

SUBJECT	FORENSIC SCIENCE
Paper No. and Title	PAPER No.2: Criminology and Law
Module No. and Title	MODULE No.10: Blue Collar Crimes
Module Tag	FSC_P2_M10

Principal Investigator	Co-Principal Investigator	Co- Principal Investigator (Technical)
Dr. A.K. Gupta Professor and Head Department of Forensic Science Sam Higginbottom Institute of Agriculture, Technology & Sciences SHIATS, Allahabad	Dr. G.S. Sodhi Associate Professor Forensic Science Unit Department of Chemistry SGTB Khalsa College University of Delhi	Dr. (Mrs.) Vimal Rarh Deputy Director, Centre for e-Learning and Assistant Professor, Department of Chemistry, SGTB Khalsa College, University of Delhi <i>Specialised in : e-Learning and Educational Technologies</i>
Paper Coordinator	Author	Reviewer
Prof. V.K. Srivastava Head of the Department Department of Anthropology University of Delhi	Ms. Deepika Bhandari Assistant Professor & Head Department of Forensic Science Institute of Forensic Science Mumbai Mr. Moinuddin Mondal Director (Technical) Royal Forensic Services, Delhi	Prof. V.K. Srivastava Head of the Department Department of Anthropology University of Delhi
Anchor Institute : SGTB Khalsa College, University of Delhi		

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Learning Outcomes
2. Introduction
3. General types of Blue Collar Crimes
4. Divergence from White Collar Crimes
5. Causing Factors of Blue Collar Crimes
6. Repercussions of Blue Collar Crimes
7. Summary

1. Learning Outcomes

After studying this module, you shall be able to know about-

- The significance of Blue Collar Crimes
- Their instigating factors of Blue Collar Crimes
- Current trends of Blue Collar Crimes

2. Introduction

Speculative endeavours to elucidate contribution to illegitimate activities often have been directed by the presumption that since crime is an unexpected behaviour, its sources must be tracked in aberrant factors and circumstances determining behaviour. Criminal behavior has conventionally been associated to a delinquent's apparently unique impetus, which in turn has been recognized to a distinctive inner structure such as deviation from physiological and mental health, spiritual degeneration, to the impact of exceptional social or family circumstances like political and social incongruities, conflict conditions, trouble in family life, or to both. The offender could be from any class of society. He may be from gentry or labour class. The crimes which are committed by people of lower social strata are called blue collar crimes. This is in distinction to white-collar crime, which refers to crime that is generally committed by people from higher social strata. The expression 'blue collar' was coined in the 1920s to refer to American workers who carry out physical labour jobs. These jobs were untidy, so the workers would dress in dark outfit in order to minimize the appearance of stains. Many also dress in outfits (or shirts) that were usually blue, hence the term 'blue collar.' Blue-collar workers include gatekeepers, construction workers, mill workers, and production employees.

Most blue-collar workers are paid a low hourly remuneration, though the wage varies significantly depending upon the particular occupation and the worker's level of skill. In contradistinction, the white collar workers usually are well paid and their jobs do not include manual labor. Generally, the white collar workers work in an office environment and that's the reason why these workers are able to wear 'white collars' without fear of getting them dirty. Business managers, lawyers, doctors and accountants come under the category of white collar workers. The blue-collar crime is not a proper legal classification of crime. It's a casual expression that is employed to represent various specific types of crimes. The crimes committed by people of lower social strata are the blue-collar crimes, such as blue-collar workers. Generally, the blue collar workers do not have easy access to the resources that are available to white-collar workers and hence they tend to commit crimes which are instantaneous and personal in nature, for example robbery, rather than committing crimes which requires proper planning. Rather, it's just that the people who commit the majority of these crimes are from a lower social class.

3. General types of Blue Collar Crimes

3.1 Crimes against Person

Crime against person means any crime which is committed against an individual or society. Basically, any crime which is against an individual is obviously a crime against the society. This is the basic concept of the penal functioning of the public administration. Crime against a person may involve violence or the intimidation of violence against others, violence including homicide, robbery, rape, causing grave and conventional injuries and aggravated assaults, etc.

3.2 Crimes against Property

Crimes against property involve theft of goods belonging to others, including burglary, theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson, etc. The common type of crimes related to property is house breaking. It is most frequently observed to be committed by individuals of the lower class. Often it has been seen that persons working as domestic helpers, rag pickers, hawkers, etc., are involved in the collusion of any such activity.

3.3 Victimless Crime

This category involves violation of laws in which there are no readily apparent victims, a contradiction, including prostitution, gambling and drug abuse. It has been often observed that persons of lower classes of society, due to lack of education and awareness, indulge in drug trafficking in order to earn which in turn becomes an unescapable habit for them. Similarly, girls may be victimized for the purpose of human trafficking and prostitution. This either may be due to their own necessity of money or may be due to any compelling element.

3.4 Juvenile Delinquency

The term juvenile delinquency denotes the criminal activities which are performed by juveniles. Specific procedures have been prescribed by various legal systems so as to deal with juveniles involved in criminal acts, for example the juvenile detention centres. Different theories are there related to the various causes of crime and many of these can also be applied to the causes of youth crime. Greater media attention is needed towards the youth crime which is also a facet of crime.

4. Divergence from White Collar Crimes

Blue collar is a popular expression applied to positions involving significant amounts of manual labor. This specific terminology is applied to positions having low wages and low levels of skill, although not every blue collar position matches that description. As such, most people term the criminal activities comprising significant amounts of manual labour that are committed by indigent defendants as “blue collar crime.” Its various types comprise violent crimes including murder, burglary, assault and robbery and also a number of crimes related to property. For the most part, blue collar crime is categorized by high risks and low rewards. Sentencing for blue collar crimes hinges upon the specific offense charged and what occurred during its commission. Many blue collar crimes involve confronting the victim directly; crimes such as murder, aggravated assault, and robbery necessarily require the offender to encounter the victim.

Even crimes committed by defendants who are actively looking to avoid a confrontation with the victim, such as burglars, still entail a risk of a confrontation. A burglary can easily turn into a robbery. As such, the penalties for blue collar crime tend to be more severe than other types of crime. Sentences are longer, perpetrators are incarcerated in higher security institutions, and probation or parole can be more difficult to obtain. In contrast to the blue collar crimes, white-collar crimes are defined as moral or ethical violations following ideals integral within principles of what is known as natural law. Natural law emphasizes on behaviors or activities that are defined as wrong because they infringe the ethical principles of a particular culture, subculture, or group. The immoral nature of the activities is seen as the foundation for defining certain types of white-collar activities as criminal. Specifically, some experts have a preference to define white-collar crime as violations of criminal law. From this outline, white collar crimes are criminally illegal behavior committed by upper class individuals during the course of their occupation. From a coordination standpoint, those functioning in the criminal justice system would likely define white-collar crime as criminally illegal behavior.

5. Causing Factors of Blue Collar Crimes

In criminology, blue-collar crime is any crime committed by an individual from a lower social class as opposed to white-collar crime which is associated with crime committed by individuals of a higher social class. These are easier to detect, people are more afraid of these crimes. Blue collar crimes are more sensational and thereby put more pressure on police due to fear. The issue before the experts is to determine the causes of blue collar crimes. However, some of the identified reasons may be:

5.1 Lack of Education

The purpose of education is not merely to educate individual, but also to produce the ethical and social aptitude which is necessary for the development of a nation. The concept of education is to incorporate the moral values in individuals. Lack of education may lead to a situation where the individuals are unable to differentiate between the ethically correct and wrong activities.

The relation between education and crime may be however more complicated, since it depends in large measure on the way education affects the relative opportunities available to offenders in different illegitimate activities. Offenders committing crimes against property would have a tendency to enter into criminal activity at a relatively young age, fundamentally because lack of schooling and legitimate training are not important obstacles to such activities and because legitimate earning opportunities available to young age groups may generally fall short of their potential illegitimate remunerations.

5.2 Lack of Social Awareness

It has been a matter of debate among the scholars that lack of education is not an influencing factor for the instigation of crimes but it is the lack of social awareness. There are a large number of people who are not literate in a formal way but cultured enough to refrain themselves from any such immoral activity. Lack of social awareness may also be a cause behind an illegal activity. Moral education cannot be operative in an economically weak society. Consequently, additional research is necessary, using a more multifarious model of crime and control to include variables such as opportunities or reasons comparative to a nation's standard of living, would-be punishment, chances of being caught, law enforcement exertions and expenses on larceny and property crime relative to other crimes, bulk of the country's criminal population, education levels, and other socio-economic factors.

5.3 Lack of Employment

For an individual, employment is an inevitable necessity for his survival. Lack of employment can make an individual exasperated to indulge in immoral activity. The main reason is to earn anyhow to fulfill the daily requirements. Due to uncontrollable population problem, it is not feasible to provide employment to each and every person and most of the individuals remain unemployed. The unemployment may prompt the cause of blue collar crimes. The connection between unemployment and crime is unpredictable. Nevertheless, appropriately directed research on young males, particularly those from underprivileged groups, which contemplate both the significance and extent of unemployment, has yet to be done.

The implication of unemployment will fluctuate depending on its extent, social valuations of culpability, previous familiarity of steady employment, discernment of impending prospects, comparison with other groups, etc. Therefore, there is likely to be a contributory correlation between relative deficit and crime, predominantly where unemployment is supposed as unwarranted and despairing by comparison with the other groups.

5.4 Lack of Basic Amenities

Food, shelter, hygiene, education, etc., are the basic amenities required for an individual and the lack of such facilities may psychologically bring about the causing factors for blue collar crimes. They may not be the directly influencing factors but the secondary factors are mostly responsible for blue collar crimes. “It is vital for citizens to receive the services they need at minimum cost to the individuals. An administration should be capable to handle statistics quickly and proficiently, be it monitoring project status or reaching out to the people. Today billions of people, nearly half of the World’s population lives in cities. According to a survey, one-third of them are slum dwellers. Moreover, four out of ten inhabitants in the developing world are living in informal shelters. They experience manifold deprivations not only houses unfit for habitation but also lack of adequate food, education health and basic services.

5.5 Deprivation of executive initiatives

It is the duty and responsibility of the respective government and public administration to check and resolve the problems faced by the citizens and also to hold such initiatives which are necessary for the development of the poor class of society. Lack of initiatives and programs for the development may be an indirect factor for initiating blue collar crimes.

6. Repercussions of Blue Collar Crimes

Every potential criminal is limited in the prospect of committing crime by the situation he or she occupies in society. If the individual is employed in a low or unskilled job and lives in an inner-city environment, pilfering inventory from the workplace may not produce value and not many neighbours may have valuable property to steal. This has significance both for the types of crime likely to be committed and for law enforcement. Because there are fewer opportunities to use skill, more blue collar crime may involve the use of force and, because more people are injured, there is a greater chance that the victim will report the crime. In contrast, in cases of white-collar crime it shades into corporate crime and there is less chance that any crime will be reported. The most common forms of predatory crimes are rape, robbery, assault, burglary, misappropriation, and auto theft which occur most frequently in urban streets. Racial minority citizens account for a disproportionately high number of the arrests for street crimes. The types of crime committed are a function of the opportunities available to the potential offender. Thus, those employed in relatively unskilled environments and living in inner city areas have fewer situations to exploit than those who work in situations where large financial transactions occur and live in areas where there is relative prosperity. Blue-collar crime tends to be more obvious and attract more active police attention, e.g. for crimes such as vandalism or shoplifting which protect property interests. Whereas white-collar employees can intermingle legitimate and criminal behaviour and be less obvious when committing the crime. Thus, in case of blue-collar crimes physical force is most often used as compared to the white-collar crimes wherein the identification of the victim is less obvious and the issue of reporting gets complex because of the nature of commercial confidentiality so as to protect the shareholders' value.

7. Summary

- The crimes which are committed by people of lower social strata are called the blue collar crimes. The type of crime committed by the individual is a function of the prospects easily available to the offender.
- In contradistinction, the white collar workers usually are well paid and their jobs do not include manual labor. Generally, the white collar workers work in an office environment and that's the reason why these workers are able to wear 'white collars' without fear of getting them dirty.
- Basically, any crime which is against an individual is obviously a crime against the society and this is the basic concept of the penal functioning of public administration.
- Blue collar is a common expression used for positions which involve substantial amount of manual labor. This term is usually pragmatic for those positions involving low wages and low levels of skill. However, this description does not match with every blue-collar crime.
- Most of the blue collar crimes comprise confronting the victim directly, in crimes for example assault, robbery and murder the offender encounters the victim.
- Blue-collar crime will more often use physical force whereas in the corporate world, the identification of a victim is less obvious and the issue of reporting is complicated by a culture of commercial confidentiality to protect shareholder value.