

# DELINQUENT BEHAVIOR, ITS CHARACTERISTICS AND DETERMINING FACTORS

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## Abstract

Delinquent behavior is defined as a criminal action committed by a human confronting the laws of the civil society. Crime understanding is based on the principle of normalization, which means that an individual's guilt is based on the norms and laws applicable in the civil society. The society conducts control over individual behavior not only by the applicable legislation but also by ethical and moral norms of the society. The crime is a specific form of a behavior that is different from other types of behavior in its contextual load and the community's assessment of it. Delinquent behavior comprises many components; therefore, according to the complexity of the case, it is the subject of numerous scientific disciplines, including criminology, sociology, psychology, psychiatry, law, etc.

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## Introduction

For characterization of personal qualities of a deviant individual it is important to separate the features influencing the development of a criminal behavior. Psychological and psycho-social theories explaining such behavior focus on the personal qualities of an individual and consider individual peculiarities as a criminal behavior stipulating factor. There is another understanding of a criminal act; according to this formulation an offender commits a crime because he/she has not developed an adequate attitude toward the social reality, such approach is conditioned by his/her moods. Offender assesses the outcomes of his/her offence inadequately, therefore, when talking about commitment of an offence it is very important to consider the individual psychological characteristics, such as motivational system and the general peculiarities of the activity, which form a general strategy of an individual; besides, it is significant to consider the individual's attitudes as well.

In term of a psychological characteristic the large number among the criminals tend to transfer their responsibility onto the other offenders and justify themselves in order to prove his/her innocence; this category of criminals try to achieve the above mentioned by exaggerating a victim's guilt, confronting with social norms, depreciating social norms and readdressing the responsibility to the other / situational factors.

It should be noted that the structural features of the hierarchy of needs and motivations are different in case of offenders. Usually, a socialized individual has an aspiration for satisfaction of higher rank of demands - self-development, self-realization and self-esteem. In the case of criminals we frequently deal with the lower rank of the demands hierarchy, because their behavior is mostly motivated with low-ranking demands. They are impulsive and focused on satisfaction of their primitive, vital needs.

The following important criteria are considered while studying the causes of criminal behavior:

1. Number of factors have influence upon formation of any type of behavior including a criminal one;
2. Criminal behavior is different from a socially acceptable behavior in its content and direction, as well as psycho-regulatory mechanisms engagement level;
3. The criminal action is carried out in the manner of disclaiming the social responsibility by an offender;
4. Criminal behavior is characterized by conflict.

As the crime is always directed towards the violation of the norms of the society, it is usually followed by the intrapersonal conflict of an offender as well as the conflict between the individuals and the groups.

In reviewing the personal qualities related to the implementation of criminal conduct we can point out some dispositional and acquired personal qualities.

In reviewing the individual dispositional characteristics of an individual in term of his/her criminal action, the special attention should be paid to his/her intelligence and temperament. Intelligence is defined as a precondition for analyzing the consequences of an offense by an offender while committing such action, while possession of certain types of temperament is deemed as a factor putting the obstacles to the process of socialization with the environment and, accordingly, supporting the implementation of anti-social action and behavior.

The scientific research in this field proves the close connection between the IQ and a crime. One of the researches conducted in connection with the mentioned issue demonstrated that IQ index of the individuals having committed serious crimes was 17 scores less compared to those who had committed no crime. In contrast to this sharp difference, the IQ score difference among the individuals having committed minor crimes and those who had committed no crime was very small and equaled to 1.

The connection between the IQ and crime is also proved by the results of the longitudinal research administered towards 12 686 individuals. Assessment of the prisoners` IQ showed that the ratio of the inmates with high and low intelligence amounted 1/31.

The most common explanation for the relationship between the crime and intelligence is related to low school performance. According to this theoretical approach, low intelligence leads to poor academic performance, which, in its turn, stipulates abandonment of school/education and the formation of criminal behavior.

The recent researches revealed that the Academic Performance Index, i.e. the GPA is a better predictor for a delinquent behavior than the IQ. There is a correlation between the academic achievement and the delinquent behavior.

**Temperament** is an individual feature of an individual which significantly determines the individual's behavioral model. Despite the great influence of environmental factors, it is generally considered that the peculiarity of temperament is determined by the genetics. Temperament includes the following components: character, sociality, activity level, reactivity and affectivity.

Temperament plays a significant role in the relationship of a child and the environment; accordingly, the experience gained in childhood is well reflected in his/her environmental attitudes and the socialization process at his/her next age development stages.

Psychology singles out personal qualities of an individual which are human psychological traits. If consider these personal qualities with regard to a delinquent behavior they may be divided into two parts: 1) psychological signs that contribute to the fulfillment of delinquent behavior by an individual and 2) psychological signs, which protect an individual from committing any delinquent behavior. Such division is important to clarify the personal qualities having positive and negative connections with the criminal action.

Let us review these personal qualities separately:

**Impulsiveness** - this is the feature of a subject to act in less consideration of the consequences of his/her action. Impulsiveness prevents a person in exercising his/her purposeful behavior. Behavior of an impulsive individual in most cases is stipulated by the situation; therefore, a person can no longer afford to determine the results of the action committed by him/her. The research conducted for the purposes of the relationship between the impulsiveness and delinquent behavior showed that in 78 cases from 80 ones the relationship between impulsiveness and crime was positive. It should be noted that the general negative emotional background further strengthens the correlation between the impulsiveness and delinquent behavior.

**Prevalence of negative emotional background** - expresses the inclination of an individual to process the received situational cues by preliminary irritation and anger. Negative emotions background strongly correlates with delinquent behavior. This regularity is valid in the case of different genders and cultures. The research showed that the cause of negative emotional background is the lack of serotonin – a chemical element in human brain. A number of researchers believe that specifically the lack of this element is a direct predictor of a delinquent behavior of an individual.

**Search risky sensations** (low sensitivity threshold) - this feature is related to the adoption of active and risk perception, which leads to the individual's search for risky situations. The category of persons who are actively looking for strong feelings and at the same time are socialized select the professions such as firefighters, police officers etc. or they go in for extreme sport. The individuals who have low level of socialization but strong desire of searching for risky feelings - with high probability – tend to self-realization in the way of carjacking, robbery etc. Review of the literature shows that there is a very high positive correlation between the risk demand and the crime.

**Empathy** - it is the individual's emotional and cognitive ability to understand, feel and share other people's feelings and spiritual condition. Emotional component of empathy enables an individual to feel the other person's pain while a cognitive component allows to understand the cause of the pain. There are people who suffer from/bear a whole world's pain, but there are the people who are unable to understand even the nearest person. Lack of psychological sign of empathy is one of the predictors of criminal behavior.

**Altruism** - is a concern of an individual for others and consideration of the interests of others without his/her benefit. On the other hand, altruism can be viewed as a behavioral component of empathy. If a person feels empathy toward others, he/she will be motivated to carry out such behavioral activity, which will reduce the stresses of another individual. Examination of these personal qualities revealed that the lack of altruism and empathy is directly connected with delinquent behavior; the lower is the level of empathy and altruism the higher is the index of anti-social behavior.

**Honesty** - is a component psychological trait. It includes the particular features such as self-discipline, orderliness, scrupulousness and responsibility. The development of the mentioned features is directly connected to the successful adaptation of individuals to the community. The lack of this feature is the impeding factor for an adaptation process.

**Acceptability** – generally this is the personality trait covering the openness and perceptibility of different opinions and ideas of different people. Acceptability is expressed in friendly, courteous and cooperative relationships with people. The most important sign of the acceptability is trust to people. The individuals with high acceptability can compromise in favour of others' interests and help other people. The people with this feature are focused on the implementation of the pro-social behavior and gaining social desirability. The individuals who commit crimes tend to be hostile towards others; they are egocentric, angry, jealous and indifferent to others. They have difficulties to control their impulses and have the values and beliefs different from socio-cultural context around them.

## **Conclusion**

As a conclusion it should be noted that the development of the sense of acceptability is the kind of prevention of a crime. The meta-analysis conducted in this sphere proved the existence of a strong correlation between the acceptability and anti-social behavior.

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