The Impact of Growth Environment on Individual Crime Behavior

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Abstract. Criminal behavior has a negative impact on society, family and the future development of individuals, so it is necessary to explore the factors that affect individual criminal behavior. Existing studies have found that individual criminal behavior is influenced by multiple factors, among which environmental impact is particularly important. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the environmental factors that affect individual crime, the present study explored the effects of family factors, school factors, and social factors on the individual crime behavior. This article summarizes multiple literature to further study the environmental factors that influence individual criminal behavior and the article will also cover the disharmony of family relationships in the family environment, campus bullying between students and language violence between teachers and students in the campus environment, as well as the impact of social media, economic underdevelopment, the layout of living space, and cultural factors on individual crime in the social environment.

Keywords: Criminal behavior, family factors, school factors, social factors.

1. Introduction

In today's society, the crime rate is increasing every year, which will threaten the life of residents to a large extent, and will also have a serious impact on the economy and population growth of each city. There are many factors that affect the increase or decrease of crime rate, among which family, school and community all have a certain influence. Crime refers to the behavior that violates national laws, has certain social harm, infringes legal interests and should be subject to criminal punishment. Crime has three basic characteristics: social harm, criminal illegality and punishable by punishment. The criminal act must have the subjective intentional and objective behavior of the perpetrator, and the unconscious behavior is excluded from the crime. At the same time, criminal acts must infringe legal interests, that is, have certain harmfulness. This study explores the impact on individual crime from three aspects: family, school and community. Among the family reasons, the reasons that have a great influence on crime are as follows: parents' neglect of their children, single-parent families caused by divorce, excessive desire to control their children, domestic violence in the family and inappropriate values transmission. The events that can be affected in the campus environment are campus bullying and teachers' inaction, and different roles (victims, bullies and bystanders) in campus bullying will have different impacts on individuals' future crimes. From the perspective of social environment, media factors, economic factors, living space factors and cultural factors are the four factors mentioned in this study that have a greater impact on crime events. From the above points, exploring these issues contributes to people's understanding of violence and also provides great support for reducing crime. In many ways, the group that can benefit from this article is very large. The way parents get along with their children can be changed, the atmosphere in the school is harmonious, teachers stick to their hearts, the media reduces the spread of bad information, and people's living standards are all the final results advocated by this article.

2. The influence of growing environment on individual crime behavior

2.1. Family factors

Family is the very first environment that all the children lived in. It can easily form the values and personality of a person which are hard to be changed in the future. Almost every minor involved in crime has an estranged, discordant or even antagonistic relationship with their families, and their family relationships are extremely complex. Thus, the situation of family of origin has direct impact on people's criminal behaviors. In sum, these factors which may cause criminal behaviors include being ignored, violence between family members and instilling false value.

Firstly, be ignored or be isolated is an essential component of the causes of future criminal behaviors. Be ignored refers to extremely lack of attention from parents and other members in the family. Showed in a study, a significant proportion of inmates had clearly suffered childhood trauma, with physical neglect at 37.0% and emotional neglect at 68.0% [1]. This situation happens frequently and exists for a long time. Especially elder children in the multi-child family [2]. It's easy for parents to ignore their children for plenty of reasons. To illustrate, their works are extremely busy, they don't have a good family relationship or they don't have enough energy to pay attention on all their kids. Even worth, as the rate of divorce keeps on rising during these years, a vast number of children have to live in a one-parent family. It also makes children easier to be ignored. As human beings are a kind of social animals, people are hard to tolerate to be isolated. If people felt to be ignored all the time, especially when they are still very young. They would do anything, even things which are extremely crazy including commit crimes, to break this situation of isolation. Thus, children who are always lack of attention from others are more likely to feel isolated during almost the whole process of growing and commit crimes in the future. One of the most typical cases is the serial killer Jeffrey Lionel Dahmer (JD) who was well known as "Milwaukee Monster" or "Milwaukee Cannibal". He killed 17 colored males during 1978 to 1991. Many of his murders involved necrophilia, cannibalism, and the permanent preservation of body parts. He had been isolated since he was very young because of his family situation (the relationship between his parents was not good and they finally divorced) and his "zombie like" actions. He did lots of ridiculous things to getting attention from other (like drinking liquor, dismembering animals etc.) but he felled. People just leave him even farther behind. Therefore, JD had lots of serious mental health issues including borderline personality disorder (BPD). In short, people who have BPD are not able to tolerate other's leanings. They will use any methods to make people stay with them. In JD's own words, he only killed people who are trying to leave him. He ate people because he wanted to make them a part of his body. He kept parts of the victims' skeletons and their skulls is also because he believed that they will never be separated in this way.

However, if parents pay too much attention on their children, it could also be a bad thing for children's growth. For example, excessive parental attention is likely to lead to over-dependence or extreme desire to escape. When the children want to get rid of dependence, but it is difficult to materially support their own independence. There seemingly be psychological impacts and contradictions, and the over-pursuit of independence will lead to minors to the extreme. They will be highly lack of obedience to anyone and start to against everything they do not want to do. As the result, they may even break the rules on purpose to show that they are already get rid of their parents' controlling. As they want to do something for themselves which is not fit their parents' expectations, even some rich kids are likely to stealing properties from others.

Secondly, family violence is another essential component of criminal behaviors. In a family which is full of violence and abuse, both verbally and physically, children will be pressured and cannot feel safe. Because a long-term effect of over pressure, their original value of violence could be changed. They may think violence could also be a proper way to solve most problems. In addition, the Bandura Bobo Doll study shows that, children are more likely to be influenced by the adult (parent) who has the same gender with them [3]. Therefore, if the abuser has the same gender with the child, they are more likely to imitate this kind of violence behavior. For example, if the father usually hurt other family members, the son may be more likely to be a bully than the daughter. It could be a background

of their future criminal activity. In the beginning, they may just easy to get angry and have difficulty with impulse control. But in their deeper cognitions, they have already accepted this kind of violence. It's not only because their values could be changed by their families but also because they subconsciously want to imitate violence to please the abuser in the family.

Thirdly, inappropriate values gave by parents have a crucial influence on children's ideologies, values and behaviors. As family education for minors' early development and infectious role is difficult to be replaced by the school and social education and is far-reaching. Inappropriate education methods can easily lead to rebellion or antagonistic feelings among teenagers, which in the long run can cause psychological distortion and criminal behaviors. It's hard for children to find the right way to handling their problems without proper leading from their parents. Especially in some families with poor economic conditions, which is one of the most common negative family conditions that leads criminal behaviors (69.0%), parents' education could go wrong. If parents instilled values like "violence can solve everything", "it's okay to stealing when you need it" or "an eye for an eye" into their children's minds. Their children are likely to become narrow-minded in the future and may even commit crimes because they treat things extremely. Moreover, especially in some only-child families, parents are easy to spoil their children. Spoil refers to give children everything they want whatever the requests are reasonable or not. Children who grow up in a spoiled environment are usually self-centered. When their desires are not fulfilled, they are prone to antagonize their parents and society. Under certain conditions, they are bound to commit crimes for their own selfish desires [4].

2.2. School factors

Bullying is a very common and serious matter in schools, and it can affect both the victim and the bully to varying degrees. These effects may even follow them long into adulthood or even throughout their lives. Bullying is a systematic abuse of power and the intentional act of repeatedly attacking others. There are three different positions in school bullying: bystanders, bullies and victims. Studies have shown that bullies in school bullying are at increased risk of crime in adulthood [5]. According to the conclusions given in [6], the victimized partner in school has the worst health outcomes in adulthood, often with a significant increase in mental disorders. Bullies are at increased risk for a range of behaviors, including official felony charges, drug use and self-reporting of illegal behavior. Victims of bullying improved their risk behavior index as adults, meaning the older they got, the more likely they were to engage in risky behavior.

In the case of campus bullying, the bully is also affected by a lot. One study found that adolescents who bullied others had a 16 percent higher risk of later antisocial or criminal behavior than those who did not. Adolescents who bully at school are more likely to be violent, and childhood bullying by age 12 is strongly linked to future criminal behavior. The study found that bullying behavior at the age of eight can also be a strong prediction of adult crime in males, but this prediction is not valid in females [7]. According to statistics, 85 percent of public schools recorded one or more crimes in the 2007-08 school year, which means 43 crimes for every 1,000 public school students. In such an environment, the crime rate on campus will increase every year, which may be due to peer pressure, or to protect themselves. The public-school environment is also a very important point that leads an individual to the path of crime [8]. So, the bully in school bullying can also be affected until he becomes a criminal.

The impact on victims of bullying is profound, often directly or indirectly affecting the victim's future. In The past, there were many people who grew up to commit crimes because of campus bullying. I will give the background and reasons for several examples: First, Harvey Glatman, known as The Lonely Hearts Killer. Three of his victims died at his hands. When Glatman was 12 years old, he was bullied quite a bit at school because the way he looked made girls feel scared. Soon after, he began sexually assaulting women while robbing them. The next month, Glatman kidnapped a woman named Noreen Laurel and groped her before he dropped her off at his home. He was arrested. During his incarceration, Glatman was examined by a psychiatrist. He was diagnosed with "schizotypal personality disorder," which today is known as schizophrenia. The second criminal to be mentioned is Roger Kibbe. Kibbe often wet the bed as a teenager, and he suffered from a severe stutter and was

often teased and bullied at school. Because of this, he has been studying alone at school. As a result, he developed a habit of stealing and was arrested for it at the age of fifteen. As a result of Kibbe's experiences of loneliness and bullying as a child, he had an active sexual fantasy life, including a tendency to tie himself up in women's underwear. His actions and behavior might be warning signs of psychosis today, but at the time, showing antisocial tendencies, he was not studied or diagnosed. Kibbe attended sessions with a psychiatrist for a while, but this had no effect. Kibbe found these sessions annoying and came up with other ways to continue his disturbing behavior without getting caught. He learned to be very mysterious. The last criminal I want to talk about is Alexander Pichushkin. As a child, Alexander Pichushkin was considered a normal, sociable, and happy child, until he suffered a head injury when he fell from a swing. After this he became more impulsive and aggressive, so he was teased and bullied at school and identified as "retarded" by other teenagers. His mother transferred him to a school for autistic children. By the time Pichushkin was a teenager, he was found to be very intelligent and had a passion for playing chess. The situation was made worse when he was later sent back to regular school and the teasing and bullying by other children continued. Around this time, Pichushkin started drinking. He also developed a dark hobby in which he would take videos of himself threatening young children and watch them over and over again, appreciating his mastery over his victims and his own power. But soon the hobby was no longer enough for him, and in 1992 he committed his first murder. These three examples give an idea of how a victim of bullying ends up being a criminal.

The teacher was a bystander in the bullying incident, this will also have an important impact on the future direction of individual crime [9]. An important influence on teachers' judgment is that teachers only judge bullying according to their own definition. In Lee's (2006) study, teachers were asked to define bullying as follows: “the willful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone. It can be physical, verbal or emotional, involving physical injury, threats and intimidation, teasing and name-calling. It can be continuous or an isolated incident " [10]. But real bullying is not so simple, teachers need to actively change their thinking and flexible thinking, empathy. If not, it will affect the student's psychological or emotional aspects and cause the emergence of criminal behavior in the future.

2.3. Social factors

The social environment is also an important part of researching the environment issues that influence individual criminal behavior. This part can be separated in to the media factor, the economy factor, the living space factor, and the culture factor.

The first aspect is the media. Though the high-developed technology helps people to collect information quickly, there are many undesirable massages on the network, such as violent videos. Teenagers nowadays approach variable information on the network than their parents did in the past, but teenagers are easy to be influenced, in another words, they can be easily impacted by the messages. Those media which spreads messages such as violent videos may teach teenagers how to crime by showing violent scenes, and teenagers have high ability of mimic and easily influenced, this is the reason that individual will crime when they were teenagers [11]. In addition, the online environment strengthens criminal motivation since the online environment offers convenience to criminals [12]. For example, the network provides people with high anonymity, which can hide oneself behind the internet. The high anonymity provides a sense of security for criminals. Most people have serious fluky psychology about crime on the internet, which means they do not think polices can arrest them. Beside the sense of security high anonymity brings, high anonymity can stenches the criminal motivation by gaining the recognition from others without barriers. When someone does the crime, he will afraid of sharing the feelings and details in the real life, but he can put it online. Then he may gain the recognition from others and criminal behavior will be social reinforced by the recognition. The other convenience online environment offered is the low cost. The network beyond the location since people can send the messages everywhere, and with the high technique, the location can be fake,

and also the time can be fake. Everything the crime needs is simplified; you can do a crime by clicking on the keyboard.

The second part is the economy factors. Though today governments are trying to help students grown up in poor economy environment or marginal areas, researchers still find they maybe poor in psychology. Taking the example of needy undergraduates. Some needy undergraduates have excessive self-esteem, which lead to their over sensitive [13]. They refuse others' kindness because they do not want being looked down upon by others for pity. They are stimuli by the material gap between affluent students, they may be shy, depress and even envy about the fact. The facts above may make them form negative values and unhealthy psychological state, which may lead these kids to crime. Talking about people with poor economy environment, people living in marginal areas cannot be neglect. Supported by the observations and data, local people living in marginal areas have the higher criminal rate than immigrants. At marginal areas, people are discriminated because the lack of resources such their educated level. On the one hand, to compare with people living in better situation, they have a tendency to crime; on the other, people live in marginal areas lack professional knowledge and financial foundation, do not fit the environment and culture in the city, they cannot find job in the city, as a result, their financial situation become worse. Unemployed and uncertainty on work are the two main reasons for the crime that happened in marginal areas.

The third part is the influence of living space. Most people live in the community, and the configuration of the living space has some kinds of influence that can lead to the crime too. The security of the community can divide into many points, take access control to start. The number of entrances, security measures, and the way cars enter the community have great impact on the safety of a community, and the continuous wall around the community also has great impact [14]. The community that has poor control on people's in and out will have higher crime rate. The wall around the community is the barrier to keep people in the community and those outside apart. If the wall around the community is not continuous enough or the community is an opened community, it will have a higher criminal rate than other communities since the open of the community allows criminals enter and exit the community easily. Talking about the thing outside the community but affect the criminal rate in the community, the land-use type around the community is a good example. There are some studies show that there is relationship between the criminal rate in the community and the number of green lands. The greener land around the living buildings, the lower the criminal rate is, but the higher rate the green land covered, the higher the murder rate. This can be explained by the land mixing degree mentioned in the same study. A single type of commercial district can increase the incidence of criminal behavior, but mixing high-density residential and commercial land can help reduce crime rates.

The final part is about the effect of culture. There are a saying goes "crime is the production of culture", to understand the sentence, separated this part into two points: culture can identify what is crime and culture can induce crime [15]. Because of the difference between cultures, the same behavior will be identified as different crime. Such as a Japanese mother with America nationality suicide with her children, the Japanese judge will sympathize with the mother but the American judge will say the mother murder her children because of the different culture. The second point that culture can induce crime means people who share the same culture can get enough messages they need since culture is the symbol that everyone in the culture knows. For example, the sentence "the criminals use drug now, citizens should be careful about it", normal people can get the information that people should be care of drugs, but criminals can get the information that using drugs are effective.

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, our findings revealed that there are a vast number of factors in families, schools and the society environments are likely to cause criminal behaviors. We found that in family aspect, be ignored, family violence and inappropriate values are easy to form people's criminal behavior. Be ignored by family members in a long term (especially when the person is young) is possible to make

people seeking others' attention and force others to stay with them in extreme ways. Just like the famous example mentioned in this article. People may get borderline personality disorder like Jeffrey Dahmer and commit horrible crimes without proper cognition about this behavior. In addition, violence between family members is also considered as a major reason for people to feel themselves in an unsafe environment all the time, immigrating the violence behaviors and form incorrect values. In the part of inappropriate values given by family members, this article discussed about overindulgence to a great extent makes children selfish and self-centered. Later in life, if any of their needs are not met in time, they may resort to extraordinary means to achieve their ends.

In the aspect of school bullying violence, we mainly discussed about in unsafe school environments, both the bully and the bullied can be influenced and commit crimes. Childhood bullying is strongly associated with later criminal behavior, especially before age 12. Young people who bully at school are more likely to use violence to solve problems. Adolescents who bully have a 16% higher risk of later antisocial or criminal behavior than others. Moreover, the victims of bullying are also likely to commit crimes because of some mental health problems (e.g., schizophrenia and antisocial tendencies) caused by bullying. During the process of being bullied, children are likely to feel over depressive and frightened. And the worst is they could not get help from others at that time. The feeling of isolated and helpless overwhelmed them and seriously damaged their dignity and pride. Under the immense hit of both mental and physical abuse, those victims are highly vulnerable and have a huge possible in self-protection mode. However, due to their mental problems, this means of self-protection becomes extreme and is conducive to serious and abnormal criminal behavior.

The social environment is also one of the most important components of the influence of the environment on an individual's criminal behavior. It includes media, economic, living space and cultural factors. Firstly, people are easy to be influenced by all kinds of information online. If ones, especially teenagers, watch aggressive or criminal videos frequently. It's more likely that they immigrate those criminal behavior as they have higher ability of learning and immigration. Meanwhile, as most places online are kind of anonymous, people who commit this kind of crimes do not need to worry about be blamed by the public as much as offline criminals. As a result, they have become more brazen in practicing criminal acts on the Internet. Secondly, living in poor economy environment or marginal areas is possible to lead people commit crimes. As their dignity are always harmed (not only because of their financial and education situation but also because they could often receive sympathy from the outside world), they are more likely to get a higher tendency of vindictive. Thirdly, the condition of living space and configuration could lead to criminal behaviors as well. Studies have shown that residential spaces that are relatively enclosed to the outside world, surrounded by a certain amount of green space and have a higher residential density tend to have lower crime rates. Finally, as culture is able to forms one's mind, different cultures seemingly have different explanations for some criminal behaviors. Some behaviors are tolerable and reasonable in some cultures. So, people living in that culture are not going to avoid those behaviors.

We hope this article is able to call for more people to pay attention on criminal behaviors caused by the environment and avoid more tragedies happening.

Authors Contribution

All the authors contributed equally and their names were listed in alphabetical order.

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