

Criminology Task 2 AC1.3 Draft

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There are eight consequences of unreported crime:

1. THE RIPPLE EFFECT:

The ripple effect is a situation in which one event causes a series of other events to happen. For example, if someone commits a knife crime and then they do not get caught as it goes unreported they are therefore more likely to continue these crimes. This results in growing levels of criminality and crime rates begin to grow. The ripple effect is mainly negative as if crime goes unreported then there will be an increase in more serious crimes as the perpetrators are getting away with it. However if the crime is reported then it will have a positive effect as less of the crimes will be committed and it will also make the police and community aware of what major problems they have, which results in them raising awareness and being able to focus on these crimes.

2. CULTURAL DIFFERENCES:

Sometimes there are cultural differences which make actions criminal in one culture/country and not another. This means that these crimes go unreported in these communities where they might be most concentrated. A case example of this is when Eric Bikubi and Magalle Bumu were found guilty of killing 15 year old Krist Bamu, Magalle's brother. They had accused Krist of witchcraft and took matters in their own hands. Another example is Honour crime. In a lot of cultures marriages are arranged and forced onto women however since 2014 that has been illegal in the UK. Because this is deemed to be acceptable in a lot of cultures it will go unreported and many women are forced into marriages against their will as they do not believe anything can be done about it. This has a negative effect as it encourages out of date, illegal cultural practices.

3. DECRIMINALISATION:

Decriminalisation is when laws are frequently altered because they cannot be imposed or reinforced. Eventually the government has no choice. An example of this is drug decriminalisation, this has occurred in Portugal. In Portugal, taking drugs are still illegal but the punishments are not as severe, for example someone in the UK could face jail time but in Portugal they could just receive a fine. In the UK there are 100x more drug induced deaths than in Portugal and 1/3 of drug overdoses recorded in Europe are in the UK. When drugs are illegal like in the UK, it doesn't stop people from taking drugs, it just forces people to go underground. When drugs are illegal people may buy drugs with unknown substances or because it is illegal they are more enticed to do them. In the UK

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last year, 4% of people aged 15-34 did cocaine compared to 0.3% in Portugal. There are a mixture of positive and negative effects of drug decriminalisation. On one hand, drugs are still bad for your health however if you don't have to buy drugs illegally they are a lot safer, if the drugs aren't illegal people will be less enticed to do them. As well as this, the police won't spend as much time and money on policing drug usage and there will be more space in prison for more serious crimes.

4. CULTURAL CHANGE AKA. THE BROKEN WINDOWS THESIS:

The broken windows thesis is a theory that suggests if an area that is run down or has buildings with "broken windows" gives the impression that no one cares about it and it is okay to vandalise it further. This theory suggests that neighbourhoods with damaged surroundings are more likely to be crime prone. An example of this is that usually people police their own neighbourhoods until it becomes unsafe to do so. When a neighbourhood becomes unsafe they either move away or they will stay inside and avoid leaving their houses. This reduces the effectiveness of informal social control and crime will increase. This has negative effects as it leads to more serious crime and it is hard to escape that cycle.

5. POLICE PRIORITISATION:

The police prioritise certain crimes due to many reasons, for example: limited resources, the local population may have concerns about certain crimes and antisocial behaviour that they pressure the police to deal with and the media may focus on a particular crime and call for action. Crimes that have no victim, petty crimes and crimes that are not of a high public concern tend to be ignored like littering and illegal downloads. This has positive and negative effects, the police can focus on more important and dangerous crimes however small crimes can develop into more serious crimes, especially if the offender thinks they can get away with it.

6. UNRECORDED CRIME:

90% of crime reported to the police is by the public. The police can choose whether or not to record this crime for reasons such as: they may not believe the story, there's not enough evidence, the victim may refuse to press charges or they may not decide to investigate the crime as they believe it is trivial or not a priority. Rape is a crime that the police fails to report, another example is that in 2018 the Thames Valley and North Yorkshire Police were deemed inadequate in recording crime as 1 in 5 crimes were not properly recorded, 35,200 offences in one year. This has negative effects as if the crime

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is not recorded, then the offender will continue to commit more offences and will not be brought to justice.

7. LEGAL CHANGE:

Legal change is the result of the government altering laws which have become outdated due to social change and pressure from campaign groups. One such example is the legalisation of same sex marriage in England and Wales since March 2014, in Scotland since December 2014, and in Northern Ireland since January 2020. Until 1967, homosexuality was illegal in the UK and Wales, this legalisation of same sex relationships and marriage is seen as a positive effect of less people reporting this crime in the past.

8. PROCEDURAL CHANGE:

Procedural change is when the procedures for reporting crime have developed over time to encourage the reporting to take place. For example in 1970, the two ways of reporting crime was going to the station and calling 999. In 2020, there are phone apps, calling 999, the crime stoppers and social media. This is positive as it is quicker easier and more accessible to people, the more methods there are the more likely people are going to report crime. However if the internet is inaccessible to you, you may struggle.