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Bowling for Columbine

“Bowling for Columbine” is a documentary film by Michael Moore, who wrote, directed, produced, as well as narrated the documentary. It was released in the year 2002 and was based on the Columbine High School massacre which took place in 1999. Moore has not only shed light on the case of the massacre; however, he has also applied the sociological analysis to the problem of gun control, violence, homicide and gun-related crime in the society, while focusing his attention on the sociological factors and not the psychological factors and mental state of the criminals. He has explored the fact that the American society is supporting the gun laws, instead of controlling them, which provides an opportunity to the population to keep the firearms and then use them recklessly to take the life of innocent people. While discussing the specific scene of the Columbine High School massacre, the filmmaker has discussed that National Rifle Association (NRA) is equally responsible for increasing gun-related crime rate in the American society and the government, as well as the public, needs to ponder in which direction the American society is heading. The main focus of the documentary film is the culture of fear and lack of gun control laws and policies, which may be explored with the differential association theory and control theory.

The very first and most important topic of the documentary film, “Bowling for Columbine" is the creation of the culture of fear in American society. The government, the media and other influential sources of the society are equally responsible for creating this fear. They make the public think that they should own the firearms, in order to ensure their security and safety. They are fed with the thoughts that the American constitutional amendment provides them the right to own the guns, and they need to secure themselves first, instead of depending on the law enforcement agencies. The main purpose behind this is to promote the business of firearms production which is a greater industry in the United States of America. Relating the case to the Columbine High School massacre, the filmmaker has presented the point that the two proponents of the attack opted for taking the bowling classes in the school, instead of the physical education class. Bowling is played in order to practice to hit the target, and the choice of the young canals depict that they were more interested in setting their targets rights. The reason behind this is the culture of fear, which makes people think that they have to save themselves by attacking people in front of them. The second topic of the video is the availability of the firearms in the society and mockingly depicts that the banks provide the guns to the general public when they open their account, which is actually ridiculous. The film highlights the fact that the government just condemns the gun-related crimes and does not impose the gun control laws in the society for its own benefits of making money (Moore, Glynn, and Gibbs).

The differential association theory sheds light on the topic of the culture of fear in the way that the individuals learn from the groups of the society. In this case, the media and government authorities are teaching them that they need to keep the firearms in order to ensure their security, which actually promotes the fact that they can use the firearms when they feel danger. Now each and every person has his own definition of danger, which gives rise to the gun-related crimes. On the other hand, the control theory explains the second topic of the documentary film which is the availability of firearms. The control theory suggests that the individual becomes deviant when there is a lack of control in the society and the control agents do not make any effort to change the situations. In the case of documentary, it is highlighting the government is not implementing the gun control laws but only condemn such actions, which is actually providing an opportunity to the public to deviate as there is no control in the society (Downes, Rock, and McLaughlin).

My personal opinion towards the movie is that it has been presented in an impressive and thought-provoking way. The filmmaker has highlighted the fact that other countries of the world have also faced the conditions of war and violence and have allowed the public to keep the firearms, however, it has not prompted the public to commit the gun-related crimes and violence. There is a dire need for implementing gun control laws in society in order to restore its peace.

The solution to the culture of the fear topic is that the public should raise its voice against the media and government manipulation of buying the firearms. A large amount of the American budget is spent on firearms dealing and defense of the country, which needs to be changed. The law enforcing agencies are responsible for securing the peace of society, and they should act accordingly. The solution to the topic of availability of firearms is to implement gun control laws and assess the change in society. Luckily, I have not experienced ay scenario of massacre and violence personally. However, having known the number of cases of gun violence which took place in the past two years, I deeply feel that gun control laws should be imposed on society.

The documentary film “Bowling for Columbine” has shed light on the impact of the availability of firearms in society. He has explained that the government induces the fear of lack of safety among the population then sell them firearms, in order to increase its profit. After that, when criminal and violent activities take place in society, the government only condemns them instead of taking action and implementing gun control laws. However, now the public needs to get rid of the manipulation of media and government authorities and demand gun control laws to make the society peaceful and secure.

Works Cited

Downes, David, Paul Elliott Rock, and Eugene McLaughlin. *Understanding deviance: a guide to the sociology of crime and rule-breaking*. Oxford University Press, 2016.

Moore, Michael, Kathleen Glynn, and Jeff Gibbs. "Bowling for Columbine." (2002).