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Avinash Kumar



Avinash Kumar has completed his Ph.D. in International Investment Law from the Dept. of Law & Governance, Central University of South Bihar. His research work is on "International Investment Agreement and State's right to regulate Foreign Investment." He qualified UGC-NET and has been selected for the prestigious ICSSR Doctoral Fellowship. He is an alumnus of the Faculty of Law, University of Delhi. Formerly he has been elected as Students Union President of Law Centre-1, University of Delhi. Moreover, he completed his LL.M. from the University of Delhi (2014-16), dissertation on "Cross-border Merger & Acquisition"; LL.B. from the University of Delhi (2011-14), and B.A. (Hons.) from Maharaja Agrasen College, University of Delhi. He has also obtained P.G. Diploma in IPR from the Indian Society of International Law, New Delhi. He has qualified UGC – NET examination and has been awarded ICSSR – Doctoral Fellowship. He has published six-plus articles and presented 9 plus papers in national and international seminars/conferences. He participated in several workshops on research methodology and teaching and learning.

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"10 CRIMES, ONE MIND: THROUGH MY EYES" **EXPLORING MENTAL DEPRAVITY AND POSSIBLE** **PSYCHOLOGICAL CONDITIONS OF CRIMINALS**

AUTHORED BY - RIYA SURI

Abstract

In many studies on crime, especially on the components of criminal acts, the perpetrators' mental status and their mental health become focal points. Roughly, malign and depraved acts, killing sprees can be likened to pernicious crimes. They are diagnosed as being problematic situations that should not even be attempted to be understood using merely social, cultural, situational solutions, or factors. This article examines the psychological underbellies of the few selected crimes in India between the periods of 1995 and 2023 and looks inwards into the criminals to see how most of them carry a mental illness or a psychological problem. In the process of stratifying individual cases, phenomena of criminality are correlated with the most common possible psychological roots including psychopaths, narcissism, sociopaths and other mental problems. The importance of the state of health of the individual in regard to the significance of violence is considered, while it is attested that such conditions management is indispensable for solicitors as well as the culture itself. Criminal psychology, it is contended, can be understood and put to good use in locating dangerous elements in the community with the aim of crime prevention.

The need to integrate mental health assessments in the criminal justice system as well as broader approaches that take into account the mind of a criminal is brought to light in this article. In doing so, this research - revolving around famous crimes - hopes to create concerns about the nature of turned behaviour and violent crime in particular, and human psychology as an oversimplified science, which, in the end, will make more rational approaches to crime and violent crime in particular possible. In recognizing how mental illness is affected by and interacts with studies on crime, safe land can be created, and obsession for jails punishing those with mental illness can be shifted towards restoring them back to sanity.

Introduction

The violation of social values is the most common way of looking at crime. However, a few infractions interact with law in a different context and present deeper problems of morality. Some crimes are referred to as heinous and involve extreme tolerable and intolerance. Such cases raise the issue of the state of mind in which the criminal was at the time of the commission of the deed. Were these criminals mad, psychopathic or just plain sociopathic? In this paper, we will focus on ten of the most notorious criminal cases in India for the period between 1995 and 2023 and relate the violent behaviors exhibited by the criminals to possible psychological factors that could account for their actions. Finally, it states that criminal psychology and mental health should be embraced by society to eliminate possible dangers that may be occasioned by lack of proper treatment of psychological problems.

1. Nirbhaya Gang Rape Case (2012)

Incident Overview:

In New Delhi in December 2012, a young woman, later named Nirbhaya, became a victim of gang-rape in a moving bus. The level of violence encompassed physical torments which became fatal. The six men involved acted out their tremendous cruelty.

Mental Depravity and Potential Diagnosis:

The criminals responsible for this offence were characterized by sadistic psychopathy. Psychopathy is the inability to feel or care, while sadism is defined as the pleasure derived from causing pain. Such a people's indifference to the value of human life, visible in the degree of physical violence and total contempt for the personality of the victim is characteristic of antisocial personality disorder (ASPD). The sadism that Nirbhaya had to endure was not definable as a sexual crime alone, but a profoundly degrading act that these perpetrators exercised due to their psychological distress resulting from their need for dominion.

2. Kathua Rape and Murder Case (2018)

Incident Overview:

Kathua, Jammu, and Kashmir witnessed the gory incident when an eight-year-old from a nomadic tribe was abducted, raped, and killed. They used the minor in an overall sectarian and political struggle, showing no respect for a life of law and innocence.

Mental Depravity and Potential Diagnosis:

Intention for the abduction of a child with a political and religious agenda suggests sociopathy. The key features of sociopathy are impulsive and violent behaviors and deviation from social norms. Since it was a crime jointly committed, the group aspect of the crime, to which the participants belong, implies mob behavior when sin is easily committed because of the absence of conscience on the part of individuals composing the group. There must also possibly be pathological hatred in some of the perpetrators owing to strong ideological conviction.

3. Delhi Burari Deaths (2018)

Incident Overview:

On the other hand, the Burari Delhi case reveals a horrifying scenario in which 11 family members were tragically found dead in their residence from asphyxiation and appeared to share the same delusional belief regarding some form of mass suicide. They believed they were performing a ceremony that would help them in attaining moksha.

Mental Depravity and Potential Diagnosis:

This case is different from the rest as it involves psychological disorder(s) including shared psychosis the head of the family believed to be in charge of all the rituals must have been living in the delusional disorder thinking that he had some supernatural calling. The family members' belief of submission can be construed as dominance by means of psychosis as it involved close people accepting the dominant person's delusional ideas.

4. Shakti Mills Gang Rape Case (2013)

Incident Overview:

In 2013, a photojournalist was horrifically gang-raped by five men in the abandoned Shakti Mills compound in Mumbai. This terrible crime echoed the Nirbhaya case, as the attackers exhibited alarming levels of brutality.

Mental Depravity and Potential Diagnosis:

The collective nature of the attack suggests a common absence of empathy and a tendency towards impulsive violence. This behavior may indicate antisocial personality disorder in the offenders. Their decision to carry out the crime in a secluded area reflects premeditation and a disregard for moral limits, while the gang dynamic often amplifies each person's readiness to engage in severe actions.

5. Jessica Lal Murder Case (1999-2006)

Incident Overview:

Jessica Lal, a model, was tragically shot by Manu Sharma, the son of a politician, after she declined to serve him alcohol at a private party. The case extended over several years, with an initial acquittal sparking widespread protests before Sharma was ultimately convicted.

Mental Depravity and Potential Diagnosis:

Sharma's actions display typical signs of narcissistic personality disorder (NPD). His feeling of entitlement, which arises from his social and political ties, combined with his desire for immediate satisfaction and difficulty handling rejection, highlights the main features of NPD. His anger when denied alcohol illustrates how delicate the ego of a person with this disorder can be, often resulting in violent reactions to perceived offenses.

6. 2006 Nithari Killings (Noida)

Incident Overview:

In one of the most shocking cases of serial killings in India, the remains of 19 children and women were discovered near the home of businessman Moninder Singh Pandher and his domestic worker, Surinder Koli, in Nithari, Noida. The victims had been sexually abused, murdered, and in some instances, cannibalized.

Mental Depravity and Potential Diagnosis:

Surinder Koli, who confessed to the murders, showed signs of psychopathy with necrophilic traits, demonstrating a complete absence of remorse and a craving for extreme violence. His actions reflect paraphilic disorders, where individuals find sexual arousal in unusual and extreme behaviors. The elements of cannibalism and necrophilia indicate a significant disconnection from typical human emotions and suggest a severe mental illness, potentially stemming from deep-rooted childhood trauma or psychosis.

7. Sheena Bora Murder Case (2012)

Incident Overview:

Sheena Bora was killed by her mother, Indrani Mukerjea, along with her stepfather and their driver. The murder remained hidden for three years before it was finally revealed.

Mental Depravity and Potential Diagnosis:

Indrani Mukerjea's role in her daughter's murder raises concerns about psychopathy or a serious personality disorder such as borderline personality disorder (BPD). This condition often involves unstable relationships and a deep fear of abandonment, which can drive individuals to take drastic measures. Her choice to end her daughter's life, along with her capacity to hide the crime for an extended period, indicates a troubling absence of empathy and emotional connection.

8. Arushi Talwar Murder Case (2008)**Incident Overview:**

Aarushi Talwar and her domestic help, Hemraj, were discovered murdered in their home. Initially, Aarushi's parents were convicted, but they were later acquitted due to a lack of sufficient evidence.

Mental Depravity and Potential Diagnosis:

The case continues to be shrouded in mystery, highlighting the potential for emotional suppression or hidden dysfunction within the family that could lead to violent outcomes. If the parents were indeed involved, it indicates a collapse of rational thought and emotional regulation, possibly arising from deep-seated family tensions.

9. Badaun Gang Rape and Murder Case (2014)**Incident Overview:**

In Badaun, Uttar Pradesh, two teenage Dalit girls were discovered hanging from a tree after being gang-raped. This horrific crime ignited widespread outrage and highlighted the issue of caste-based violence.

Mental Depravity and Potential Diagnosis:

The offenders exhibited a profound bias rooted in caste and misogyny, suggesting a shared sociopathic mentality where societal norms regarding caste and gender are distorted to rationalize such brutal acts. This case illustrates how cultural influences can merge with mental depravity, leading perpetrators to perceive certain groups as inferior and thus "worthy" of such violence.

10. Bilkis Bano Case (2002)

Incident Overview:

Bilkis Bano suffered a terrible gang-rape during the Gujarat riots, and tragically, 14 of her family members, including her young daughter, were killed. She was able to survive by pretending to be dead.

Mental Depravity and Potential Diagnosis:

The individuals responsible for this atrocity displayed sociopathic tendencies fueled by communal animosity. Their capacity to engage in such extreme violence under the guise of religious and ethnic conflict reveals a total absence of empathy and moral judgment, characteristics commonly associated with Antisocial Personality Disorder (ASPD). The mob mentality prevalent during communal riots often offers a shared rationale for brutal actions that individuals might not undertake alone.

The Importance of Understanding Criminal Psychology and Mental Illness in Society

Understanding criminal psychology and the mental health issues that can lead to criminal behavior is essential for both prevention and intervention. The ten cases discussed here illustrate the severe mental depravity present in the perpetrators, often showing traits of psychopathy, sociopathy, narcissism, or other personality disorders. In many cases, these criminals exhibited a disturbing lack of empathy, remorse, and emotional control, indicating underlying mental health conditions. Recognizing the psychological aspects of crime can help identify potential threats in society. Early intervention through mental health screenings and support services can reduce risks associated with untreated mental health issues. By fostering a deeper understanding of the psychological factors that contribute to criminal behavior, society can create more effective prevention strategies, ensuring better protection for vulnerable populations and decreasing the occurrence of violent crimes. Additionally, incorporating mental health education into the criminal justice system can enhance outcomes for both offenders and victims. Offering resources and support for offenders with diagnosed mental illnesses can promote rehabilitation instead of just punishment, ultimately leading to lower recidivism rates. This approach highlights the importance of a comprehensive view of criminal behavior, one that acknowledges the complexity of human psychology and the multifaceted nature of violence.

Conclusion

Examining heinous crimes in India from 1995 to 2023 through a psychological perspective shows that many of these violent acts stem from significant mental health issues. The prevalence of psychopathy, sociopathy, narcissism, and other personality disorders among offenders highlights the need to understand the psychological aspects of crime.

By tackling mental health concerns within the criminal justice system and society as a whole, we can foster a more informed strategy for crime prevention and support for those impacted. Mental illness should not be used as a justification for criminal actions; instead, acknowledging its influence can lead to more effective interventions and policies. Continued research into the link between criminal behavior and mental illness is essential for developing preventive strategies and ensuring justice for victims while promoting a safer community for everyone.

