

Part - II

[Section - A]

Q. No. 3 Answer,

Social Learning Theory and the Rising Trends of Cyber Harassment in Pakistan

Introduction

The rapid digitalization of society has transformed patterns of human interaction, communication, and deviance. In Pakistan, the exponential growth of social media platforms has been accompanied by a disturbing rise in cyber harassment, particularly targeting women, journalists, students, and public figures. To comprehend this phenomenon beyond legal and technological explanations, criminological theories offer a deeper analytical lens. Social Learning Theory, developed primarily by Albert Bandura and later extended by Ronald Akers, provides a powerful framework to explain how deviant behaviors such as cyber harassment are learned, normalized, and perpetuated within society. This theory emphasizes that criminal

behavior is not innate but acquired through social interaction, observation, and reinforcement, making it highly relevant in understanding cybercrime trends in Pakistan.

Key Ideas of Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory is grounded in the assumption that human behavior is shaped through continuous interaction with the social environment. Unlike biological or purely psychological explanations of crime, this theory integrates behavioral learning with social context. One of its core ideas is observational learning, which suggests that individuals learn behaviors by observing others, particularly those they admire, identify with, or perceive as successful. When individuals witness others engaging in deviant acts without facing consequences, such behaviors are more likely to be imitated.

Another central concept is differential

association, which highlights that individuals are exposed to varying definitions of acceptable and unacceptable behavior depending on their social networks. When a person frequently interacts with peers or online communities that justify harassment, misogyny, or aggression, these definitions gradually become normalized. Closely linked to this is the idea of definitions, referring to personal beliefs and attitudes that either support or condemn deviant behavior. In the context of cyber harassment, definitions that trivialize online abuse as humor or freedom of expression facilitate its continuation.

Differential reinforcement is another key component, emphasizing that behaviors are shaped by rewards and punishments. Actions that receive positive reinforcement such as peer approval, likes, shares, or social recognition are likely to be repeated. Conversely, the absence of punishment

Further strengthens such behavior. Lastly, imitation plays a crucial role, particularly in digital spaces where trends, challenges, and viral content rapidly spread across platforms. Individuals replicate behaviors that appear popular or socially rewarded, even if those behaviors are harmful or criminal.

Cyber Harassment in Pakistan : A Social Learning Perspective

Cyber harassment in Pakistan can be effectively understood through the mechanisms proposed by Social Learning Theory. The digital environment provides an ideal setting for observational learning, where individuals are constantly exposed to abusive language, misogynistic memes, character assassination, and coordinated online attacks. When influential figures, including celebrities, political activists, or social media influencers, engage in or tolerate

online harassment, they inadvertently model such behaviour for their followers.

Differential association is particularly evident in online communities such as Facebook groups, v trends, and messaging forums where abusive discourse is normalized.

Young users, especially males, often become part of digital peer groups that glorify trolling, doxxing, and character shaming. Within these spaces, harassment is framed as entertainment, masculinity, or ideological defense, thereby shaping definitions favorable to cyber aggression.

In Pakistan's patriarchal social structure, deeply rooted gender stereotypes further reinforce definitions that legitimize targeting women who are vocal, independent, or visible in public spaces.

Differential reinforcement operates strongly in cyberspace. Harassers frequently receive instant social rewards in the form of likes, retweets, supportive comments, and

increased online visibility. In politically polarized environments, harassment is often praised as loyalty to a cause, whether religious, political, or ethnic. At the same time, weak enforcement of cybercrime laws and low conviction rates reduce the likelihood of punishment. This imbalance between reward and sanction encourages repetition and escalation of harassment. Imitation also explains the viral nature of cyber harassment in Pakistan. Coordinated online campaigns against journalists, female activists, or minority voices often begin with a few influential accounts and are quickly replicated by thousands of users. The repetition of abusive hashtags, memes, and narratives demonstrates how individuals imitate observed behavior without critically evaluating its legality or moral implications. This process is intensified by algorithm-driven platforms that amplify controversial content, inadvertently reinforcing

deviant learning.

Gendered Dimensions of cyber Harassment

From a gender informed criminological perspective, Social learning Theory also explains why women in Pakistan disproportionately face cyber harassment. cultural norms that police female visibility and expression are transmitted through both offline and online socialization.

Young men learn, through observation and reinforcement, that controlling or silencing women online is socially acceptable and often applauded.

Women themselves may internalize these norms, leading to self censorship, withdrawal from digital spaces, or reluctance to report abuse, thereby indirectly reinforcing the cycle of harassment.

Conclusion

Social Learning Theory offers a comprehensive and content sensitive explanation of cyber harassment trends in Pakistan. By highlighting the roles of observation, social interaction, reinforcement, and imitation, the theory demonstrates that cyber harassment is not merely an individual deviance but a socially learned behavior embedded in cultural norms, peer networks, and digital environments. Understanding cyber harassment through this lens underscores the need for interventions that go beyond legal reforms, focusing instead on reshaping social definitions, promoting responsible digital role models, strengthening accountability mechanisms, and fostering online cultures that condemn rather than reward harassment. Only by disrupting the social learning processes that sustain cyber abuse can Pakistan effectively address this growing criminological challenge.

Section - D

Q.No. 9. Answer:

Terrorism and the Terror Narco Nexus: A Criminological Analysis of Legal and Institutional Failures in Pakistan

Introduction

From a criminological perspective, terrorism is not merely an ideological or security phenomenon; it is a form of organised crime sustained through illicit economic networks. In Pakistan, terrorist violence has increasingly relied on criminal financing, particularly through the terror narco nexus, where narcotics trafficking becomes a primary source of revenue. Despite the existence of anti terrorism and anti narcotics laws, Pakistan's criminal justice system has remained largely ineffective in dismantling the financial proceeds that sustain terrorist organisations. This failure reflects deeper structural, legal,

and enforcement deficiencies that allow criminal economies to merge with terrorism.

Defining Terrorism in criminological Terms

In criminology, terrorism is defined as form of organized, rational, and instrumental violence employed by non state actors to achieve political or ideological objectives through fear and coercion. Unlike conventional crime, terrorism relies on sustained organizational capacity, which necessitates reliable financial resources. Thus, terrorism is inseparable from financial crime, including drug trafficking, money laundering, extortion, and smuggling. In Pakistan, terrorism has evolved into a hybrid crime model where ideological violence is underwritten by profits from the narcotics economy.

The Terror Narco Nexus as an organized crime Structure

Criminological theories of organized crime

explain the terror narco nexus as a mutually reinforcing relationship between criminal enterprises and militant groups.

Narcotics trafficking offers terrorist organisations high profit, low risk funding streams, while militants provide protection, territorial control, and enforcement mechanisms to traffickers. Pakistan's

proximity to Afghanistan's opium producing regions has embedded terrorist groups within transnational drug routes passing through Balochistan and former tribal areas.

From a routine activities and rational choice perspective, terrorists engage in narcotics trafficking because the expected benefits significantly outweigh the perceived risks. Weak border controls, informal economies, and limited surveillance reduce the likelihood of detection, making drug related financing a rational criminal strategy for militant groups.

Legal Inadequacy in Targeting Proceeds of Terrorism

Although Pakistan has enacted laws such as the Anti Terrorism Act, Control of Narcotics Substances Act, and Anti money Laundering Act, these legal instruments remain largely punitive rather than preventive in practice. Criminologically, the failure lies in the inability of the law to effectively follow, freeze, and confiscate criminal proceeds.

Law enforcement agencies primarily focus on arresting foot soldiers or intercepting narcotics consignments, while the financial architects of terror remain untouched.

Asset forfeiture provisions are weakly implemented, and financial investigations are often disconnected from terrorism cases.

This fragmented approach allows terrorist organisations to regenerate even after leadership losses, as their economic base remains intact.

Institutional Weaknesses and Enforcement Gaps

From a criminal justice perspective, institutional incapacity plays a central role in sustaining the terror nexus. Investigative agencies in Pakistan lack specialised financial crime expertise, forensic accounting skills, and inter agency coordination. Intelligence related to narcotics trafficking rarely translates into prosecutable financial cases, leading to low conviction rates. Corruption further exacerbates this problem. Drug proceeds infiltrate law enforcement and local administrative structures, neutralizing deterrence and creating zones of criminal governance. In criminological terms, where illicit economies undermine the rule of law and replace formal authority with coercive power structures.

Criminological Impact on Society and Security

The failure to disrupt terror linked drug

proceeds has profound social consequences. Narco founded terrorism perpetuates cycle of violence, normalizes criminal livelihoods, and embeds terrorism within local economies. According to social disorganization theory, communities exposed to drug trafficking and militant financing experience weakened social controls, increased recruitment into criminal networks, and declining trust in state institutions.

Moreover, the continued flow of illicit funds enables terrorists to exploit socio economic deprivation by offering financial incentives, thereby transforming poverty into a recruitment tool. This demonstrates how legal failure indirectly contributes to the reproduction of terrorism as a social crime.

Conclusion

Terrorism in Pakistan Persists Not

Solely because of ideological extremism, but due to the State's inability to effectively criminalize and dismantle the financial proceeds of the terror narco nexus. While law exists on paper, weak enforcement, institutional fragmentation, corruption, and inadequate financial surveillance have rendered them ineffective. As long as terrorist organisations retain access to narcotics based funding, counterterrorism efforts will remain reactive and temporary. A criminologically informed response requires shifting the focus from kinetic operations to financial disruption, institutional reform, and systematic targeting of criminal proceeds, without which terrorism in Pakistan will continue to regenerate and adapt.
