly in terms of its forms and the degree of disapproval it elicits. Thus, it includes a broad spectrum of behaviours, ranging from the most socially harmful, such as rape and murder, to the relatively inoffensive, such as hissing against the other fellow. A deviant act becomes a crime when it is deemed socially harmful or dangerous; it then will be specifically defined, prohibited and punished under the criminal law (Siegel 2011).

- **Conformity**

Conformity is the opposite of deviance. It simply means compliance with the generally accepted norms (Eiya, Ilaboya & Okoye, 2016). It implies the act of

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matching attitudes, beliefs and behaviours to group norms (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004). Conformity can occur in the presence of others or when an individual is alone. For example, people tend to follow social norms when eating or watching television, even when lonely. The benchmark of what constitutes deviance is a comparison with what constitutes conformity. In any society, deviants do not exist except in relation to those who attempt to control it (Ojedokun & Aderinto, 2018).

TYPOLOGY OF CRIMES

Crime occurs in various forms and can be exhibited in a variety of ways. Different crimes carry different weights and sanctions. Some are major crimes while others are minor. Crime typologies can be either simple or complex.It should be emphasised that different scholars and law enforcement agencies have classified crime in different ways. Broadly speaking, there are two types of crimes, though not exhaustive of all types. These are felonies and misdemeanours.

- **Felony**

Felony has been described as the most serious type of crimes. It is usually defined by the fact that they are punishable by prison sentences of greater than three years. Dambazau (2007) describes felony as any offence which is declared by law to be such, or is punishable, without proof of previous conviction, with death or imprisonment for three years or more. Since the punishment can be so severe, court-room procedure must be strictly observed so that the defendant's rights stay protected (Sekoni, Ayoola & Somefun, 2015). Felonies are of two categories. The first category of felonies are crimes that are viewed severely by society, and these may include murder, rape, burglary, kidnapping, arson, human trafficking, terrorism, and treasonable offences among others (Fatai,2017).The second category are other types of felonies that are nonviolent, but considered egregious acts in some other way. These include crimes such as tax evasion, grand theft, copyright infringement, perjury, Internet fraud, and violation of probation or parole (Rotimi & Ogunyemi, 2016). Felony can be punished in a range of ways, but it is important that the punishment matches the severity of the crime (Olusola, 2016).

- **Misdemeanours**

A misdemeanour is considered a crime that is less serious. This is punishable by a sentence of less than a year of incarceration or jail term (Chine & Nnedum, 2018).Dambazau (2007) sees misdemeanours as offences which are declared by law as such, or which are punishable by imprisonment for not less than six months but less than three years. Misdemeanours are referred to as simple

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offences, making up the third category of offences under the law (Joel, 2017). Those who are convicted of a misdemeanour are known as misdemeanants while those convicted of felonies are known as *felons* (Joe, 2017). Depending on the jurisdiction, examples of misdemeanours may include smoking in public, petty theft, prostitution, public intoxication, disorderly conduct, trespass, reckless driving, discharging a firearm within city limits, truancy, verbal threat or attempt of physical violence without a weapon and in some jurisdictions first-time possession of certain drugs and other similar crimes (Gross, 2018).

THEORIES OF CRIME AND DEVIANCE

Theory is central to any social science discipline (Flyvbjerg, 2001). In criminological discourse, theory frames research questions or the research problem and guides scholarly interpretations; it is fundamental in making decisions on crime control policies (Kraska, 2006). There are many criminological theories, each of which gives varying explanation(s) of criminal behaviour. Some of these theories are based on the type of crime while others are based on the characteristics of the offenders (Hirschi & Gottfredson, 2008; Lilly, Ball& Cullen, 2011).This section discusses some of the criminological theories that explain some aspects of criminal behaviour.

- **Anomie/Strain Theory**

Robert K. Merton (1938) developed the Anomies/Starin Theory. According to Agnew (2017), this theory argues that crime occurs when there is a gap between the cultural goals of a society (e.g. material wealth, status) and the structural means to achieve them (e.g. education, employment). This strain between means and goals result in frustration, aggression and resentment and it makes some people use illegitimate or illegal means to achieve success (Walsh, 2017; Antonaccio, Smith & Gostjev, 2015). According to this theory, society creates crimes by emphasising the attainment of certain goals without giving equal opportunities to all members of the society to achieve such goals (Agnew, 2017).In other words, society glorifies wealth without giving equal opportunities to all members to acquire legitimate wealth (Messner & Rosenfeld, 2017).

Based on the situation in contemporary society, Merton (1955) proposed five modes of adaption. The first mode of adaptation is conformism. According to Merton, a conformist accepts the goals of acquiring wealth which society emphasises and, at the same time, accepts the legitimate means of acquiring such wealth (Agnew & Cullen, 2017; Jensen, 2017). The majority fall under this categorisation.

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The second mode is innovation. An innovator accepts societal goals of achieving wealth, but rejects the means of achieving it. An innovator believes that the existing means may not enable him/her to achieve wealth. Thus, he or she creates another means for attaining wealth. The innovators adopt the illegitimate means of becoming rich in the underworld. According to Agnew and Cullen (2017), individuals may attempt to achieve monetary success through illegitimate channels such as theft, yahoo-yahoo, drug peddling and prostitution. They may engage in drug use to alleviate their frustration (Robinson & Rogers, 2018; Kaufman, 2017; Freilich & LaFree, 2015). As noted by Deflem (2017), innovators find and create their own ways of obtaining what they want, and mostly these new ways are often considered to be socially unacceptable.

Ritualism, the third mode, is the acceptance of the means but rejection of the goals (Collins & Menard, 2017). Ritualists continue to adhere to the means, but reject the overall goals (Hughes, Antonaccio & Botchkovar, 2018). To ritualists, the society is not the ultimate, but the hereafter. Thus, whatever things they get from their hard work are fast spent. As far as they are concerned, they are building their afterlife. Ritualism is more common among religious people.

The fourth mode is the retreatism. Retreitists reject both the goals and the means of achieving them (Agnew, 2015). According to Merton (1955), retreatists were previously conformists. However, since their conformity did not pay them, they decided to retreat from the society. They are called society dropouts or victims of circumstances or vagabonds. Such people mostly engage in heavy drinking because they lost hope in the society (Agnew, 2015). As argued by Chism and Steinmetz (2017), retreatists want to find a way to escape from everything and therefore, reject the goals and the means.

The fifth mode is rebellion. Rebels reject both the goals and the means and then impose their own goals and means (Connolly & Beaver, 2015). Innovation and ritualism are the pure cases of anomie, as Merton defined it, because in both cases, there is a discontinuity between goals and means (Hughes *et al.* 2018).

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Table 1: Merton's Paradigm of Deviant Behaviours

	Behaviour	Attitude to goals	Attitude to means
1.	Conformity	Accept (+)	Accept (+)
2.	Innovation	Accept (+)	Reject (-)
3.	Ritualism	Reject (+)	Accept (+)
4.	Retreatism	Reject (+)	Reject (-)
5.	Rebellion	Reject/accept(-/+)	Reject/accept (-/+)

Source: (Tepperman &Curtis, 2006)

However, Anomie/Starin Theory has been criticised for its failure to consider psychological and social factors associated with criminal behaviour (Chism & Steinmetz, 2017). The theory has also been criticised for overemphasising the role of social class in crime and deviance (Brym &Lie, 2007, p. 197). The theory applies best to those in the lower classes since they struggle with the lack of resources to achieve their goals (Agnew, 2015). If we examine the wide spectrum of deviant and criminal acts, the strain theory accounts inadequately for crimes beyond the narrow scope of street crimes. For instance, crimes considered as white-collar crimes are more rampant among the middle and upper-classes (Collins & Menard, 2017) but such crimes are not sufficiently explained with the strain theory. Chism &Steinmetz (2017) stressed that the motivation behind white-collar crimes can be sophisticated. It is argued that most white-collar crimes are influenced by greed, and are perpetrated by persons of high social class (Agnew, 2015).

- **Social Control Theory**

This theory is primarily associated with the work of Travis Hirschi an American social scientist in 1969. He proposed that people generally conform to social norms due to strong social bonds. Conversely, they engage in delinquent acts when these bonds are broken or are weak (Smith-Lovin & Heise, 2016). The theory argues that those who engage in criminal behaviour lack social control. The theory provides four elements of social control: attachment, commitment, involvement and belief.

Attachment: The level of social bond will determine the involvement of a person in criminal or non-criminal behaviour. If a person is attached to their parents/guardians, such a person is less likely to engage in criminal acts. Thus, a weak attachment produces criminal or deviant behaviour. How strong or weak is an individual's relationship with others? Do these others expect certain kinds of behaviour (such as obeying the law) from this individual? The stronger the

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attachment and the expectations, the more likely it is that the individual will conform (Thompson, 2017).

Commitment: The more an individual commits himself or herself to a particular lifestyle (for example, being married, being a parent, having a job), the more he/she has to lose if he/she becomes involved in crime (and so deviate from the lifestyle) (Hirschi, 2017). According to the theory, the level of criminality varies with the level of commitment that a person has towards certain things. For instance, commitment to marital life, a legal contract, or sports, among others is more likely to reduce the level of commitment to illegal activities. A person who is committed to legitimate activities is less likely to be involved in criminality.

Involvement: This component comes down to time; the more time the individual spends engaging in law abiding behaviour, the less time he or she has to engage in law breaking behaviour (Tittle, 2018). According to the social control theory, there is a correlation between level of involvement in law abiding behaviour and criminality. The more a person is involved in legitimate activities, the less his or her involvement in illegal activities.

Belief: This relates to upbringing. If an individual has been brought up to be law abiding, they are less likely to become involved in crime (Akers & Jennings, 2015). It is the idea that a person has about laws. If a person believes so much in laws or has a positive attitude towards the fairness of criminal laws, such a person is less likely to engage in any law-violating behaviour.

However, this theory has been criticised for not acknowledging bio-psychological factors of crimes. Also, it does not address other social factors that influence or determine criminal behaviour. Therefore, this theory does not explain criminal or deviant behaviour holistically; it only explains it in part.

- **Labelling Theory**

The labelling theory was developed by many scholars (Becker, 1963; Lemert, 1967; Tannenbaum, 1938). However, the most influential contributor to this theory was Howard S. Becker. His contribution to this theory is contained in his book titled the *Outsiders* (Becker, 2018). The Labelling Theory provides a distinctively sociological approach that focuses on the role of social labelling in the development of crime and deviance (Burke, 2017). The theory assumes that, although deviant behaviour can initially stem from various causes and conditions, once individuals have been labelled or defined as deviants, they often face new problems that stem from the reactions of self and others to the negative stereotypes (stigma) that are attached to deviant behaviour (Becker, 1963; Lemert, 1967). These problems in turn can increase the likelihood of deviant and criminal behaviour becoming stable and chronic (Thornberry,

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2018). In the words of Lemert (1967: 321), deviant behaviour can become a "means of defense, attack, or adaptation" to the problems created by deviant labelling. Thus, being labeled or defined by others as a criminal may trigger processes that tend to reinforce or stabilise the involvement in crime and deviance as well as a host of behavioural patterns and the social and psychological conditions that existed prior to labeling (Terrie, 2018; Pound & Campbell, 2015). Tannenbaum (1938) argued that a person becomes a criminal through tagging. He introduced the concept of tagging. This tagging is imaginary. The bearer of this tag would be firstly confused as to the reason why the society puts a tag on him. However, when the tagging continues such a person would then begin to dramatise such a tag. Thus, he referred to it as the dramatisation of evil (Tannenbaum, 1938).

Furthermore, Lemert (1951) introduced the concept of secondary deviance. He believed that there are two types of deviance: (1) primary deviance; and (ii) secondary deviance. Primary deviance is the actual act of deviating from the norm. Secondary deviance is the reaction to such a deviation and how the deviant sees such a reaction. Thus, the reaction of the society to such a deviant behaviour determines the continuation of such deviant behaviour. This justifies the argument that society is fundamental in the perpetuation or discontinuation of criminal behaviour.

However, the major drawback of this theory lies in its concept of self-fulfilling prophecy (Nelken, 2017). The concept has no scientific basis. For instance, when judges and policemen define or label certain behaviours as criminal or deviant, there is no empirical fact that suggests that such labelling would become a self-fulfilling prophesy. The fact that the one so labelled is stigmatised as a criminal or deviant does not imply that such a stigmatisation would give him or her a new self-concept or definition (Mouzelis, 2016). Another limitation of the theory is that its theoretical implications have already been explained in the conflict theory (Rubik & Frankl, 2017). For instance, members of the powerful class are more likely to label members of the powerless class criminals or deviants (Miller & Holstein, 2017). Also, critics stress the fact that the theory ignores the causative factors of crime such as unemployment and peer influence, among others. They only see crime as a consequence of the reaction of others in the society (Mouzelis, 2016; Rubik & Frankl, 2017).

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- **Social Disorganisation Theory (SDT)**

The concept of social disorganisation emanated from the Chicago School of Sociology in the 1920s and 1930s (Sampson, 2017). Park & Burgess (1921) developed this theory in relation to urban ecology, which proposed that cities are environments like those found in nature and are governed by many of the same forces involved in the Darwinian evolution theory. The SDT was popularised by Shaw & McKay (1942) who also believed that there are cultures of conflicts that those groups living in the environment share. The theory suggests that the city centre is organised along social groups, which patterned their settlements based on a layout showing different processes of industrialisation (Kubrin & Wo, 2016). Using this model, Shaw & McKay noted that, with the development of the cities, there are bound to be cracks in communities hitherto homogenous and agrarian. Similarly, the impact of immigration and subsequent migration of persons in and out of cities will eventually lead to competing norms and values, most especially for survival (Sampson, 2018). It is within this context that crime and deviance are most likely to occur (Kubrin & Wo, 2016; Abdullahi & Issah, 2016; Umar, Johnson & Cheshire, 2018). The theory directly links crime rates to the neighbourhood's ecological characteristics (Akers & Jennings, 2015). According to Pridemore and Rogers (2016), the residential location and its characteristics determine the crime rates and/or criminal behaviour (Melo, Andresen & Matias, 2017). Akers (2017) stresses that the theory suggests that youths from disadvantaged neighbourhoods are more likely to participate in a subculture or form a gang which approves deviant and criminal behaviour.

However, while the theory explains criminality and deviance in socio-economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods, it does not explain criminality and deviance in socio-economically advantaged neighbourhoods. Critics note that the theory implies that there is no crime in socio-economically advantaged neigbhourhoods (Umar *et al.*, 2018; Melo *et al.*, 2017; Akers, 2017).

- **Social Learning Theory**

The emergence and development of the social learning theory is associated with the work of Burgess and Akers (1966). According to Bandura (1977), social learning is a cognitive process that takes place in a social context and can occur purely through observation or direct instruction, even in the absence of motor reproduction or direct reinforcement. Bandura (1963) also observed that, in addition to the observation of behaviour, learning also occurs through the observation of rewards and punishments, a process known as *vicarious reinforcement*. When a particular behaviour is rewarded regularly, it will most

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likely persist. Conversely, if a particular behaviour is constantly punished, it will most likely stop (Illeris, 2018). As noted by Akers and Sellers (2004, p. 74),

> "the same learning process in a context of social structure, interaction and situation produces both conforming and deviant behaviour. The difference lies in the direction... (of) the balance of influences on the behaviour".

The Social Learning Theory acknowledges that individuals have psychological mechanisms that enable them to behave aggressively (Akers, 2017). The theory is a general theory of crime and criminality and has been used in research to explain the diverse array of criminal behaviours (Goldie, 2016). However, this theory has been criticised on the ground that not all criminal behaviours are learned. Some criminal behaviours are biological, psychological or bio-psychological. Some criminal behaviours are consequences of neurological disruption and genetic problems. While this theory may explain crimes such as theft, armed-robbery and other economically motivated crimes, it may not explain violent crimes such as acid bath, manslaughter, murder, arson and many others.

- **Differential Association Theory**

The Theory of Differential Association was developed by Edwin Sutherland in 1949. This theory is a prominent criminological theory rooted in Sociology (Sutherland, Williams & McShane, 2015). The theory holds that criminal behaviour is learned through interactions with others in a process of communication (Steffensmeier & Ulmer, 2017). Criminal behaviour is learned from observations of definitions favourable to the violation of the law. What is learned includes the techniques of committing crime and the "specific direction of motives, drives, rationalisations and attitudes" (Okpan & Anigbogu, 2016, p. 345). These will determine whether a person will violate the laws or becomes a criminal (Alabi & Durowaiye, 2018).

Also, Akers & Sellers (2004) argued that a direct association and interaction with others who engaged in certain kinds of behaviour as well as the indirect association and identification with more distant reference groups is a significant factor in the occurrence or non-occurrence of deviant acts. The timing, length, frequency and nature of the contact are also important determinants of criminal behaviour (Ibrahim & Mukhtar, 2016). In other words, the greatest effect on a person's behaviour occurs as soon as an association is made. The longer the duration of the association and the more frequent the association, the closer the association gets (Okoye & Uniamikogbo, 2017). Implied in this is the fact that a

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child who was younger when a house help with the pilfering habit was brought in to assist the family would be negatively influenced (Owuamanam & Makinwa, 2015). The house help would likely play an important role in shaping the child's behaviour, especially with respect to pilfering. This is not likely if the house help in question not only lives with the family but is also closely with the child (Haruna, Namadi, Dunkrah, Zamfara & Dangiwa, 2018). However, the major limitation of this theory is that it fails to understand that people can independently learn criminal behaviour. Some people do not have to associate with criminals before they become criminals. The argument advanced in this theory is similar to that of the Social Learning Theory.

SOCIAL CONTROL MECHANISMS

All societies adopt certain mechanisms of social control. Social control mechanisms are meant to encourage and persuade people not to deviate from norms and expectations of the society (Ferrante 2011; Okereafoezeke & Elechi, 2006). Thus, social control refers to the techniques and the strategies for regulating human behaviour in any society (Ajayi, 2018). It is a way of inducing people to conform to the norms; it also refers to efforts to punish people for violating norms of the society (Weitzer 2002). Similarly, Keel (2005) sees social control as an existing institutional mechanism through which members of the society ensures that their members conform to prescribed conduct norms (Mohammed, *et al.* 2015). It may be informal (exercised in encounters between ordinary members of the society, such as family, friends and peer groups) or formal (exercised by agents of such institution as the church, criminal justice system and the legislature) (Enofe, Ekpulu & Ajala, 2015). However, agents of formal control operate with the support of some established codes of conduct, such as the criminal law and have formal sanctions at their disposal (Tade & Olaitan, 2015).

All social norms are accompanied by sanctions that promote conformity and safeguard against nonconformity (Elechi, Lambert & Jenkins, 2016). A sanction is any action or reaction from others to the behaviour of an individual or group of individual purposely to ensure that the individuals or group complies with a given norm (Enofe, Egbe & America, 2016). Sanction may be positive or negative (Okogbule & Nkpolu, 2016). Examples of positive sanctions are rewards, standing ovation, clapping, praising and gifts for conformity (Mungan, 2019). Other negative sanctions include punishment, banishment, imprisonment and ostracism (Elliott, 2018). Sanctions can also be formal or informal (Giddens, Duneier, Appelbaum & Mitchell, 2003). Norms are meaningless without

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sanctions; a rule is not really a rule unless there are consequences for breaking it (Platteau, 2015).

Social control can also be divided into internal and external. Internal social control fundamentally lies within the individual. This involves the internalisation of norms (Tremewan, 2016). This form of social control develops during the socialisation process (Hirschi, 2017). An individual's action is influenced by the internal social control if he does something because he believes that it is the right thing to do (Barber, 2018). For example, an individual who has a clear opportunity to perpetrate an evil act but restrains from doing so because he considers the act as bad, is exhibiting internal social control (Hunter, 2019). However, since the process of socialisation does not ensure that all members of the society will conform at all times, external social control is desirable (Norris & Moran, 2016). External social control is generally based on social sanctions, which may be rewards or punishments that are designed to encourage conformity to expected behaviour (Ford, Mongon & Whelan, 2018).Therefore, we can say that through social control, members of a group remain united and exhibit a common behaviour pattern (McIntosh & Rock, 2018). If there is no social control, society would wither away (Felson, 2017). It is for this reason that an overwhelming majority of the society adhere to the normative patterns of the society (Edwards, 2018).

PERSPECTIVES OF CRIME

Criminologists often associate themselves with one of the many perspectives in their discourse. Each and every perspective maintains its view of the causes of crime and what constitutes criminal behaviour in the society. The variety of perspectives is not so unque to criminology. The three major concepts of crime used by criminologists are the consensus, the interactionist and the conflict views.

• The Consensus View of Crime

According to the consensus view, crimes are behaviours believed to be repulsive to all elements of society. Consensus is used because it implies that there is a general agreement among the majority of the citizens on what behaviours should be outlawed by the criminal law and viewed as crimes. The substantive criminal law, which is the written code that defines crimes and their punishment, reflects the values, beliefs and opinions of society's mainstream. This approach to crime implies that it is a function of existing beliefs, morality and rules. Criminal law is applied uniformly to all members of the society. This ideal legal system deals

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fairly with all classes and types of people. For example, laws outlawing theft and violence may be directed at the neediest members of society, whereas laws banning embezzlement and corporate crimes are aimed at controlling the wealthiest.

- **The Interactionist View of Crime**

The interactionist view of crime was popularised by George Herbert Mead, C. H. Cooley, and W. I. Thomas (Blumer 1969). They were of the view that people act according to their own interpretation of reality through the meaning they assign to it. People observe the way others react, either positively or negatively and they interpret their own behaviour according to the meaning and symbol they have learned from others. According to this perspective, there is no objective reality. People, institutions, and events are viewed as subjective entities and labelled according to the interpretation of the evaluator.

- **The Conflict View of Crime**

The conflict view sees society as a collection of diverse groups of workers, owners and students who are in constant and continuous conflict. Groups are able to assert their political power and use the law and the criminal justice system to advance their economic and social positions. Criminal law, therefore is viewed as something created to protect the haves from the have-nots. Criminologists often contrast the harsh penalties exacted on the poor for their street crimes (burglary, robbery, and theft) with the minor penalties received by the rich for their white collar crimes (financial scandals, pension fraud, and tax fraud). Although the latter may cause considerably more social harm, the poor go to prison for minor crimes, while the rich are given lenient sanctions for even the most serious crime.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed the dynamics of crime, deviance and social control. It shows that while crime and deviance are universal, they are also relative. They vary from one society to another and from one group of people to another. An act that is regarded as deviant or criminal in one society may not be regarded as such in another society. Crime and deviance vary in space, time and context. This chapter also examines differences and similarities between crime and deviance. The chapter also discussed some of the major perspectives and theories that explain crime and deviance. Even though the theories presented are not exhaustive, they explain some aspects of crime and deviance in our contemporary society. The discussion on perspectives and theories also shows that no single perspective and theories can adequately explain crime and

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deviance in contemporary society. These theories have to be combined in an integrative manner in order to sufficiently explain crime and deviant behaviours.

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