

Global Perspectives – Law and Criminality

What are laws?

The system of rules of a particular country usually made by a government, that is used to order the way in which a society behaves

Why do we need laws?

- Most laws are for our own benefits and protection; they preserve public order and policy.
- Without laws, a society will be an anarchy- dysfunctional, full of chaos, injustice and immorality.
- Without laws, we would all live like animals in nature, each person pursuing one's own desires with no regard for the effects of his or her behaviour on others and this would lead to suffering.
- Laws prevent people from harming others, and do whatever one feels like to anyone else by setting punishments for those harms if they are committed.
- Another purpose of laws is to resolve disputes, since laws are consistence rules made to be applied in almost every situation.

What is a crime?

an action or omission which constitutes an offence and is punishable by law.

Why do people break laws?

1. Necessity/desperation : Some people literally steal (or commit other crimes) so they can provide food, clothing, or shelter to themselves or their family. Maybe they *really* have no other option, and maybe they just don't recognize the other options.
2. Ignorance : Simply not knowing that they have broken a law as there are way too many laws. However ignorance is not an excuse.
3. Greediness/Selfishness : the greed for money
4. Convenience : sometimes finding loopholes in the law is simply convenient. Eg. Jay walking because pedestrian crossing is quite far away.
5. Psychological/Emotional Issues : some people get a rush from breaking laws. Others find it a way to vent our their feelings on society.

6. Vengeance : Personal harm caused to a person by breaking a law is sometimes avenged by a consequent breaking of law

Most commonly committed crimes

- Theft
- Assault
- Traffic related (hit and run, drunk driving)
- Drugs
- Murder