

Q. Travis Hirshi argued that crime results when an individual's bond to society is weak or broken. Discuss in detail what this theory of social bonding explains about crime.

1. The Social Bond Theory by Travis Hirshi
The social Bond Theory is one of the social control theory. Travis Hirshi in his book "Causes of Delinquance" in 1959, explained the importance of social bond in preventing criminal behaviours.

2. Social Bond as deterrence to crime

The social bondings include family relationships, associations with friends, school groups, community groups etc. These social bondings in a society play an important role in preventing criminal behaviours. People don't commit crime because of the fear of being viewed negatively by social groups. People living in isolation from the society are more prone to commit crimes. The stronger the bond, the less chance for indulgence in the crimes.

3. Forms of social bondings by Travis Hirshi
According to Travis Hirshi, there

are four forms of social bondings

- a) Attachment
- b) Commitment
- c) Belief
- d) Involvement

a) Attachment

It means psychological affection of a person towards others e.g. child has a love and affection for parents.

b) Commitment

It means the value an individual gives to a group. E.g. a person gives value to the terms and conditions of employment due to fear of losing job.

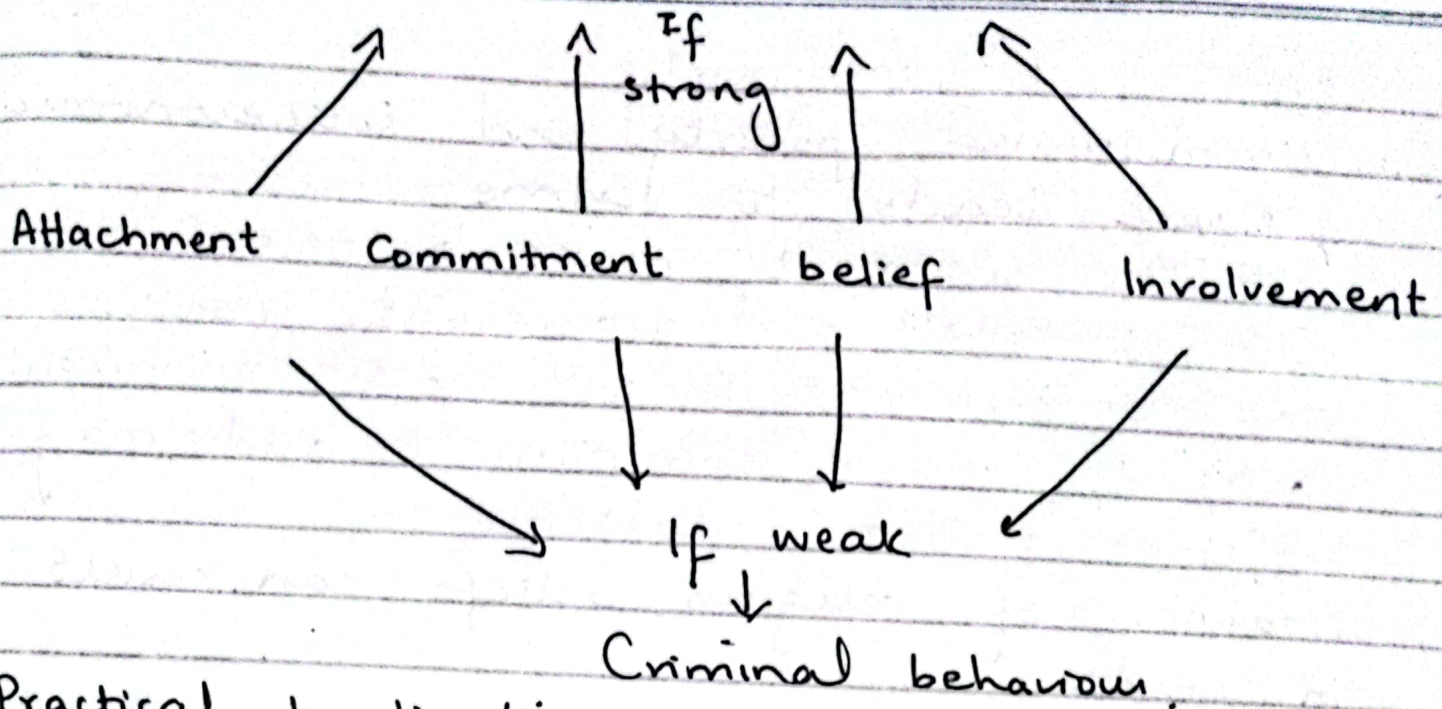
c) Belief

It is the degree of adherence to the value of group to which one is associated. The person having strong religious beliefs is less prone to commit crime.

d) Involvement

It means how much time an individual spend in social groups. A common saying is "Idle hands are the devil's workshop." A person who participate in extracurricular activities is less prone to criminal activities as compared to the one living in isolation.

Conformist
behaviour



Practical Implications of Social bond theory

- ① Children of broken families, dysfunctional rigid parents are more prone to crimes. The children of broken families, dysfunctional and rigid parents are devoid of true affection and love of parents. They ^{try to} find the care and attention outside the home and there is a chance that they may indulge in criminal behaviours.
- ② High rate of crime in communities is a cause of involvement in crimes. According to the social bond theory, involvement in community groups, club, sports activities prevent individual to commit crime. The lack of participation in extracurricular activities can result in bad grouping especially if there is already high rate of

crime in the community

Q3. Unemployed, poverty and socioeconomic pressure leads to crime

Strong commitment make a person career oriented and progressive. Continuous failures, disrespect in job and unemployment leads to loss of commitment and may result in crime indulgence

4. Weakness of religious beliefs can result in crimes

Religion is an important means of deterrence against crimes. Weakness of these beliefs can result in crimes.

Critical Analysis

① According to social learning theory, individual learns from the society or social groups. If parents are criminals, the children become the criminals too. People involved in bad company are more prone to crimes.

② This theory negates the association of biological characteristics and psychological factors with crimes.

③ Even in the presence of strong social bonds, people indulge in crimes.

④ This theory negates the nature approach i.e free will. People commit crimes because they get pleasure in crimes E.g a thief

steals things in order to get money.

Conclusion

Social bonds play an important role in preventing crimes in society. The weak or broken social bonds result in more crimes. We can prevent criminal behaviours by strengthening social relationships and associations i.e. family, friends, extracurricular activities participation and community groups.