Criminal Profiling: Myth vs. Reality

Name

Institution Affiliation

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My Previous Perception and Understanding of Profiling

Previously, my apprehension and discernment of criminal profiling was superficial. I knew that criminal profiling was a correct approach of apprehending offenders, but I was not aware that criminal profiling was a diverse field of science that is studied. Furthermore, I did not understand the levels of racial disparity that were involved in criminal profiling. Incidentally, a significant part of my standpoint on the profession was based on shows such as Profiler, Law & Order, and The Mentalist. The types of shows exhibit criminal profiling as a strategy for capturing criminals. Although these television shows can portray the mechanisms of criminal profiling, they are not able to reveal the racial disparities that are existent in the field. In the U.S, especially in neighborhoods with African-Americans and Hispanics, there are significant concerns about the arrests made by law enforcement.

How My Opinion on Criminal Profiling Changed

The perceptions and comprehensions that I had regarding criminal profiling were transformed when I became aware of the statistics and reality surrounding the profiling of criminals. I realized that in 2011, children between the ages of 14 and 18 had police encounters almost 8000 times in Brownsville, New York City (Dobrin, 2012). In the same year, teenagers were obstructed by police 20 times around Stuyvesant High School. This particular statistic made me aware of the racial prejudice involved in criminal profiling. Additionally, I understood that criminal profiling is a new field of science. There is no agreement on the terms or methods between the practitioners of profiling. Forensic psychologists describe it as crime action profiling while the FBI refers to it as criminal investigate analysis (Winerman, 2004). What is more, I grasped the gruesome fact that there is incredible racism in profiling of offenders by police

officers. I read a news website that revealed that two teenagers and their grandmother were suing a Utah Highway Patrol trooper for illegally searching their vehicle for drugs (Manson, 2008). The grandmother claimed that the patrolman knew there were no drugs but still requested for a drug-sniffing dog. Also, it became apparent that attempts to sue police officers for racial profiling are useless. For instance, there was a woman that alleged that Torrance police apprehended her because of her race (Nix, 2009). She lost her lawsuit against the officer with the jury deciding that the officers did not abuse her rights and did disturb her emotionally.

Why profiling is different in popular culture and reality. I am confident that the difference that exists between profiling's image in popular culture and reality lies in the fact that most TV shows only aim to entertain. Today, most of what is referred to as media (TV, Newspaper, and Radio) is centered on entertainment and the profits that are accrued. Nobody is interested in viewing a show where the proper procedures for conducting criminal profiling are observed or where investigators trace a black person for capture. Most people want to see fancy strategies and flashy guns in action. However, I have the belief that modern culture can transform our minds about this issue but is not concerned because it generates no revenue.

References

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