**Item B:**

**Some functionalist sociologists argue that crime and deviance are caused by the inability of some people to gain the rewards of society, for example because of educational underachievement. Those members of society whose opportunities are blocked cannot achieve the goals of society by socially approved means.**

**Applying material from item B and your own knowledge, evaluate the usefulness of functionalist’s approaches in understanding crime and deviance.**

**Intro:**

**Functionalists view crime and as universal and inevitable. They believe the solution to crime is better socialisation within the family. Durkheim argues that society is held together by social norms and values but not everyone can conform to the values consensus, during time of grave social strain the bonds of society are weakened and this leads to deviance.**

**Para 1:**

**Durkheim’s view of crime and deviance. Durkheim believes that societies are held together by shared values, and economic interdependence. There is always, according to Durkheim, the possibility of social collapse if values are not constantly reaffirmed and passed from one generation to another. Therefore, the maintenance of values is a crucial ‘functional prerequisite’ of society. Even in a society of saints there will always be deviance.**

**However, people are individuals - they are naturally self-seeking and prefer to look after their own interests at the expense of others. What stops social dissolution is the law and primary socialisation from the family. Institutions such as religion or the education system foster an idea of collective conscience. The law is less powerful than the power of this belief in collectivism, which helps, instil the pervasive ‘self control’ that we all learn.**

**However, in periods of great social strain or dramatic change, the power of the collective conscience is weakened. When Durkheim was writing, there was great fear that community life had been shattered by the growth of major cities and industrialisation. As communities collapsed under the weight of dramatic change brought about by these processes, so the collective conscience was weakened. The result of this process, according to Durkheim, was the development anomie. In essence, this means that people regard the social expectations to respect the rights and the needs of others as unimportant and prefer to look after their own interests even at their neighbour’s expense.**

**Problems: ignores concepts of power and doesn’t explain why some people are more likley to commit crime than others.**

**Para 2:**

**Merton, redefined Durkheim’s notion of the concept of anomie (anomie always present).**

**Merton created the five types of deviant adaptation; ritualism, Retreatists, rebellion, Conformists, innovation. Use of an illegitimate opportunity structure to achieve legitimate goals.**

**Argues deviance is the result of two things; the goals the culture encourages individuals to achieve. What the institutional structure of society allows them to achieve legitimately. Strain to anomie.**

**Problems: doesn’t explain non-utilitarian crime, assumes there is a value consensus and disproportionally focuses on crimes by the working class.**

**Para 3:**

**Subcultural strain theories are different to traditional functionalism. See deviance as the product of delinquent subcultures with different values to the mainstream. Cohen agrees with Merton, deviance results from the inability to achieve mainstream success through legitimate means, but thinks the subculture has different values. This causes status frustration. Looked at w/c boys. Subcultures provide an alternative hierarchy. This theory by Cohen gives an explanation of non-utilitarian crime.**

**Problems: assumes that w/c boys start off sharing m/c success goals only to reject them when they fail, he ignores the possibility they don’t have these values in the first place.**

**Cloward and Ohlin explain that different forms of subculture emerge to provide people with alternative opportunity structures.**

**Problems: over predicts the amount of working class crime.**

**Para 4:**

**Evaluation, neo Marxist Taylor argues that there is no value consensus as people have different values in society. People commit crime because of capitalism. Crime may be politically motivated, rather than for selfish gain.**

**Marxism: Gordon- capitalism is criminogenic and crime can be seen as a rational response to a challenging situation.**

**Right realism: crime is a rational choice- would concur with functionalists that poor socialisation is key (Murray) and that the working class are likely to turn to crime because they do not have the benefits of wealth the middle class do (Van Dan Haad)**

**Interactionism- labelling theorists argue functionalists and strain theories ignore the role of people who have power to label behaviour as deviant- Becker, Circourel.**

**Conclusion:**

**Needs to weigh up whether functionalism is useful as a theory. Does it have big problems or can parts be used? Is there a theory that is more effective?**

Item: Rather than look for the initial cause of the deviant act, as functionalists do, labelling theorists ask how any why some groups and acts come to be labelled as criminal or deviant while others do not. Coming from an interactionist perspective, they argue that what we mean by crime or deviance is the outcome of the same processes of social interaction- between police officer and suspect, for example- as any other social behaviour. Therefore to understand crime and deviance, we must grasp the meanings involved in the interaction.

Applying material from the item and your knowledge, evaluate the contribution of labelling theory to our understanding of crime and deviance (30 marks)

Intro:

* Labelling theory and crime relates to the idea that people become labelled as deviant
* Functionalists look at the initial cause of the deviant act
* Interactionists believe that crime and deviance is a process of social interaction

Para 1:

* Becker’s theory – 4 steps: social reaction to act of primary deviance, labelling of deviant as an outsider, excepting the label and denial of normal life – leads to secondary deviance, building a subculture based on deviance
* Criticism: Becker doesn’t explain why some behaviour is considered deviant, too deterministic
* Criticism: Ignores new right theory of people having a choice to commit crime or not – Clarke

Para 2:

* Edwin Lemert (1951) distinguishes between primary and secondary deviance
* Primary deviance refers to deviant acts that have not been publically labelled
* Lambert argues that it is pointless to seek the cause of primary deviance, since it is so widespread that its unlikely to have a single cause and in any case it is often trivial e.g. fare dodging mostly goes uncaught
* Criticism: however although a deviant career is a common outcome labelling theorists are quick to point out that it is not inevitable.
* Criticism: Downes and Rock (2003) note we cannot predict whether someone who has been labelled will follow a deviant career because they are always free to choose not to deviate further

Para 3:

* Cooley describes how our self-concept is a reflection of others reactions and assumptions – how we see ourselves is at least partly constructed by others
* We are often at the mercy of others opinions – this is the idea of “looking glass self” which can lead to labelling and the self-fulfilling prophecy which can lead to crime and deviance
* He also identifies the idea of ‘pronoia’ in which individuals exhibit an unreasonable resistance to the idea that others may not always have your best interests at heart

Para 4:

* Concentration on marginal forms of deviance. No analysis of crimes against property.
* Young 1975 – ‘indeed it is engaged in an astonishing accomplishment of the development of a criminology that does not deal with property crime’
* Criticism: understates the severity of some of the crimes of the working class

Conclusion:

* Labelling has made a really big contribution – showed us how crime is committed in groups
* Shows why working class people commit crime because they want to gain a new hierarchy of status that they can’t gain elsewhere
* Even though it can be seen as deterministic many people have followed through with being more deviant after they have been labelled as committing a deviant act e.g. Young

Item B: Strain theories focus on the ways in which people may resort to crime of deviance when they are unable to achieve socially approved goals by legitimate means. For example, Merton argues American culture emphasises achieving success, but an unequal structure limits some individuals’ opportunity to do so legitimately. This may induce frustration in the individuals concerned. Some strain theorists see the response to this situation as a group reaction, in which individuals create or join deviant subcultures.

Applying material from Item B and your knowledge, evaluate the contribution of strain theories to our understanding of society.

Intro: Refer briefly to item. State everything that is to be debated: Strain theories (give basic information). Name some theorists (for example: Merton) and opposite theories too.

Para 1: As stated in Item B, strain theories believe… Merton argues American culture emphasises achieving success. Not everyone can achieve this success legitimately. People therefore turn to crime. He believes there are five modes of adapting to strain. They are ‘Rebel’ ‘Ritualist’ ‘Retreatist’ ‘Innovator’ ‘Conformist’. Evaluation; Merton only focuses on the working class and ignores ruling class crime. He also assumes there is a value consensus. Durkheim believes crime is created by a sudden social change, whereas Merton says deviance is a symptom of the social structure of society.

Para 2: Cohen expands on Merton’s theory by agreeing it is a lower class phenomenon… ‘Unequal structure’ limits people’s ability legitimately (Item) Disagrees with Merton’s emphasis on individual crime, believes crime can also be committed by groups. Working class boys face anomie in a middle class dominated school system- turn to an alternative status hierarchy- create gangs and subcultures to gain status they can’t gain in education. Criticism- assumes everyone accepts mainstream values, ignores middle class crime and corporate crime.

Para 3: Cloward and Ohlin, takes Merton’s ideas as a starting point… they agree that working class youths are denied legitimate opportunities to achieve money success and that their deviance stems from the way they respond to the situation. However, Cloward and Ohlin over exaggerate differences between subcultures. On the other hand, unlike Merton they demonstrate a variety of different group responses.

Para 4: Right Realists alternatively think the laws upheld in society are sound and benefit the majority. Capitalism is desirable and power of the criminal justice system is even handed. But crime is immoral and selfish and punishment is justified. Psychological and biological factors- not everyone is equally rational, some people are unable to see the consequences or are more comfortable taking risks.

Conclusion: Sum up all of the arguments, and come to a decision as to whether Strain theories have contributed to our understanding of society. (They have contributed to understanding however they have a very narrow view and don’t explain certain types of crime)



Female crime is often not as examined within sociological research involving crime and deviance. Although statistically females are still shown to be a large percentage of convictions and crimes. 20% of convicted offenders are female and they are less likely to commit homicide, carry out crimes or be repeat offenders. These statistics have been considered not to illustrate the true extent and seriousness of female crime and also why there is such a significant difference between men and women in relation to crime.

1. By the age of 40, 9% of females have a criminal conviction compared to 32% of males.

Men are more likely to be repeated offenders, to have longer criminal careers and commit more serious crimes, for example men are 15 times more likely to be convicted for homicide.

Women may commit to less crime but they are still a large percentage of convictions and offenders

Although as victims fewer women than men are victims of violence – 2% vs 4%

1. Physiological/ biological factors

Lombroso

Criminality is innate but very few born female criminals

Biological factors, e.g testosterone can account for gender differences in offending

Evaluation

Argue social factors must be constructed, e.g, relative deprivation

Burman and Batchelor (2009) point to media depictions of women that picture them as a ‘drunk, disorderly, out of control’ etc

1. Carlen argues that women are more likely to be sentenced according to the courts assessment of them as wives, mothers, daughters rather than the seriousness of their crimes.

She studied 39 working class women, argues working class women are generally had to conform through the promise of 2 deals “class deals and gender deals. – Liberatian theorists

1. Heidensohn

Patriarchal control theory- Women commit less crime than men because patriarchal society imposes control over women, reducing the opportunities to offend.

Dobash and Dobash – Show many violent attacks result from men’s dissatisfaction with their wives and their domestic duties.

Patriarchy can also push some women into crime for example, women are likely to be poor as a result of inequalities turning to theft.

Conclusion-

It is clear to see that both genders DO commit crime however statistically men do commit more crime but there are various different reasons for this. For instance class differences, can influence female crime as well as biological differences.

 **APPLYING MATERIAL FROM THE ITEM AND YOUR KNOWLEDGE, EVALUATE SOCIOLOGICAL EXPLANATIONS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ETHNICITY AND OFFENDING (30 MARKS) –**

Item: Official statistics suggest that there is a clear relationship between ethnicity and offending. These show black people and to a lesser extent Asians as being over-represented in the criminal justice system, from policing through to sentencing, institutional racism distorts the picture of ethnic patterns of offending. However, left realists argue that there are real differences in offending rates and these differences can be explained in terms of factors such as relative deprivation and marginalisation.

**INTRODUCTION:** In this essay I will cover the relationship between ethnicity and offending with regard to official statistics considering the over representation of ethnic minorities such as black people in offending. As well as the argument of neo Marxists such as Paul Gilroy who suggests the idea of black criminality being a myth. I will also look at the arguments of Lea and Young’s criticisms against Gilroy stating that he over romanticises the idea of street crime as being revolutionary.

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| --- | --- |
| **PARAGRAPH 1: OVER REPRESENTATION OF BLACK PEOPLE AND ASIANS IN OFFENDING*** Evident in official statistics, victim surveys and self-report studies
* Ministry of Justice 2013: black people twice as likely to be convicted. 3 times more likely to be arrested. More likely to be charged and receive a custodial sentence compared to white people.
* Self-report studies: 21% Asians, 28% black had the highest rate of offending compared to 42% of whites. This suggests bias in the criminal justice people as whites show the highest rate of offending
 | **EVALUATION:** * Excludes crime against organisations such as corporate crime and white collar crime
* Not just linked to ethnicity: higher crime rates in inner-city areas according to Philips and Bowling.
* Self-report studies and victim surveys can be a bad measure of statistics – relies on victim memories which can become distorted
 |
| **PARAGRAPH 2: BLACK CRIMINALITY IS A MYTH*** Neo-Marxist Paul Gilroy
* Rejects the idea that black criminals belong to ‘alien subculture’.
* Instead, he sees these groups as defending themselves against a society that treats them unjustly
* Minority ethnic crime as a partial struggle, not more prone to it.
 | **EVALUATION:*** Lea and Young criticise Gilroy by saying:
	+ First generation immigrants were law abiding, it’s unlikely that they passed on tradition of anti-colonial struggle
	+ Most crime is intra-ethnic therefore not a struggle against racism
	+ Gilroy romanticises street crime as revolutionary
 |
| **PARAGRAPH 3: MUGGING IN BRITIAN*** Stuart Hall
* Argued that certain sections of the police were racist and the concern about street crime was an unjustified moral panic.
* Noted that there is no legally defined crime called mugging and therefore its extent can’t be measured.
 | **EVALUATION:*** Phillips and Bowling support this by suggesting that there have been many allegations of oppressive policing of minority ethnic communities
 |
| **PARARGAPH 4:** * Would need to bring in a more theoretical dimension, picking out problems with the neo-marxist approach to studying ethnic inequality in crime. You could look into changes that have occurred within policing e.g. since the Macpherson report to highlight changes. There could also be a discussion of the issue that class might be more significant her.
 |  |

**CONCLUSION:** In conclusion, different sociologist’s explanations provide different reasons for the relationship between ethnicity and offending. Left realists see the official statistics as reflecting real differences in offending between ethnic groups. However, Phillips and bowling believe offending is not just linked to ethnicity. For example, crime rates are higher in inner-city areas. Neo Marxists such as Gilroy suggest that black criminality is a myth however, Lea and Young criticise this by saying he romanticises aspects such as street crime for being ‘revolutionary’. Therefore, the reasons that ethnic minorities offend can be explained by the many things such as deprivation, institutionalisation and being over represented in the criminal justice system/