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JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AND PERSONALITY: LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract:

To study juvenile delinquency from psychological perspective, it is necessary to inquire into causes of it. Personality factor is one of the psychological causes of delinquency amongst children. The relationship between juvenile delinquency and personality has been observed by many researchers. We may summarize the relationship between personality traits and criminal behaviour from various research papers and assess if certain variables are predictive of potential recidivism. So let us understand the relationship between Big Five personality traits and juvenile delinquency through literary review.

Key Words: Juvenile delinquency, Personality.

Introduction:

The purpose of this research paper is to explore and compare juvenile delinquency and personality. There are many factors which cause juvenile delinquency in children. In this paper we find, the various dimensions of personality have been used to understand the development of delinquent behaviour. There is a connection between personality and delinquency and criminal behaviour. The current research would look at a wide range of deviant practices, not just crime in general and not just a few crimes. Offenses ranged from status violations and criminal offense violations to crimes against people and property. Not only could the association between personality traits and offending be seen in this context, but it could also be seen in the relationship between very particular forms of crime and offending behaviours.

Juvenile Delinquency:

In this present era, juvenile delinquency is becoming an universal challenge. Juvenile refers to children under the age of 18, whereas delinquency is a legal term that refers to criminal activity that is often the product of extremely problematic behaviour. A child is not born a delinquent, and

delinquent habits are not caused by genes. According to Schwartz and Johnson, delinquency is a term used to describe a juvenile (usually under the age of 18) who has committed an act that would be unlawful for an adult. In India, juvenile delinquency has become a big issue for children's psychological and moral growth, as well as for society.

Personality Trait and Juvenile Delinquency:

Larsen and Buss (2002) defined personality as “the set of psychological traits and mechanisms within the individual that are organized and relatively enduring and that influence his or her interactions with, and adaptations to, the environment (p. 4).” Traits are usually classified in one of two forms.

The criminal behaviour is affected by a variety of personal characteristics. Personality characteristics have been identified as significant determinants of criminal and delinquent behaviour in children over the last three decades. Single personality traits or a group of personality traits may influence criminal behaviour. There is a connection between personality and delinquency and criminal behaviour. In general, research on juvenile deviance offered two analytical perspectives: sociological and psychological.

Psychology provides personal and inner power, which is shaped by the superego or sharpened by behaviour patterns. Sociology focuses on culture or cultural systems that have a direct impact on external social regulation mechanisms. According to Siegel traits theories focus on the psychological aspects of crime, such as the relationship between personality, intellect, learning, and criminal behaviour. Psychodynamic perspective focuses Early childhood experiences and their impact on personality. According to social learning theorist's crime is the product of learning the beliefs, norms, and actions associated with criminal activity. Temporary, situational, antisocial behavior up to and including criminality is common among juveniles (Moffitt, 1993).

Eysenck was the first to investigate the utility of personality characteristics in understanding criminal behaviour (1964). Eysenck posed an important question: “Why do most people lead relatively blameless lives, rather than indulging in a career of crime?” (p. 102). He suggested that within everyone is a conscience, or “inner guiding light” that keeps one from committing crime. People who lack learned moral and social responses (or a conscience, which is a function of low capacity to be conditioned and extraversion) are more likely to participate in criminal or deviant conduct. (Eysenck, 1964).

Many researchers already agree that there are five basic personality characteristics. Support for this theory has been increasing for several years, starting with D. W. Fiske's research in 1949 and later built upon by others such as Norman (1967), Smith (1967), Goldberg (1981), and McCrae & Costa (1987). (1987).

Five Basic Personality Traits:

The Big Five are the broad higher order personality characteristics of extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience. The Big Five personality model started as a lexical method to capture how people describe themselves and others (John & Srivastava, 1999), and is now seen in adults from 50 different cultures (Livesley, 2001; McCrae, Terracciano, & Personality Profiles of Cultures Project, 2005). The idea that personality traits are more malleable at younger ages and become more stable with age emphasises the importance of studying personality traits earlier in life. The Big Five traits have demonstrated utility in predicting problematic behaviors (e.g., delinquency, conduct disorder, externalizing problems) and discriminating between groups (e.g., delinquents versus non-delinquents, externalizing versus non-externalizing) in at-risk and clinic-referred children and adolescents (John, Caspi, Robins, Moffitt, & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1994), even outperforming competing personality models, such as the ego-control and egoresiliency model (Huey & Weisz, 1997).

Openness

Conscientiousness

Extraversion

Agreeableness

Neuroticism

Significance of Review:

Low conscientiousness in children is linked to externalising activities (Prinzle et al., 2003), and longitudinal studies have linked childhood impulsivity to increased antisocial behaviours later in childhood and adolescence. (e.g., Henry, Caspi, Moffitt, Harrington, & Silva, 1999; Lynam et al., 2000; Moffitt & Caspi, 2001). Using the Self-Report Delinquency scale (Elliot, Huizinga, & Ageton, 1985) and the Self-Reported Antisocial Behavior Scale (Loeber, Stouthamer-Loeber, Van Kammen, & Farrington, 1989), delinquents scored significantly lower on conscientiousness than non-delinquents in a high-risk study of boys (12 to 13 years of age) (John et al., 1994)

According to John and Srivastava (1999), The Big Five personality model was developed as an etymological method to capture how people describe themselves and others and it has since been found in adults from 50 different cultures (Livesley, 2001; McCrae, Terracciano, and Personality Profiles of Cultures Project, 2005).

Low agreeableness, low conscientiousness, and high neuroticism were found to be closely correlated with violence by Lynam et al. (2005). Furthermore, adolescent psychopathy is characterised by low agreeableness, low conscientiousness, and high neuroticism, which has been shown to be a Good

predictor of violence and antisocial conduct (Lynam et al., 2005).

Neuroticism in toddlers predicted higher anxiety and psychosomatic issues in puberty, as well as greater mother records of proximity seeking towards mothers at 5 years of age (Abe, 2005). In both inpatients and outpatients, neuroticism predicted later depression, anxiety, occupational disability, and a lower global assessment of functioning (Miller & Pilkonis, 2006). Neuroticism has also been linked to delinquency (Laak et al., 2003) and diagnosis of behavior disorder and drug use disorders in adolescents. (Anderson et al., 2007).

Anxious, vulnerable, tense, easily scared, guilt prone, moody, low in anger tolerance, insecure in their relationships with others, and prone to easily "fall apart" under stress are all characteristics of highly neurotic children and adolescents (Shiner, 2009). Emotional stability, on the other hand, denotes a propensity to be relatively calm, comfortable, and stable (Miller & Pilkonis, 2006). Neuroticism can manifest as serious affective lability, emotional distress, insecure commitment, depression, low anger tolerance, and inadequate or maladaptive coping mechanisms at the pathological extreme (e.g., substance abuse). At the very bottom of the scale, a person can be fearless (e.g., low harm avoidance), have little emotional distress, and even appear emotionally flat in stressful situations.

Using juveniles from the Pittsburgh Youth Study, John, Caspi, Robins, Moffitt, and Stouthamer-Loeber investigated the relationship between juvenile delinquency and the FFM in 1994. The California Child Q-Set was used to test the personality of 350 boys from the sample who were between the ages of 12 and 13. (CCQ). The CCQ was actually completed by the boys' mothers, who used a series of descriptors to identify their children's personalities with the assistance of a professional examiner. The boys were also asked to fill out two questionnaires about their participation in criminal activity and drug abuse. The findings showed that delinquent boys were more likely than non-delinquent boys to have lower transparency ratings. This suggests that delinquent boys are less likely than non-delinquent boys to be receptive to new experiences, which seems counter-intuitive. Scores of neuroticisms have also been shown to differentiate various forms of crimes. Increased rape, drug, and burglary accidents (Bartol & Holanchock, 1979), causing harm (Laak et al., 2003), and the use of both psychological and physical violence by men and women have all been linked to high neuroticism scores (Hines & Saudino, 2008). According to Hornsveld and de Kruyk (2005) Sexually violent psychiatric outpatients had higher neuroticism scores than nonsexually violent outpatients, To put it another way, higher neuroticism is linked to a higher risk of violent sexual crimes among outpatients than all other types of sexual crimes.

According to Laak et al. (2003), incarcerated girls with lower conscientiousness scores were more likely to cause harm, battle, or steal. With their research, Hornsveld and de Kruyk (2005) confirmed these results by revealing that aggressive outpatients had lower conscientiousness scores

than the control group.

In adolescence, agreeableness was linked to less maternal records of conduct issues and impulsivity, according to one study (Abe, 2005). Low agreeableness, on the other hand, was seen in 11 children and adolescents with conduct disorder, drug use disorder (Anderson et al., 2007), delinquency, and externalizing behaviour issues (John et al., 1994). Low levels of agreeability indicate a proclivity for manipulation, cynicism, rudeness, uncooperation, and suspicion. Aggressiveness, vengefulness, callousness, mistrust, and entitlement are all pathological manifestations of agreeableness (Shiner, 2009). Submissiveness, dependence, over-compliance, aversion to rejection, and indecisiveness are examples of the extremes.

According to Dacey & Kenny (1997), 60 percent to 80 percent of teenagers have engaged in delinquent activity in the past. Steinberg (1999) and Dacey & Kenny (1997) noted that about 10% of adolescents who have experimented with delinquent behaviors become responsible for most of the criminal behavior within this age group. Conscientiousness is a concept that describes a child's ability to prioritise long-term goals over immediate urges, and it may indicate a child's maturing attentional skills and abilities to prioritise long-term goals over immediate impulses (Shiner, 2009).

Discussion:

Several studies investigated that transparency also looked into the connection between conscientiousness and deviance. In a study of juveniles from the Pittsburgh Youth Study, John et al. (1994) discovered that delinquent boys were more likely to have low scores on conscientiousness. Low conscientiousness scores were also shown to be significantly related to vandalism/theft for males and females (Heaven, 1996) and the number of times an individual is arrested (Clower & Bothwell, 2001). According to Laak et al. (2003), incarcerated girls with lower conscientiousness scores were more likely to cause harm, battle, or steal. With their research, Hornsveld and de Kruyk (2005) confirmed these results by revealing that aggressive outpatients had lower conscientiousness scores than the control group.

The majority of extraversion and delinquent behaviour studies previously discussed in other parts of this literature review shows a positive relationship between the two variables. Delinquent boys in Pittsburgh had higher extraversion scores than non-delinquent boys, according to John et al. in 1994, which makes sense given that Mak et al. (2003) found that high extraversion scores were a strong predictor of male delinquency. As compared to non-incarcerated people, incarcerated people have higher extraversion ratings and are thus more outgoing, talkative, and assertive (Burgess, 1972; Eysenck, 1970; Price, 1968).

Furthermore, juvenile offenders also exhibit behavioural traits that can lead to antisocial personality disorder in adulthood (e.g., violence against people and animals, property damage, deception, fraud, and severe rule violations) (McCord et al.; APA).

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