**MEGGISON PRECIOUS – 18/SMS13/013**

**SOCIOLOGY OF CRIME AND SOCIAL CONTROL**

**PRESENTATION**

**THE SOCIOLOGICAL FACTORS OF CRIME**

First off, what is crime?

Crime is defined as any act that violates the law and is also punishable by the law. an action or an instance of negligence that is deemed injurious to the public welfare or morals or to the interests of the state and that is legally prohibited.

The causes of crime are: Multiple factors, Psychological factors, SOCIOLOGICAL FACTORS and the Physiological factors.

**THE SOCIOLOGICAL FACTORS**

Crime and criminal behaviors, as well as their causes, have always been a topic of social controversies because sometimes, two individuals may come from the same environment or family background, but they turn out to be so different from one another later in life. One might become a law-abiding citizen while the other, a criminal. Often times, it's because of how they were raised as well as who they chose to surround themselves with.  
As a society, of course when things like that happen the majority of us always find ourselves struggling to find a correct and acceptable explanation for this. 

In this article, I'll use a scenario about a girl who names Nathalie and her oldest's brother who were raised together but end up differently in life.   
They come from the same family and were raised in the same house, but his brother turned out so differently from her in a very antisocial behavioral way. I'll use that story so I can talk about crime and criminal behaviors, their cultural roots, as well as the socio-psychological causes that may promote antisocial behaviors within society.

Most of us are well-aware that poverty and social imbalanced have a very close link with criminal behaviors/activities. However, there are many other things that may contribute to criminal behaviors. Today I'll use three psycho-sociological theories to further explain this; differential opportunity theory, feminist theory, and control of delinquency theory.

**Differential Opportunity Theory:**

 According to Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin in 'Delinquency and Opportunity' (1960), crime is learned through associations with criminal definitions. These definitions might be generally approving of criminal conduct or be neutralizations that justify crime only under certain circumstances. Differential opportunity theory also emphasizes that interacting with antisocial peers is a major cause of more crimes. This means criminal behaviors will be repeated and become chronic if reinforced.   
So when criminal subcultures exist within an environment, then many individuals can learn to commit crimes in a very specific location, and as a result, crime rates including violence will become higher within the environment or community.

Natalie's oldest brother's life turns out to be so different from her own because he associates himself with a criminal subculture that decides what is right or wrong instead of following the social norms that exist within society. On top of that, Nathalie's brother had a rebellious behavior since he was in high school.   
In fact, according to the story, he always got in trouble in school and even hit a teacher once. It seems to me that Natalie's oldest brother's inability to learn in school and have good grades, out of frustration, trigger his delinquent behavior. As a result, he associates himself with other antisocial peers until things got out of control.

**Gender Difference Theory (Feminist Theory):**

 Gender difference theory is part of a contemporary theory known as, feminist theory. This theory teaches us the differences in gender and how those differences affect the way each gender views the world.   
In addition to the influence on gender behaviors of biological factors, we also learn that there are four principles of psychological explanations of gender-linked behavior patterns: Freudian theory's process of identification, cognitive social learning theory, gender-schema theory, and Kohlberg's cognitive developmental theory.

The process by which children acquire the values, motives, and behaviors viewed as appropriate for males and females within a culture is called gender-typing. Children develop gender-based beliefs, largely on the basis of gender stereotypes; the latter is reflected in gender roles. Children adopt a gender identity early in life and develop gender-role preferences as well.   
In every society, men are always seen as dominant figures as compared to women, this societal norm can be linked to the reason why men are more violent and more rebellious than women in many ways. Which translates into having more males breaking the law than females. If this is true, it also explains why Natalie and her brother are so different from the social choices they've made in their lives (McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2004).

**Control Theory of Delinquency:**

 Another theory that could better explain Natalie's oldest brother's antisocial behavior as compared to hers is control theory of delinquency. According to Walter Reckless's control theory, both inner and outer controls work against deviant tendencies.   
This means, people may want, at least some of the time to act in deviant ways, but most of us restrain ourselves from doing so. However, that doesn't mean the tendency is not there, it only means that some of us have greater ability to control that tendency than others.   
As humans, we have various restraints internal controls, such as; conscience, values, integrity, morality, beliefs, and the desire to be a “good person” or a "law-abiding citizen." But, there are also outer controls that can restrain us from committing crimes as well, such as; the police, family, friends, religious beliefs as well as religious authorities figures, etc.

In this scenario, Travis H. noted that these inner and outer restraints form a person's self‐control, which prevents acting against social norms.   
According to Travis H., the key in developing self‐control is proper socialization, especially in early childhood. Children who lack this self‐control may grow up to become violent, antisocial, and good candidates for criminal activities (Kelly Welch, 1998).   
With that says; people that we associate ourselves with have a lot more impact on our behavior than we could ever imagine. As a result, two children from the same family and who grew up together could end up adopting different behavioral types, including antisocial ones.   
This then explains Natalie's oldest brother's case and any other family that may be dealing with a similar situation in that sociological theory's context.