

Various Dimensions of Impact of Climate on Criminality

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ABSTRACT

Climate is one component that impacted human nature and civilization from time immemorial. From the viewpoint of environmental determinism, human activities are dominated by climatic elements like temperature, humidity, and seasonal variations. Deviance from the moral code of conduct is one of the important aspects of social pathology which hampers the overall sustainability of human society. Deviant forms of behaviour very often take the form of crime. Criminal offences always go against the balance between the environment and humanity. Research is going on for a long time to understand the proper correlation between climatic elements and criminality. Though they may sound quite detached from each other: climate and crime, criminologists and social theorists have been regularly studying the impact of climate change on the change in the nature of criminal offences. The present article is intended to review the major trend of the studies regarding this issue.

I. Introduction

Climate and criminality seem to be quite detached from each other. Climate is considered to be one of the important factors which shaped human society. From that point of view, individual personality has to be influenced by the climatic conditions of a geographic locale. The human body and mind get highly affected by environmental conditions. A “crime” is any act or omission in violation of a law prohibiting the action or omission. Climatic factors create changes in human nature. For example, sometimes people get irritated with a high temperature in summer as that creates some sort of discomfort within their body which gets reflected through their behaviour. Those kinds of behavioural outcomes can take the very intense form of enactment and culminate into a criminal offense. The study about the correlation between climatic factors and criminal

the behaviour started in the United Kingdom by the criminologists who are the majority supporters of Positivist theories of crime. The studies mainly dealt with two categories of crime namely crimes that are based on physical harm like murder, assault, and the second category dealt with property crimes. Researchers from this field took climatic variables mainly from the seasonal dimension. The change in temperature, humidity, precipitation, the change in the length of day and night, etc are primary factors that attracted academicians to study the impact on criminal offences. With time, the issue of environmental degradation and climate change have become very relevant among researchers of all scientific domains. As an effect of that, the activities which cause environmental degradation, itself considered being criminal offences. Researchers of environmental science and global resource politics have shown a great amount of interest in working with these issues related to the activities which accelerated global warming, ozone depletion, deglaciation, deforestation, and numerous other issues of climatic concern. This is a new dimension of the study of climate and criminality. Most of the research works have been based on a

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