

Quadrant II – Transcript and Related Materials

Programme: Bachelor of Arts (First Year)

Subject: Sociology

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Paper Title: Crime and Society

Unit: I Introduction to Crime

Module Name: Types of Crimes and Criminals

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Notes:

1.2 TYPES OF CRIMES AND CRIMINALS

- TYPES OF CRIMES:

The word ‘crime’ is a behaviour that breaks the formal written laws of a society. Crimes have been classified on varied basis - **Edwin Sutherland** (American Sociologist) has given two types of crimes on the basis of their atrocity and seriousness – felony and misdemeanor. The distinction between the two is made in terms of the sentence that can be imposed.

Felonies are the more serious crimes for which a person can be imprisoned for a long period of time or sentenced to death. Examples: First-degree felony: murder, rape, kidnapping, fraud. Second-degree felony: aggravated assault, felony assault, manslaughter, possession of a controlled substance, child molestation.

Misdemeanours are the less serious offences for which either a short – term confinement in a jail may be provided or a fine may be imposed. For example: petty theft, public intoxication, simple assault, disorderly conduct, vandalism, reckless driving, etc.

➤ **Clinard and Quinney** (*Criminal Behaviour Systems: A Typology, 1967*) have given six types of crimes:

1. ***Violent Personal Crime:***This crime is based on the use of violence and is committed by a person who does not have earlier record of crime against him.For example:murder, rape, assault etc. The reaction of society against those who commit this crime is very harsh.
2. ***Occasional Property Crime:***This crime is violation of individual property rules.Shoplifting is one example of this crime.
3. ***Occupational Crime:***This crime is committed, during the course of one's occupation, with an economic motive. The criminals who commit this crime accept the traditional norms of society except that of honesty. Bribes, black-marketing, misleading advertisements, embezzlement are some examples of this crime.
4. ***Political Crime:*** This is committed by an individual with vested political and economic interests. For example:Treason, corruption, spying, passing secrets to enemy country.
5. ***Public Order Crime:***This crime is one in which an individual violates the rules of conduct in society. For example: Disorderly conduct, vandalism, homosexuality, prostitution, and violation of traffic rules.
6. ***Conventional Crime:*** This is a crime in which an individual violates the sacred norms of individual property. Individuals commit this crime on a part time basis, and these crimes are not the main source of their income. Theft, robbery, dacoity, kidnapping and riot are some examples of this crime.

➤ Besides the above kinds of classification, Crimes are also classified as:

1. **White Collar Crime:** Committed by persons of high status with an economic motive.
2. **Professional Crime:** Committed as a profession and as the main source of livelihood because of which crime becomes a way of life which gives criminals a status in their criminal group.
3. **Organised Crime:** Committed in a planned way by a group of criminals.

- **CLASSIFICATION OF CRIMINALS:**

Concept of a CRIMINAL: When we generally think of a criminal our first thought may be like that of a murderer or a rapist. However, the word criminal is a lot broader; anyone who breaks

the law is technically a criminal. Legally speaking, a criminal is one who is convicted by a court for violating the law of the land.

Classification of Criminals: Criminals have been mainly classified as:

1. First Offenders: A person who is convicted of a criminal offence for the first time.
2. Casual Habituals: A person who frequently has been convicted of criminal behaviour, and is presumed to be a danger to society.
3. Professionals: People who commit crimes and treat it like they are professional, like it is a job/business.
4. White – Collars: Committed by persons of high status with an economic motive.

Garofalo (Criminology – 1914) has classified criminals into four groups: Murderers, Violent Criminals, and Criminals deficient in probity (lack of strong moral principles such as honesty and decency and Lascivious (with feeling of lust).

Ferri (Criminal Sociology – 1917) has classified them as follows: The Insane, The Born, The Habitual, The Occasional and the Passionate.

Alexander and Staub (The Criminal, the judge and the Public – 1931) have classified criminals as: the accidental criminal – is one who omits a single crime or only a few crimes because of unusual circumstances, while the chronic criminal is one who commits crime repeatedly either because of his association with criminals (normal criminal) or because of his anxieties, guilt feelings and personality conflicts (neurotic criminal) or who engages in criminal behavior because of an organic condition (pathological criminal).

➤ **CONCLUSION:**

A crime is therefore any act that is contrary to legal code or laws. There are many different types of crimes, from crimes against persons, public order, property to victimless crimes and violent crimes to white collar and organized crimes. The study of crime and criminals is a large subfield within sociology, with much attention paid to who commits (criminals) which types of crimes and why.

➤ **REFERENCES:**

- Ahuja, R. (2017). *Criminology*. Jaipur: Rawat Publications.