Value and Ethical Concerns of Psychological Profiling

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Psychological profiling has emerged as the most important source of identifying criminals in recent times. It was first introduced in the year 1960 by Federal Bureau of Investigation and since then, it has developed greatly due to the advancement in technology. Psychological profiling is the tool which helps the investigators in identifying the criminal, based on their before, during and after attitudes of conducting the criminal activity. The close observation of the crime scene allows them to depict the way in which the crime was enacted, thus leading them to identify the characteristics of the criminals from the minutest details of the crime scene. This paper will discuss the values and ethical concern of psychological profiling in a great deal, while paying attention to importance, advantages and disadvantages of psychological profiling in the areas of society, police, courts and corrections, in addition to presenting examples and recommendations.

There is no doubt that society has made extensive technological, as well as economic progress over the course of the last century. The modern world has opened new avenues of progress and development for the generation of the present times, while a significant number of the population has also faced a number of challenges, leading them to failures and choosing the path of crime, instead of struggling and working hard to survive and become successful. Such people have used the same modern technology for the wrong purposes, while the psychological profilers are using the latest technology for identifying the criminals who hide in the general society and keep hurting more and more people instead of turning themselves to laws enforcement agencies. Psychological profiling is greatly valued across the globe because it provides the opportunity of identifying and arresting the criminals within the least possible times. On the other hand, it has certain ethical issues as well, because the profiling of the criminals can lead the investigators to doubt the innocent people due to certain actions or characteristics, thus hurting their repute and sentiments. However, psychological profiling cannot be stooped to ensure avoiding ethical concerns, so the investigators have to formulate certain policies in order to ensure the safety and repute of the innocent people and be more specific about the criminals (Canter, & Alison, 2018).

 Psychological profiling is of great value to the areas of society, police, courts and corrections. It is important because it enables these areas to work as a single unit towards catching the criminals and making them stand before the courts, in addition to getting the punishment of their crimes and becoming an example for the rest of the society. The punishment of the criminals after being caught due to their psychological profiling gives the message to the general society that any person causing any harm to the life and property of other individuals would not be able to live his/ her life in secrecy and would be brought to justice. It also gives the message to the people attracted towards committing crimes to think twice about their choices, as they will have to pay for each and every unlawful act, irrespective of its magnitude (Youngs, 2017).

Psychological profiling is advantageous for the society in the way that it allows the society to work according to a certain legal system. The development of the forensic department is the greatest example, which shows that psychological profiling is essential for the just and lawful management of society. Psychological profiling helps in the identification of the criminal who robes the peace and smooth functioning of the society. On the other hand, there is no particular disadvantage of psychological profiling for the society, apart from the bad repute in case one is wrongly framed for some crime based on faulty psychological profiling (Gudjonsson, & Haward, 2016).

Psychological profiling is the most important lead for the police which helps them get started on the investigation of the crime scene and catching the criminal. The minutest details and evidence secured from the crime scenes can help the profilers identify certain characteristics of the criminals, thus allowing the police to direct their investigation in the defined direction and accomplishing their goals as soon as possible. On the other hand, the psychological profiling can be disadvantageous for the police if they start relying too much on the psychological profiler and not putting enough effort in decoding the crime scene and developing a framework of investigation (Youngs, 2017).

Psychological profiling is greatly important for courts as well, because of the fact that courts have the responsibility of protecting the victim groups of the society. The psychological profiling helps the courts to punish the criminals strictly, based on provided evidence gathered from the profiling and depiction of the traits of the criminals. The psychological profiling can also highlight the tendency of the criminals to repeat the offence or indulge in some other unlawful or criminal act. Thus, providing the opportunity to the courts to reach a better decision which would be able to save the victims and make the criminal pay for his actions. The disadvantage of psychological profiling is that a little mistake on the part of the profilers can result in changing the opinion of the courts, leading them to punish the innocent or free the criminal, which can ultimately impact the general society (Canter, & Alison, 2018).

Corrections is one of the most important parts of the law enforcement which ensures that the criminals are paying for their crime while getting to amend their attitude and traits which trigger them towards committing the crime. The psychological profiling is advantageous for the corrections in the way that it highlights certain aspects and personality traits of the criminals which need to be corrected, in case they want to become a part of the general society again. On the other hand, there is no particular disadvantage of psychological profiling towards the area of corrections (Gudjonsson, & Haward, 2016).

Ethical issues and concerns are a part of each and every field of life and psychological profiling is no exception. The departments or fields of society which are providing their services to human beings by staying in direct in connection with them have the tendency of committing some ethical issue. However, such issues can be avoided by following a proper protocol and being extra careful. One of the most important ethical concern in the area of society is that it can start doubting every other individual bearing a little resemblance with the personality traits of the criminals made public for cooperation. An important ethical concern in the area of police is that it may neglect the potential criminal by relying too much on the profiling of the criminal, who sometimes leave fake triggers for profilers on purpose. The ethical concern in the area of courts is that they can wrongly punish someone based on psychological profiling and faulty evidence. Ethical concern in the area of corrections is that the criminals may be provided different treatment based on their psychological profiling which can make them relive the traumatic experiences of their life and becoming more determined on committing crimes, instead of living their lives lawfully (Youngs, 2017).

Ethical concerns are present in these areas because they deal with human beings and try to punish one on the basis of causing more harm to the other. The professionals can use the approach of following the protocols and policies and work strictly according to the devised plan in order to avoid the issues. One of the most important ethical concern in psychological profiling is that a list of suspected criminals is formulated according to their profiling and clues collected from the crime scene. Crimes cannot be solved without suspecting the members of the society, however, suspicion sometimes leads to hurting the repute of innocent people. So, an alternate path to this concern is that the profilers and other members of the investigation team do not leak even a little bit of information to the general society, whether it is through the medium of media or the open investigation of the case. The investigators will be able to stay in the ethical guidelines if they do not raise fingers on the suspects without concrete evidence. In addition to it, the psychological profilers should not rule out the possibility of fake triggers used by the criminals to manipulate the direction of the investigation. They should also keep a close watch on the people visiting or avoiding the crime scene to get a lead towards the criminals (Gudjonsson, & Haward, 2016).

Psychological profiling is one of the most important parts of the federal bureau of investigation which helps the investigators and law enforcement agencies to better identify and catch the criminals on the basis of depicting their personality traits and motive of committing the crime. The field is quite valuable for the areas of society, police, courts and correction, in addition to having some ethical issues as well. The psychological profilers should always work according to the policies and protocols in order to avoid any kind of ethical concern.

References

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