

ITEM B: GLOBALISATION AND CRIME

Globalisation refers to the increased interconnectedness of the social world which is brought about by the advent of new technologies for communication and transportation. Global markets are now linked and there are greater opportunities to trade between nations than ever before. However, some sociologists have argued that globalisation can actually bring about higher levels of crime as there is now a global criminal economy that engages in activities such as trafficking, cyber-crimes, green crimes and also international terrorism.

Applying material from Item B and your knowledge, evaluate the view that globalisation has caused an increase in crime. (30 marks)

Some sociologists would agree that globalisation has brought about a greater level of crime in society than ever before. According to Item B, “globalisation refers to the increased interconnectedness of the social world which is brought about by the advent of new technologies for communication and transportation”.

According to Item B, “globalisation can actually bring about higher levels of crime as there is now a global criminal economy that engages in activities such as trafficking, cyber-crimes, green crimes and also international terrorism”. Held *et al* argue that there has been an increased interconnectedness of crime itself as globalisation has allowed for both legitimate and illegitimate opportunities to spread across international borders and has also argued that this is difficult to police as there is no overarching authority for the internet, which means that the activities that go on there are increasingly difficult to police and legislate for. The creation of the ‘Dark Web’ also makes things increasingly problematic for law enforcement agencies as many of the transactions that go on are undetectable and therefore it makes it virtually impossible to detect crime online. This has led to a significant increase in the level of drugs and arms being traded online.

Castells (1998) argues that the global criminal economy is now worth over £1 trillion per annum and is taking a number of new forms. These include various forms of trafficking such as arms trafficking to terrorist groups, nuclear materials, women and children for sale into the sex trade, in organs or body parts (particularly from China). He also points to the growth of the smuggling of illegal immigrants, cyber-crimes such as theft and pornography and also green crimes including the illegal dumping of toxic waste. Castells also explains the way in which there is a

A clear introduction which refers explicitly to Item B and defines globalisation effectively.

Further reference to Item B and links to sociological evidence.

The points in Item B have been elaborated upon well and there are links to contemporary examples.

Sociological evidence is used effectively and there are clear examples which have been fully analysed.

Statistics evidence is also used effectively.

Sociological theories are introduced to support points.

supply-demand system that is based largely on exploitation and inequality. In Columbia, for example, there are large numbers of poor people who are willing to work for very low costs to cultivate drugs. In fact, approximately 20% of the population depend upon cocaine production for their livelihood. Ian Taylor (1997) also points towards exploitation by the capitalist system as the free nature of market forces has led to free rein in the markets and thus greater social inequality. Marxists would argue that this material deprivation forces people into crime as they cannot keep up with the demands of capitalist consumption or are simply struggling with the rising costs of living.

There has also been the option for more organised crime to occur as the deregulation of the markets has meant that there are greater opportunities for large corporations such as Amazon and Starbucks to move their money around and carry out insider trading to avoid taxation. In terms of employment too, the globalised economy facilitates new patterns of employment which include flexible working or zero-hours contracts as immigrant workers are often more willing to work for lower pay and conditions than an indigenous population. This suggests that the globalised economy has created greater potential for criminality.

There are also instances where the globalised nature of society has allowed criminal gangs to form. An example of this which has been identified by Misha Glenny (2008) is called the 'McMafia' which refers to Russian and Eastern European gangs that coincided with the break-up of the Soviet Union and the deregulation of global markets. This allowed the Russian government to deregulate most sectors except natural resources. These resources were then sold across the global market by criminal gangs at hugely inflated prices resulting in huge levels of profit and subsequent social status and power. This again points to the potential for globalisation to bring about crime.

Another area in which globalisation has brought about greater levels of crime than ever before is in the area of green crime. By a green crime sociologists mean crimes against the environment. Sociologists are increasingly aware of the way in which despite national boundaries, the planet is in fact a single eco-system and therefore any threats to the environment will have a negative impact upon us all. A famous example of this was the Chernobyl nuclear incident in 1986, the effects of which were widespread as radioactive material was found thousands of

More successful use of contemporary examples and continued analysis and positive evaluation.

Clear links are made back to the original question.

Continued positive evaluation with strong use of examples.

Sociological evidence is used effectively to support points and links are made back to the original question.

New issues are introduced as part of the sustained positive evaluation and examples are once again used effectively.

Some explicit evaluation of the different views of green crime is offered.

miles away from the original source and had significant impacts upon the population and their health. There is some debate in sociology as to whether or not crimes against the environment should be illegal and these come from two positions. Traditional criminology suggests that we should only be concerned with specific behaviours and if no law has been broken then no crime has taken place. These sociologists would argue that in order to protect the environment, changes need to be made to international laws. However, critics would argue that decisions about what the laws are would be heavily influenced by big businesses who wish to support their own profit making and as such the laws may not be created truly in the interests of crime reduction, but instead in support of the sustained global economy.

The opposing position comes from green criminology which argues that we need to start from a notion of harm rather than criminal law and as such any action that harms the physical or natural environment is in fact criminal. They argue that this is particularly important in a globalised society as we need to be transgressive (overstepping the boundaries of traditional criminological definitions in the same way as we have crossed international borders). However, again, critics would argue that it is unlikely that we will be able to agree upon how best to classify and deal with crimes against the environment because so many global nations are involved and each comes with their own sets of norms and values and also competing interests.

Based on the evidence presented, it is overwhelmingly true that globalisation has brought about an increase in crime, but it is important to recognise too the benefits of globalisation in crime reduction. There is now greater sharing of information which means individual nations are able to learn from each other regarding law enforcement techniques and in particular the best ways in which to combat issues such as cyber-crime. Intelligence regarding criminal gangs and terrorist networks can be shared more freely and there is huge potential for global law enforcement to work together effectively to overcome crime.

Similarly, awareness of international politics has meant we are able to intervene more effectively in global situations that threaten human rights, such as Donald Trump's recent interventions in Syria or Tony Blair in Iraq. This suggests that although globalisation has indeed brought about a rise

Continued evaluation of green crime and additional analysis of the points made.

New concepts are introduced and used effectively.

A good conclusion which addresses the original question but which also focuses on evaluating the issues raised.

Contemporary examples are used highly effectively here.

in crime, it has also brought about beneficial effects for both law enforcement and the economy.

[1114 words]

Examiner style comments: ***Mark band 25–30***

This is a challenging essay as it requires the candidate to largely focus on positive evaluation. There are a good range of points which are analysed and evaluated well both internally and externally. Sociological studies and Item B have been used effectively and there are strong contemporary examples.

To improve further the candidate could have focused on their analysis and evaluation of supporting sociological theories to a greater extent.