The Sociological Significations of the Criminal: From Classical Theoretical Framing to the Changing Social Reality – A Theoretical Approach

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Abstract

The paper focuses on traditional theoretical frameworks in sociology that have addressed the concept of the offender. This exploration seeks to answer a central question: Do classical theoretical frameworks remain capable of providing explanations of offenders that reflect their shifting social reality? The study concludes by emphasizing on the necessity of adopting a comprehensive approach to understand the offender—one that connects various social and psychological factors, especially in light of the technological and technical changes

Keywords: Theoretical framework, theory, offender, social reality.

الدلالات السوسيولوجية للمجرم: من الإيواء النظري الكلاسيكي إلى الواقع الاجتماعي المتغير – مقاربة نظرية –

ملخص

يهدف هذا المقال الى قراءة مختلف الدلالات السوسيولوجية للمجرم انطلاقا من النظريات الكلاسيكية، وصولاً إلى كيف تتفاعل تفسيراتها في الحياة الواقعية، بالإضافة الى التركيز على السياقات النظرية التقليدية في علم الاجتماع التي تناولت موضوع المجرم، وذلك بهدف الإجابة على تساؤل أساسي مفاده: هل السياقات النظرية الكلاسيكية لازالت قادرة على تقديم تفسيرات للمجرم تعكس واقعه الاجتماعي المتغير؟ وفي الأخير خلصت هذه الدراسة إلى ضرورة اعتماد مقاربة شاملة لفهم المجرم، وذلك من خلال الربط بين مختلف العوامل الاجتماعية والنفسية المختلفة خصوصا في ظل التغيرات التكنولوجية والتقنية.

الكلمات المفاتيح: إيواء نظري، نظريّة، مجرم، واقع اجتماعي.

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Introduction:

This article, entitled The Sociological Significations of the Criminal: From Classical Theoretical Frameworks to a Changing Social Reality – A Theoretical Approach, addresses the figure of the criminal by examining it through classical theoretical conceptions and the evolving social reality marked by significant transformations in certain aspects.

The category of the criminal is a complex symbolic construct that cannot be reduced solely to criminal behavior. Rather, it extends to social representations and psychological-behavioral projections. Classical theoretical frameworks have varied in their attempts to understand and explain the causes of criminality, especially given that the criminal constructs a social reality distinct from the ordinary life experienced by typical individuals once labeled as such. This label carries cultural, symbolic, and psychological connotations that suggest marginality, insignificance, rejection, neglect, and exclusion, among other traits.

Within this context, various classical theoretical perspectives have emerged as frameworks attempting to explain the criminal or criminal behavior. Since the inception of the sociology of crime and deviance in the nineteenth century—beginning with Lombroso's biological theories and extending to labeling theory, symbolic interactionism, and behavioral-psychological approaches—numerous ideas have sought to address a central question: Is criminality innate, or does society transform an individual into a criminal?

Amid these attempts to answer that question, this article proposes a theoretical framework based on an analytical approach to several sociological theories of crime and deviance. It traces the transformations this conceptualization has undergone—from classical sociological foundations to an evolving social reality. These changes have led to the emergence of new types of criminals, differing in their motivations and methods from those previously identified. The objective is to answer the following question:

Are classical theoretical frameworks still capable of explaining criminality in a way that reflects its changing social reality?

The Importance of the Study:

The importance of this study lies in its focus on revisiting the narrow classical conceptions that have traditionally confined the notion of the criminal to specific dimensions-such as biological or psychological factors-while overlooking another influential element.

Objectives of the Study:

This oversight is especially critical today, given the transformations in social reality driven by the technological revolution, which has introduced new patterns and forms of criminal behavior. Accordingly, this article aims to accomplish the following objectives:

– To examine the concept of the criminal as articulated in classical theoretical frameworks.

– To provide an operational definition of the concept of theoretical "sheltering," which remains relatively uncommon in social and human sciences research?

– To explore the causes of criminal behavior as presented in various classical sociological theories.

– To outline the relationship between the criminal and the evolving social reality in which they exist.

– To link theory with social reality and to assess the extent to which theoretical models account for empirical data on criminals amid the many transformations affecting various aspects of life.

– To identify points of divergence or convergence between theoretical frameworks of the criminal's image and their real-world manifestations.

1- Conceptual Introduction:

Every scientific research project or study, regardless of its topic or field, fundamentally relies on the construction of concepts. This process is a methodological step toward understanding the subject, resolving ambiguities, and providing a comprehensive depiction of its features. Based on this premise, this section addresses the core concepts around which the current study revolves, beginning with the concept of theoretical sheltering.

1-1- Definition of Theoretical Sheltering:

It is important to note at the outset that the term theoretical sheltering is not commonly used or well-established in social science literature. Therefore, it can be said that no specific academic definition exists. However, certain semantic indicators can help clarify its meaning and support the development of an operational definition consistent with the focus of this article. We begin by examining the linguistic meaning:

– Linguistic Meaning of Sheltering: The term derives from the verb to shelter, which means to take someone in, to embrace, or to provide a safe and secure place[1]. It also signifies seeking refuge or turning to a place for protection. From this linguistic perspective, sheltering implies containment, returning to a particular source, or seeking support.

– Theoretical Meaning of Sheltering: Within a theoretical framework, the concept of sheltering is foundational to symbolic interactionism. This perspective discusses the notion of self-sheltering, which refers to the process by which the self is normalized through the internalization of dominant symbols and meanings prevalent in society. In other words, the self—or aspects of it—is shaped through the selves, memories, and imaginations of others. This mechanism allows for a kind of alignment or harmony between the individual's self and the selves of others[2].

From this theoretical perspective, self-sheltering implies that an individual adopts others' selves as a reference point in constructing or understanding their own self—essentially relying on others' identities.

1-2- Definition of Theory:

Theory consists of a set of interrelated terms, definitions, and assumptions that collectively propose an organized view of a phenomenon, aiming to explain or predict its manifestations[3].

Therefore, theory can be understood as the conceptual framework through which a researcher explains and interprets various subjects and phenomena observed in reality.

1.3 On the Meaning of the Concept of Theoretical Framework

Due to the difficulty of establishing a clear and precise academic definition of the concept of theoretical framework, it is useful to draw on the above connotations to propose an operational definition tailored to the context of this article, as follows:

– Operational Definition of Theoretical Framework: Based on the preceding discussion, the theoretical framework can be defined as the foundational theoretical background or reference that a researcher adopts, relies on, or draws from in order to develop a theoretical approach. This approach emerges from existing theoretical contexts to understand and explain a specific phenomenon or subject. Given that the subject of this paper is the offender, the theoretical framework in this case comprises theories of crime or criminal behavior.

1.4 The Offender:

Several definitions of the offender have been proposed by sociologists. Within this context, the following are notable:

– Émile Durkheim's Definition: Durkheim defines the offender as an individual who violates the collective rules and norms of society. He states: "We do not condemn the act because it is a crime; rather, we consider it a crime because it is condemned by society." Thus, Durkheim's definition emphasizes the importance of social rules and norms as the standard by which an individual's conformity or deviance is measured. One who breaches these norms is regarded as a criminal by society[4].

– Robert Merton's Definition: According to Merton's writings, the offender is an individual who engages in deviant behavior as a result of the social system's failure to provide legitimate means for achieving culturally prescribed goals such as wealth or success. The offender is not inherently deviant, but socially adaptive through illegitimate means[5].

– This definition suggests that criminality is not inherited; rather, it is the social system's inability to fulfill individual goals that drives one to commit crimes. The individual seeks to adapt to society, even if it means resorting to illegitimate methods; thus, becoming a criminal.

–Definition of Lombroso: Lombroso is considered one of the most prominent Italian scholars who founded the positivist school of criminology. Within this framework, he defined the criminal based on a biological theoretical background, which assumes that the criminal is inherently born as such. He defines the criminal as follows:

The criminal is an individual possessing primitive traits that render him closer to wild animals or early humans, thereby driving him to commit crimes naturally, without influence from social or moral factors[6].

From Lombroso's definition, it is understood that the criminal is born with innate predispositions and specific biological characteristics that are the primary causes of criminal behavior while other factors play no significant role.

1-5- Social Reality:

Social reality refers to the relationships among individuals within a society, who collectively constitute social phenomena as well as the surrounding geography and all factors influencing these phenomena[7].

From a Marxist perspective, social reality is defined as social existence, shaped by the relations and forces of production. The material aspect, or what Marxists refer to as the infrastructure, includes physical elements such as buildings, roads, and transportation. The second aspect, known as the superstructure, consists of ideas, beliefs, and ideology[8].

2- Classical Theoretical Contexts in Interpreting the Image of the Criminal:

Theoretical conceptions generally serve as a foundation upon which research builds to understand and explain various phenomena. Within this framework, the focus here is on a set of classical conceptions and perspectives that form a theoretical shelter through which the condition or image of the criminal is understood and interpreted. The following section presents an overview of several of these theoretical contexts.

2-1- Labeling Theory:

The origins of this theory trace back to Frank Tannenbaum (December 4, 1893 – June 1, 1969), who conceptualized criminal behavior as a stigma applied to individuals who violate the laws and norms established by society. In this context, Tannenbaum emphasized that the formation of a criminal identity results largely from how others treat the individual, accompanied by interactive processes of mutual influence and response. This dynamic ultimately reinforces perceptions of guilt and evil—often exaggerated—through a process in which the community attaches labels, tags, and definitions to the individual's identity.

According to Tannenbaum, the labeling process serves group interests by helping consolidate collective resentment toward the individual while also fostering internal resentment within the stigmatized person[9].

Building on this foundation, Edwin Lemert, a prominent figure in labeling theory, distinguished between primary and secondary deviance. Primary deviance refers to acts or behaviors that violate norms but do not lead to labeling, whereas secondary deviance plays a critical role in the imposition and internalization of the stigma[10].

A significant contribution to labeling theory was made by Erving Goffman in his book Stigma, where he argued that crime functions as a means of defining an individual's social status or position. Goffman further explained that a criminal is an individual who bears a social stigma that excludes them from social acceptance. He added that stigma attaches a sense of shame to the labeled person, which becomes a decisive factor prompting others to distance themselves from the stigmatized individual[11].

Based on the foregoing, it can be concluded that the core principles of labeling theory include the following:

− The labeling of an individual as a criminal may be either accurate or inaccurate; however, once society forms this perception and attaches the criminal label to an individual, the stigma tends to persist in the collective consciousness over time and may prove irreversible.

− Social stigmatization of an individual as a criminal may lead them to internalize this identity, even in the absence of a formal conviction. The individual's self-perception is

significantly influenced by societal views; notably, labeling an individual as a criminal can lower their self-esteem and cause psychological harm, potentially motivating further criminal behavior against society.

– According to labeling theory, crimes are categorized into two types: primary crimes, which are actual offenses committed by the individual—such as murder, theft, and fraud—and secondary crimes, which arise as a consequence of the negative societal perception attached to the individual, often following a prior stigmatizing event or offense.

– The causes of criminal behavior and deviance, according to labeling theory, are not solely linked to the offender or their objective circumstances, but also critically involve society's labeling of the individual as a criminal. This stigma, in turn, pushes the individual toward further delinquency and criminality[12].

2-2- Symbolic Interactionism Theory:

Symbolic interactionism developed primarily at the University of Chicago during the interwar period, with social psychologist George Herbert Mead recognized as one of its founders. Mead's analysis of society focused on the stages of self-development, identifying the initial phase as the play stage and the subsequent phase as the game stage[13].

Broadly, adherents of this theoretical framework interpret social phenomena by moving from the internal perspective of the self to its external interactions. They emphasize that society is constructed by individuals through shared meanings and symbols, which facilitate communication through language, gestures, signals, and other forms of symbolism. Proponents fully accept that society shapes and moulds individuals; nevertheless, they also argue that individuals retain ongoing opportunities for creative agency—a concept especially emphasized by Isaac William Thomas, an early advocate of symbolic interactionism[14].

Building on this, the symbolic interactionism approach views social systems as inseparable from the individuals who create and sustain them. These systems—including family, school, peer groups, and others—are understood as the product of on-going social interaction.

Contemporary symbolic interaction theory can also be clarified through metaphors used by its theorists to describe social life. Erving Goffman, for example, likened social interaction to theatrical performance, conceptualizing social life as a staged production. Eric Berne, founder of transactional analysis, entitled one of his key works Games People Play, highlighting the performative nature of interactions. Goffman adopted a dramaturgical model to explain social interaction, proposing that social life, like theater, is a humanly constructed and meaningful reality shaped by individuals[15].

Accordingly, based on the assumptions of symbolic interactionism, the concept of the offender can be understood by focusing on the behaviors exhibited by the individual, which are shaped through social interactions with other social actors. In other words, action and reaction arise through the process of social interaction between the offender and other members of society. These behaviors are governed by two factors that generate symbolic meanings within the context of daily interactions: the first is the self, and the second is the socio-cultural environment in which the interaction occurs. The social and psychological environments, in which the individual lives, constitute the primary determinant of behavior.

Therefore, it can be argued that symbolic interactionism explains the offender through social interaction and the symbolic meanings that individuals and society attribute to behavior, rather than through fixed individual traits or static social structures[16].

On this basis, symbolic interactionism, through its various analyses, is among the most effective theories for interpreting the image of the offender within the society in which they exist. The offender carries new ideas, symbols, and meanings, which interact with other actors who, in turn, hold different perceptions of the offender. These perceptions are expressed in various forms through daily interactions.

Consequently, a set of foundational principles underpinning this theory can be identified as follows:

– Social interaction occurs between individuals occupying specific social roles.

– Upon completion of an interaction, participants form symbolic mental images of those they interacted with. These images reflect a superficial, impressionistic perception that one person holds of another at a given moment.

– Once an impression of an individual is formed, it tends to become fixed upon merely seeing or hearing about them, because the individual is regarded as a symbol—and it is this symbol that determines the nature of the interaction. Such impressions may be either positive or negative.

– When a symbolic image of a particular person is formed, it is quickly communicated by the person who formed it to others, who then adopt these images—whether positive or negative—based on the impression rather than the actual reality or motivations of the person in question.

– When a person forms a specific symbolic impression, it tends to be rigid and resistant to change. The individual who is the subject of the impression eventually becomes aware of it and evaluates themselves accordingly. In other words, a person's self-assessment depends on the symbolic image others have formed of them.

– Whether a person continues to interact with others or s/he withdraws from interaction depends largely on the symbolic image others hold of them; if the image is positive, interaction is likely to continue; whereas, a negative image generally leads to its cessation[17].

2-3- The Biological Theory:

This theory is primarily associated with the Italian scientist Cesare Lombroso, who argued that criminal behavior is innate to human conduct. His research, conducted in a military context, aimed to identify the causes that drive individuals to criminality. He focused his observations on certain deviant soldiers and their physical features in an effort to identify common traits among them and compare these to those of non-deviant individuals.

In this context, Lombroso categorized the subjects of his study into three distinct groups:

– Category One: This group included a professional thief named "Villar," noted for his extraordinary agility and tendency toward mockery and sarcasm. Upon his death, an autopsy revealed a cavity at the back of his skull resembling that found in primates. Based on this observation, Lombroso concluded that the criminal is a primitive being whose traits are biologically inherited.

– Category Two: This group consisted of the dangerous criminal "Francis," who brutally murdered twenty women and reportedly drank their blood before burial. From this case, Lombroso inferred that the individual had a primitive physical constitution, exhibiting traits akin to the ferocity of predatory animals.

– Category Three: In 1884, Lombroso studied the case of a soldier named "Masdia," who suffered from epilepsy. After an incident in his native Calabria, during which he rebelled and killed eight of his superiors and colleagues, he lost consciousness for twelve hours and had no memory of the event upon awakening. Lombroso concluded that this case combined traits of a wild, mature animal and that hereditary epilepsy contributed to the commission of the crime[18].

Following these observations, Lombroso distinguished five types of criminals as follows:

– The Born Criminal: Characterized by congenital physical traits such as deformities in the limbs and eyes, a narrow skull, and other external features noted earlier. Psychologically and mentally, this type exhibits a reduced or absent pain sensation, a violent temperament, arrogance, impulsivity, recklessness, indifference, laziness, disrespect toward women, and a persistent sense of psychological and emotional instability.

– The Insane Criminal: In this type, insanity is the primary cause of criminal behavior.

– The Criminal by Habit: In this case, Lombroso introduces environmental factors as causes of criminality, where the individual becomes habituated to crime.

– The Occasional Criminal: This type lacks a clear predisposition toward criminal behavior and commits crimes due to external influences they cannot adequately assess. This category is considered more amenable to rehabilitation.

– The Criminal by Passion: This person commits crimes driven by intense emotions such as jealousy, envy, or love, and is unable to control these overwhelming feelings[19].

Based on the above, several foundational premises of the biological theory can be identified:

– The theory assumes that the body—including physiological and chemical factors and processes—is a key determinant of criminal behavior.

– The biological theory recognizes the importance of heredity, acknowledging the genetic factor as playing a major role in shaping the individual.

From this, it can be inferred that this theoretical approach aims to explain criminal behavior by linking it to the individual's biological makeup. Specifically, it involves the concept of inherited criminal tendencies, which Cesare Lombroso called the "born criminal." According to Lombroso, the criminal is born with a natural tendency toward crime, resembling a primitive and savage human being marked by degenerate traits. Criminal behavior is; thus, seen as a regression to an earlier, primitive state. In addition, criminality may result from the individual's physiological makeup—such as brain abnormalities, glandular imbalances, or nervous system disorders—that predispose the person to crime. This biological predisposition may lead to criminal acts if combined with suitable environmental conditions[20].

2-4- Psychoanalytic Theory:

Alongside biological studies, psychologists and psychoanalysts began focusing on criminals, emphasizing understanding and treatment. One of the key figures in this approach was the Austrian neurologist and psychologist Sigmund Freud, who developed psychoanalytic theory. Freud argued that an individual's personality is shaped not mainly by heredity or physical constitution, but also by psychological factors experienced during childhood. These factors emerge from specific family relationships and mutual behaviors. The effects of these early experiences become embedded in the personality and memory, deeply rooted in emotional life, and forms an unconscious reality that influences later behavior.

In other words, if a person's childhood was harsh and full of difficulties and family conflicts, it can negatively affect later stages of life. Such early hardships may cause social or psychological deficiencies that lead to feelings of sadness and resentment. These emotions often produce painful and disturbing thoughts, which are eventually repressed into the unconscious mind. This repression can result in an inferiority complex. Several factors contribute to this complex, especially the family as the main environment for upbringing. If a person senses a change in how their family treats them, this may trigger deviant or criminal behavior as a reaction to that treatment[21].

It is important to note that Freud was not a criminologist and did not specifically focus on crime; however, his followers applied his theory to explain criminal behavior and deviance. The main components of Freud's theory can be summarized as follows:

Personality consists of three parts: the id, the ego, and the superego. The id is responsible for instinctual drives and desires, seeking immediate pleasure without distinguishing between reality and fantasy. It is sometimes called the primitive or undeveloped part of the personality. The ego follows the id and represents the reality principle, acting as a mediator or judge. It distinguishes between reality and fantasy and restrains the impulses of the id. It is responsible for delaying gratification, especially in children, to prevent deviant behavior. The superego develops from the ego and is understood as the internalized values and norms learned during childhood. It governs feelings such as remorse, shame, and guilt[22].

Proponents of this theory argue that criminal behavior is learned through various behavioral learning mechanisms, mainly through positive and negative reinforcement. Key factors include:

– The need for sexual and narcissistic gratification, often resulting from disturbances in social relationships.

– The need to assert and confirm the self.

– Internal conflict between primal desires and the superego, leading to psychological distress.

Thus, examining the assumptions of behavioral theory in relation to crime shows that the theory focuses on psychological factors. Applied to the offender, this suggests the individual may suffer from psychological difficulties rooted in socialization experiences. These early experiences may have created complexes or psychological trauma due to parental rejection (by one or both parents), neglect, exposure to violence, or exclusion by family or community. Such conditions may cause the person to feel unwanted and alienated from society, which can motivate criminal behavior[23].

2-5- The Criminal—Between Classical Theoretical Conceptions and Changing Social Reality:

Building on the previous discussion of classical theoretical frameworks that addressed the figure of the criminal—such as biological theory, symbolic interactionism, labeling theory, and psychological-behavioral approaches—each attempt to explain criminality based on specific assumptions and premises. This section examines the actual social reality of this group.

In this context, it can be argued that despite the variety and differences in theoretical explanations of criminal behavior through specific hypotheses and concepts, a clearer picture appears when moving from classical theory to real-world conditions. Many of these explanations tend to align with certain traditional theoretical models and are reinforced by institutional and social forces that place the criminal into fixed stereotypes. These stereotypes are often promoted by the media, which produces a social discourse that divides society into two main groups:

–   Law-abiding citizens, the innocent victims of crime, typically represented as "us";
–   Criminals, the dangerous and lawless others, labeled as "them."

To elaborate further, the media plays a major role in shaping and spreading the image of the criminal. This portrayal often aligns with several of the previously mentioned theoretical explanations. For example, in relation to Lombroso's biological theory, films, TV dramas, and even animated shows for children often depict criminals as having large physiques and aggressive facial features, labeling characters as criminals without any legal conviction. This labeling is not based on legal judgment but on biological traits or social interactions that create an initial impression of suspicion and distrust. As a result, the individual is socially marked as a criminal, consistent with symbolic interactionism, which highlights the importance of social interaction and first impressions.

In addition, many media representations place criminal behavior in a social context of poverty, hardship, and unemployment. As Robert Merton suggested, such conditions may lead individuals to commit crimes like theft as a way to achieve wealth and success, and thus, adapt to their social environment.

This analysis shows the on-going interaction between classical theoretical interpretations and changing social realities in shaping how the criminal is understood today.

Without ignoring the media's tendency to justify the criminal as a victim of psychological conditions—such as trauma or complexes—various examples illustrate this. For instance, a man who hates women may be portrayed as someone who, as a child, discovered his mother's infidelity, or the reverse. A well-known example is the 2019 film Joker, which clearly shows how psychological factors can lead a person to criminal behavior and violence. Many such examples exist in this context.

In terms of punitive policies, reality shows that strict laws and penalties are not applied equally across society. Vulnerable and marginalized groups—such as the poor, the unemployed, people with limited education or social support, and residents of neglected or outlying areas—are often subjected to harsher punishments. This reflects a social explanation of crime based on structural inequality.

The issue also includes how society views the criminal. Although legal principles state that a person is innocent until proven guilty, reality often contradicts this. Mere suspicion can lead to someone being treated as a criminal, labeled with harmful terms, and seen as a security

threat requiring legal action, imprisonment, and punishment. The usual result is social stigmatization, which leads to marginalization, exclusion, and isolation. This situation may even push innocent individuals to commit crimes—an idea emphasized by supporters of labeling theory and symbolic interactionism. As a result, instead of helping these individuals escape the cycle of crime, society may unintentionally push them further into it.

Nonetheless, while classical theoretical frameworks offer explanations that partly reflect criminal reality, it must also be acknowledged that recent social changes—driven by the technological revolution, the rise of social media, and the spread of artificial intelligence technologies into many areas of daily life—have changed many practices and concepts, including how we understand the criminal and criminal behavior.

Based on this, it is argued that classical theories in criminology and sociology are no longer enough to fully explain current realities. Modern technology, with its various tools and methods, has created a new type of interaction—virtual interaction—which has led to new forms of crime that did not exist before. For example, cybercrime has become part of daily life, with offenders using the internet to steal data, impersonate others, and carry out extortion. Even users of artificial intelligence can commit illegal acts using these technologies. As a result, the concept of the criminal today differs greatly from its earlier understanding, as do the motives behind criminal behavior. The criminal is no longer only someone who confronts others directly with weapons or who robs homes, shops, or banks. Instead, the figure of the "digital criminal" or "AI-driven criminal" has appeared, with motives, tools, and methods that differ significantly from the traditional criminal described by classical theories.

Today, crimes can be committed remotely—such as hacking into bank accounts from one's home—and some offenses occur without the offender being physically present. These are known as cybercrimes, where a single click can cause significant physical and material damage. The Beirut Port explosions by the end of 2024 show the destructive potential of such modern crimes.

These new developments have added complexity to understanding and explaining criminal behavior, making it necessary to develop new theoretical frameworks that match rapidly changing social realities.

3- Conclusion:

In conclusion, this article has reviewed a range of classical theoretical perspectives on how the criminal is conceptualized and understood, and the extent to which these theories explain criminal behavior within a changing reality.

These perspectives present a wide range of ideas and assumptions. While most focus on the causes that lead individuals to commit crimes—turning them from ordinary people into criminals—such as Lombroso's biological theory or approaches based on psychological, behavioral, or social factors, this variety reflects the complexity of the issue.

At the end, it can be said that no single factor alone determines criminal behavior. Instead, a set of diverse and connected factors contributes to criminality, especially given technological and scientific developments that have changed the patterns, causes, and methods of crime.

Therefore, the ability to understand and integrate these ongoing changes in social reality requires the development of theoretical frameworks that keep up with such transformations. This also requires interdisciplinary studies that connect technical, social, humanistic, and cultural fields. In the twenty-first century, crime has taken on forms not seen before—not only in causes and motives, but also in tools and methods. As a result, understanding and interpreting crime demands new broader approaches to grasp the changing concept of the criminal and the shifts in their behavior and profile. This includes producing new concepts that can account for changes in social reality while also recognizing the on-going relevance of classical theoretical perspectives that have historically helped explain criminal behavior. Such

an integrated approach supports developing effective solutions focused on prevention and social reintegration, rather than relying only on punishment.

3-1- Recommendations of the Study:

Based on the discussion above, the following recommendations are proposed:

– It is important not to rely solely on classical theories when explaining and understanding criminal behavior.

– New concepts of the criminal and criminal behavior should be developed to reflect recent technological changes that have introduced new types of crimes and offenders as well as tools and methods that did not exist before (e.g., cybercrime, symbolic violence, and social media-related offenses).

– Broad approaches should be adopted that take into account social, psychological, and technological aspects in order to reach a complete understanding of the criminal.

– Curricula in fields that study crime and deviance should be updated to reflect on-going changes in different areas of social reality.

– International and local conferences and symposiums should be held to discuss topics related to the criminal from interdisciplinary perspectives by providing recommendations that support the creation of scientifically based programmes and broader approaches to reduce criminal behaviour. This helps the offenders' reintegration into the society as productive members, mainly by helping them to prevent repeating offenses.

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