

### Explanations for Patterns of Crime: Ethnicity

Opportunities for criminal behaviour

- \* Young blacks have higher levels of unemployment than whites which may produce greater temptation for crime.
- \* Afro-Caribbean's have younger age profile than ethnic majority (more young men...) which means there are more people at peak offending age (14 – 21).
- \* Many ethnic minorities live in inner city areas (cheap private housing) and may be drawn into culture of criminality.
- \* Ethnic minorities more likely to be in the lower classes of society, it is not surprising that we see a greater percentage of their population in trouble with the law (see social class factors.). If we control for social class, all ethnicities have a very similar amount of street crime activity in their populations. When ethnic minorities move to "white" neighbourhoods that are lower in crime, their crime rate is the same as the rest of the neighbourhood, while whites living in lower class areas tend to be as criminal as their minority counterparts.

Opportunity Structures

Note: The factors associated with gender, age, class and region will apply in this category

### Explanations for Patterns of Crime: Ethnicity

Primary /  
Secondary  
Socialisation

- \* Cultural socialisation – many black working class families are headed by single parent (usually female). Families may lack a father figure, leading to lack of discipline and social control.
- \* Ethnic minority subcultures (eg Rastafarianism) are also subject to racial discrimination. Subcultures may represent a support system against discrimination and lead into criminality through peer pressure etc.

Social  
Control  
Agencies

- \* Some Asian groups have large extended family structures which act as strong agencies of social control
- \* Some ethnic groups (eg Hindus) exercise very strong control over female behaviour (for example, where children may go, who they may go with, etc.).

### Explanations for Patterns of Crime: Ethnicity

Police:  
Strategies  
Labelling  
(Stereotypes  
and  
Scapegoats)

- \* Police may target ethnic minorities (because of their relatively higher involvement in crime)
- \* Self-fulfilling prophecy (police believe young blacks more likely to be involved in crime) may result in more targeting and more arrests of ethnic minorities.
- \* Deviancy Amplification process may occur whereby police stereotyping and scapegoating of ethnic minorities may result in appearance of more crime amongst ethnic minorities.

Judicial  
behaviour  
Labelling  
Stereotypes  
Medical  
models

- \* Judicial stereotypes about black culture may result in more ethnic minorities being sent to prison.

**Explanations for Patterns of Crime: Ethnicity**

Social  
Visibility  
  
Of crime and  
criminals

\* Ethnic minority groups may be more socially visible to the police (especially when present in areas associated with ethnic majority).  
  
Note: All the factors associated with gender, age, class and region will apply in this category.

Lifestyle  
Factors

Note: All the factors associated with gender, age, class and region will apply in this category.  
  
\* Crime may occur as the result of racism / racial tensions.