Thought Paper

[Name of the Writer]

[Name of the Institution]

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**Introduction**

There are several notions as to why people commit crimes. One of the theories is the rational choice theory that states that people do ponder about what crime they are going to perform and for what reasons; which means that their crime for instance robbery is not a deliberate crime, but there are many personal reasons behind it. The law-breakers according to rational choice perspective, weigh on their behavior before performing and keep in mind the advantages and disadvantages before committing the felony. The rational perspective of Clark and Cornish suits well for the causation of robberies or burglaries. According to this perspective, crimes are not committed by robbers only because they want to act criminally or for the sake of entertainment or fun. It is most certainly because they are in need of money for multiple reasons and that they are not able to see any other way to make a living, so they break the law. This paper believes that any crime such as robbery despite the reason should be punishable, however, reasons for committing the crime should be taken in consideration so to help the criminals and the society as a whole.

**Discussion**

Rational choice theory or perspective by Clark and Cornish propose that it is valuable to see felonious conduct as the consequence of the lawbreaker’s general rational decisions and choices and not as the outcome of socially and psychologically determined character to offend. Rational choice perspective offers basics for developing models of criminal conduct. Neuropsychological studies illustrate that neurobiological mechanisms are involved in our "rational choices." These Rational choices are grounded on several assumptions, for instance, individualism. Secondly, people are self-centered. Thirdly, people have to maximize their goals. Criminals usually think about themselves and the advancement of their individual goals. Some of the critical points of the rational theory are that human being is a sensible performer and they calculate before they perform any activity. Individuals have the free will to decide on any behavior, whether it be deviant of conforming to the law based on their calculations and reasons. Moreover, the vital component of their rational calculation comprises a cost and benefit analysis, for example, pain, pleasure or decadence. According to the theory, these choices or decisions can be controlled through individuals own imagination and thoughtfulness of the potential act, etc.

Many elements of rational choice perspective make it appropriate to serve as a criminological “metatheory” since rational choices of a person can describe diverse constituents; it is comprehensive enough to be applied to everyday life and crime circumstances as well. This theory outlook has delivered a structure which will help in organizing information and result in added general benefits (Newman, Clarke, 2016).

The primary purpose of the rational choice philosophy is to assist in preventing situational crime by reducing the opportunities that are directed at particular practices related to crimes rather than merely reacting against the criminals. Rational perspective is that these lawbreakers are more often short of money, do not have any employment or they have low paid occupations. Robbers are usually illiterate and lazy. These criminals other than for basic needs, break the law for drugs as more often they are addicted to drugs. The theory says that even law-abiding populations can commit a crime not for the reason that they will be looking for something particular from the victim's possessions or for the reason of getting cash for a long-term objective. Most robbers can start making an honest living only if their basic needs social or psychological needs are fulfilled.

In opposition with rational choice perspective, others argue that robbers or burglars are habitual of committing the crimes and they do not think before their deed and that they may be incompetent of reasoning. Law-breaking is the outcome of a conscious choice. According to opposed groups, these criminals will continue breaking the law, and therefore, the punishment should be the only and immediate reaction.

All these theories are noteworthy and applicable to some extent but, there needs to be more research and specific descriptions for every crime committed individually. The scope of research is quite extensive and open as there are numerous shortcoming in almost all the theories. Human perspectives and actions are complex, and every crime that happens usually have multiple reasons behind it, if these reasons are explored and a specific framework is developed for every individual crime, the current procedures may alter significantly, and many criminals might return to being law-abiding citizens. In my opinion, if not majority, a large chunk of robbers start their criminal activities based on lack of basic needs, individual or social circumstances and therefore, rather than punishment only, the reasons should be explored in order to benefit from them in devising a more better approach and make progress in controlling the grass-root behaviors that lead people to commit or start committing crimes such as robberies. If the state provides basic needs for the people, crime rates will fall drastically.

**Conclusions**

To conclude, no crime can be labeled as rational until and unless the criminal is proven medically to be of unsound mind. No excuse can be strong enough to justify such criminal activities. Robbing someone of their possessions is ultimately a crime no matter the reasons. However, despite having some deficiencies in the rational choice perspective, it can be used to devise a better theory or program that will help in controlling or lessening criminal behaviors especially related to robbers and burglars. These people might be facing some personal issues or having bad habits; theories like rational choice can help greatly to find the solutions for these problems and address them more efficiently and effectively. So far, advisory theories typically are narrowed to an inadequate range of variables derived from other contributing disciplines. A decision-making process concerning these behaviors need to stress the rational components in criminal conduct and needs clarifications to be precise to actual forms of misconduct. As the models are developed mainly for refining crime control strategies and related research they can only be labeled as good enough and not most suitable or satisfactory. Thus, these decision-making models should be used to construct good enough theories.

**References**

Newman, G., & Clarke, R. V. (2016). *Rational choice and situational crime prevention: Theoretical foundations*. Routledge.