

Theories of Juvenile Delinquency

Assignment 3

Question 1.

Using what you have learned so far,

a. which theories would best explain this action? (Use chapters 3,4,or 5).

Choice theory in Chapter 3 page 55

Psychodynamic theory in Chapter 3 page 74-75 (Larry and Brandon)

Question 2

Pick two theories.

1. Identify, explain and justify the theories you have chosen including the chapter(s) from which you choose your theories.

Choice Theory

Jeremy Bentham and Cesare Beccaria, fathers of utilitarian philosophy argued that human beings choose and weigh the consequences of their actions. Human beings have freewill and they will choose and violate the law in accordance to the benefits and costs o the outcome. Delinquents violate the law since they find it attractive and they choose their actions. Harris and Dylan Klebold choose o destroy lives and the school. It was a rational choice of killing and setting bombs in the school. They made a choice of eliminating people, property, and themselves.

Psychodynamic theory

The theory was posited by Sigmund Freud. He claims that a personality has three components. The id is present in every born child and it is pleasure seeking. The ego develops through the reality of living. It works to restrain the id from attaining immediate gratification. The superego develops after interaction with parents, the social world and nurtures morals in a person. The id, ego, and superego work simultaneously and they must be balanced. When an imbalance occurs, people lack sensitivity for other people's needs, become aggressive and psychotic. In general they act on the id; they want to gratify themselves just like the teens that killed their fellow students in Columbine.

Assignment 4

Question 1

Parenting styles and peer group association are the two main predictors of juvenile delinquency. Permissive parenting denies children consequence-oriented discipline; they tend to do as they please irrespective of the consequences. The parents of these youths come out as neglectful because they do not monitor their children and indulgent because they affirmatively enable their misbehavior.

Authoritarian parenting teaches children that harsh discipline and violence is the only way to get anything they want. Youths tend to associate with antisocial peers especially when they are unsupervised. In these groups, youths influence each other to involve in criminal activities.

Question 2

Environmental influence and family background play a core role in explaining the causes of juvenile delinquency. Disjointed families, drug abuse, disadvantage communities, peer pressure, and low self-esteem are some of the common factors contributing to juvenile offenses. Youths in unstable or dysfunctional homes or social environments are considered at-risk children as they are vulnerable to damaging influences.

These factors encourage antisocial behavior in youths that later results into criminally deviant actions. Dysfunctional families, for example, transfer dysfunctional standards to their children. Socioeconomic classes, like families, affect the behavior of a child; children born into dangerous classes grow up to become juvenile delinquents. Children born into drug dealing classes become drug dealers.

Question 3

The world relies on law to acquire justice; sometimes the law lacks its fairness and seems unjust. Shawn killed his father by stabbing him repeatedly using a knife. His crime is more escalated than that of the other three boys yet he receives the most lenient punishment. His intentions for pleading guilty are not right and there is a high probability that he will repeat offending after his release.

Marquese's case is quite fair because he has been given a number opportunities but he keeps on offending the law over and over. Jose is a perfect example that rehabilitation rather than punishment of juvenile delinquents works, but it is a rare case. Manny was not given the chance for rehabilitation; he was tried as an adult despite showing remorse and pleading guilty.

Question 4 and 5

As a judge, I would try Shawn and Marquese as adults. Shawn does not show any remorse for his actions and there is a high chance that if tried as a juvenile, he will go back to committing more murders after being released.

Considering that Marquese has been given many chances of changing in the juvenile system, a shot in an adult system should be tried to facilitate correction for him. Jose and Manny, I would judge according to the juvenile system. Jose's crime is peer influenced and there is a chance of reformation after rehabilitation. Manny shows remorse for his actions and pleads guilty; he deserves a second chance. As a lawyer I would consider his remorse and guilt plea as the behaviors of someone who is ready to change.

Question 6

Shawn's case displays a high level of willingness. There is a high chance that he did not get along well with his father and wanted to punish him. He willingly decided to kill him with a knife. The rational choice theory best describes his behavior. If the father was harsh to him, Shawn must have thought that killing him was the only way to get rid of him, which was a benefit to him.

It is said that Shawn brutally attacked his father by using a knife to stab him repeatedly. The ordeal sounds premeditated and Shawn's aggravation is portrayed by the repeated stabbing. The relationship between Shawn and his father was an estranged one, because otherwise a single misunderstanding would not have caused such aggravation.

Question 7a

Juvenile Justice

Juveniles commit crimes such as forcible rape, murder, homicide, and aggravated assault. In 1997, the juvenile courts of the United States disposed at least 1.7 million felony cases. It is easier to try youths in adult criminal courts because the extent of their crimes.

Juvenile vs. Adult Justice

The juvenile justice system exists because it is believed that it is possible to rehabilitate delinquents. The adult system is for adult criminals who are beyond rehabilitation.

Question 7b

Adult Time for Adult Crimes

Youths who commit adult crimes should be detained in the adult system if there is no possibility for them to be reformed.

What it Takes to Rehabilitate Troubled Violent Teens

There is no specific routine to rehabilitate delinquents. Each teenager is different, and they all respond differently to different rehabilitation criteria. It is more fruitful if a delinquent is rehabilitated early, supposedly their first time in the system.

Works cited

- Larry, J. Siegel, and Brandon, C. Welsh. Juvenile Delinquency: The Core. 5 Ed. Cengage Learning

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