**The Neglected Sides of Criminal Psychology: Reevaluating Victimization**



Criminal psychology primarily focuses on understanding offenders’ minds, motives, and behaviors. While this focus is undoubtedly critical for preventing and investigating crimes, it has raised concerns about neglecting two crucial aspects: the risk of victimization and the adverse effects experienced by victims. This essay aims to disparagingly examine the legitimacy of this claim by exploring the historical development of criminal psychology, its current practices, and the consequences of overlooking victimization. This essay advocates for a more balanced and comprehensive approach to criminal psychology by highlighting the importance of including victims in research and policy formulation.

**Historical Perspective on Criminal Psychology**

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The roots of criminal psychology can be traced back to the early 20th century when scholars like Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung delved into understanding the psychological aspects of criminal behavior. In its initial stages, the focus was mainly on the offenders, attempting to unravel the reasons behind their actions and providing insights into their mental state. This narrow concentration on offenders might have contributed to the neglect of victim-related considerations.

**Contemporary Practices in Criminal Psychology**

In contemporary criminal psychology, the field has evolved to include various sub-disciplines, such as forensic psychology and criminal profiling, aimed at aiding law enforcement and the justice system. While these developments have yielded valuable insights into offender behaviors, the question remains: have they adequately addressed the risks faced by potential victims and the consequences experienced by actual victims?

**Neglect of the Risk of Victimization**

One of the primary criticisms against criminal psychology is its failure to pay attention to the risk of victimization. Understanding the factors contributing to victimization, such as environmental, societal, and situational factors, is crucial for developing effective crime prevention strategies. By neglecting this aspect, criminal psychology may inadvertently perpetuate a reactive rather than a proactive approach, leaving potential victims vulnerable to harm.

**Neglect of the Negative Effects of Victimization**

Another significant concern is overlooking the adverse effects experienced by victims of crime. Victimization can have profound and long-lasting impacts on individuals, affecting their mental and physical well-being and social and economic status. By not fully comprehending the consequences of victimization, criminal psychology risks underestimating the importance of victim support and rehabilitation in the broader criminal justice system.

**The Offender-Centric Approach and Its Consequences**

The heavy focus on offenders in criminal psychology research and practice may lead to a distorted view of the criminal justice system. An offender-centric approach can inadvertently reinforce the stigma and blame placed on victims, potentially hindering their recovery and reintegration into society. Moreover, overlooking the victim's perspective may impede the pursuit of justice and the provision of appropriate restitution for the harm they have endured.

**A Holistic Approach: Integrating Victimization Research**

To address the earlier concerns, criminal psychology must adopt a more holistic approach integrating victimization research into its core principles. By understanding the risk factors associated with victimization, researchers and practitioners can identify high-risk populations and develop preventive measures tailored to their needs. Moreover, recognizing the adverse effects of victimization can inform the creation of victim support programs that promote recovery, resilience, and empowerment.

**Victim-Oriented Policies in Criminal Psychology**

Promoting victim-oriented policies within criminal psychology requires collaboration between academia, law enforcement, and policymakers. Researchers must prioritize victim-related studies, and their findings should inform policy decisions. Police and legal professionals must receive training emphasizing the importance of victim empathy and sensitivity during investigations and court proceedings.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, the claim that criminal psychology neglects the risk of victimization and the adverse effects of victimization holds merit. While understanding offenders is essential for addressing and preventing crime, it should not overshadow the needs and experiences of victims. A balanced and comprehensive approach integrating victimization research into the core principles of criminal psychology is necessary to promote a fair and effective criminal justice system. By doing so, we can better protect potential victims, support those who have suffered harm, and work towards a more just and compassionate society.

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