

PERSONALITY, SEXUAL DIFFERENCES AND JUVENILE DELINQUENCY. STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

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INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this study is the comparison between groups of teenagers (12-16 years old) placed along a socialization' dimension. From a normal socialization to delinquency, crossing a hypothetical mid-point with problem, but non-delinquent, children. We consider personality and motivation variables by means of 13 scales which score variables such as extraversion, neuroticism, antisocial behaviour, locus of control and achievement motivation. Taking into account former studies, we shall postulate the following hypothesis:

(1) According to Eysenck's biosocial theory (1964), the highest scores in CA (antisocial behaviour), E (Extraversion) and N (Neuroticism) should belong to delinquent children and the lowest to control children.

(2) From Pelechano's Parameters theory (1973, 1989), where rigidity is a independent variable as well as extraversion and neuroticism, we hope to see high scores in rigidity for delinquents (Pelechano and Guerra, 1981).

(3) Taking into account different studies on motivation (Rossen and D'Andra-

de, 1959) and delay gratification on delinquent samples, low motivation should appear in delinquents. The motivation questionnaire used is based on school performance. We found that delinquents have very low IQ (Díaz, 1989) and logically should also have low motivation scores.

(4) In the same way, we predict more externality from the normal to delinquent dimension, because the weak socialization has been correlated with the non-contingency between behavior and its results (Phares, 1976, 1978; Raine et al., 1982).

We shall also analyse these general hypothesis between boys and girls at the end of this paper.

METHOD

Subjects

675 teenagers (389 boys and 286 girls) whose ages ranged from 12 to 16 years participated in this study. They were split into three representative groups of a socialization's dimension: (a) Control group, $n = 421$ (224 boys and 197 girls); (b) Problem children group, $n = 132$ (86 boys and 46 girls) and (c) Delinquent group, $n = 122$ (79 boys and 43 girls).

We used two criteria to split the groups. The first to select control and problem children groups using the teacher's report about normal (control group) or bad conduct, such as lying, fighting or insulting behavior (problem children group) in the classroom. This criterion was uses in other successful studies (Lane and Hymans, 1982; Powell and Steward, 1983; Saflofske, 1977; Tremblay et al., 1988). The second criterion was the selection of the delinquent group from a population of institutionalized delinquents. The kind of offence and the recidivism level varied depending on sex. It means that while boys committed offenses mainly against property and the recidivism level was high, girls committed offenses mainly against status and the recidivism level was low.

Finally, to match socio-demographic variables, we selected control and problem children groups from those in the city where the majority of delinquents came from.

INSTRUMENTS AND MEASURES

CA, Antisocial Behaviour Scale (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1971) with 34 items in the Spanish version.

EN, Extraversion, Neuroticism and Rigidity Questionnaire (Pelechano, 1977)

with four variables: elite and dogmatism (E1); neuroticism (E2); rigidity about work and subordination to authority (E3); and social extraversion and leaderships (E4).

MA, Motivation and Anxiety Questionnaire (Pelechano, 1977) with four variables: imaginary and strong feelings towards good performance (M1); anxiety before examinations (M2); disinterestedness towards work (M3) and positive and strong motivation's self image (M4).

LUCAD, Locus of Control Questionnaire (Pelechano and Báguena, 1983) with four variables: external locus of control in personal relationships (L1); internal locus of control towards the attainment of achievements (L2); external locus of control attributing the result of the actions to physical and social causes (L3) and internal locus of control accepting personal responsibility (L4).

All instruments were filled collectively for control and problem children groups and individually filled for the delinquent group.

Statistical analyses

First, we show the reliability of all variables by means of Cronbach's α . Secondly, we present the factor analysis by group and finally we show t-tests between boys and girls by group.

RESULTS

Scales' internal consistency

Table 1 shows Cronbach's α for all variables in the three groups. The internal consistency was moderate, higher in delinquents than control and problem children groups. The most reliable scales are E1 (elite and dogmatism), L3 (external locus of control) in all groups, and E3 (neuroticism) in control and delinquent groups.

Factor analyses

Table 2 presents the factor matrix (rotated Varimax and Principal Components extraction) for the three groups. The 13 variables have produced four factors for the group with eigenvalues over 1.00 and they have similar percentages of variance: 62.40% in the control group, 61.70% in the problem children group and 62.10% in the delinquent group.

TABLE 1. INTERNAL CONSISTENCY OF PERSONALITY AND MOTIVATION VARIABLES

FACTOR	ITEMS	PROBLEM					
		CONTROL GROUP		CHILDREN DELINQUENT GROUP		DELINQUENT GROUP	
		—	N	—	N	—	N
CA Antisocial behavior	34	.63	421	.51	132	.68	67
E1 Elite and dogmatism	18	.75	421	.71	132	.77	122
E2 Neuroticism	16	.74	421	.56	132	.77	122
E3 Rigidity about work and subordination to authority	15	.61	421	.59	132	.66	122
E4 Social extraversion and leadership	9	.43	421	.41	132	.40	122
M1 Imaginary and strong feelings towards good performance	19	.69	421	.74	132	.77	122
M2 Anxiety before examinations	22	.61	421	.53	132	.73	122
M3 Disinterestedness towards work	22	.62	421	.59	132	.59	122
M4 Positive and strong motivation's self image	12	.57	421	.59	132	.72	122
L1 External locus of control in personal relationships	13	.64	421	.41	132	.51	122
L2 Internal locus of control towards the attainment of achievements	8	.48	421	.47	132	.53	122
L3 External locus of control attributing the results of the actions to physical and social causes	23	.74	421	.74	132	.74	122
L4 Internal locus of control accepting responsibility	12	.63	421	.56	132	.52	122

(_ = Cronbach's _)

TABLE 2

FACTOR ANALYSIS OF PERSONALITY AND MOTIVATION VARIABLES
IN THREE GROUPS SEPARATELY

	CONTROL GROUP				PROBLEM CHILDREN GROUP				DELINQUENT GROUP						
	F1	F2	F3	F4	h ²	F1	F2	F3	F4	h ²	F1	F2	F3	F4	h ²
CA	.68	-.10	.08	.42	.65	.03	.18	-.09	.80	.68	-.10	.59	.14	.06	.38
E1	.45	.65	.03	.01	.63	.54	.48	-.05	.21	.57	.72	.29	-.00	.02	.61
E2	.59	-.14	.49	-.17	.64	.33	.04	.36	.61	.61	.21	.68	.07	-.20	.55
E3	.20	.33	.55	.14	.47	.14	.05	.68	-.25	.55	.43	.15	.53	.01	.49
E4	.02	.25	.01	.80	.70	-.22	.59	.20	.11	.45	.11	-.02	.06	.92	.86
M1	.07	.72	.24	.23	.64	.13	.81	.16	.14	.71	.74	-.11	.26	.14	.65
M2	.07	.22	.77	-.22	.69	.03	.26	.74	-.04	.61	.47	.12	.70	.01	.73
M3	.75	-.08	-.08	.12	.59	.25	-.04	-.32	.71	.67	.40	.51	-.43	.30	.70
M4	-.11	.77	.01	.02	.60	.44	.64	-.18	-.23	.69	.79	-.13	.23	.06	.69
L1	.71	.13	.23	-.31	.67	.80	-.08	-.06	.15	.67	.41	.61	.09	.07	.55
L2	-.16	-.22	.62	.36	.58	-.21	-.06	.62	.08	.44	.14	.44	.57	.37	.67
L3	.68	.46	-.21	-.09	.73	.75	.28	-.19	.09	.68	.80	.23	-.07	-.02	.70
L4	-.65	-.27	-.13	.01	.51	-.78	.05	-.23	-.15	.68	-.64	-.23	-.15	-.02	.49
Eigenval.	3.65	1.79	1.25	1.14		3.29	2.03	1.40	1.31		4.30	1.47	1.26	1.04	
% EV	28.10	13.80	11.70	8.80		25.30	15.60	10.70	10.10		33.10	11.30	9.70	8.00	
% RV	45.10	22.15	18.78	14.13		41.01	25.28	17.34	16.37		53.39	18.23	15.65	12.90	

% EV = Explained variance percentage; % RV = Rotated variance percentage
For key to variables, see Table 1

The comparison between factor structures appears in the same **Table 3**. This was obtained by calculating Pearson's correlations between different factor couples and taking as the control structure the reference point. The results summarized as follows:

(1) The first factor in the control group indicating emotional instability, antisocial behavior, disinterestedness for work and external locus of control, appears separate in two structures in problem children group. The first structure shows loss of control feelings and the second structure shows instability, antisocial behaviour and lack of work motivation. Factor F1 in control group has a high correlation with F1 ($r = .76$) and F4 ($r = .69$) in the problem children group.

(2) The first factor (F1) of the control group structure is similar to the second factor (F2) of the problem children group ($r = .81$) and to the first factor (F1) of the delinquent group ($r = .82$). These factors group imaginary and strong motivation and elite and dogmatism variables.

(3) The third factors are similar in all groups with high correlations: $r = .93$ (problem children) and $r = .84$ (delinquents). These factors group rigidity about work, anxiety before examinations and internal locus of control towards attainment achievements variables.

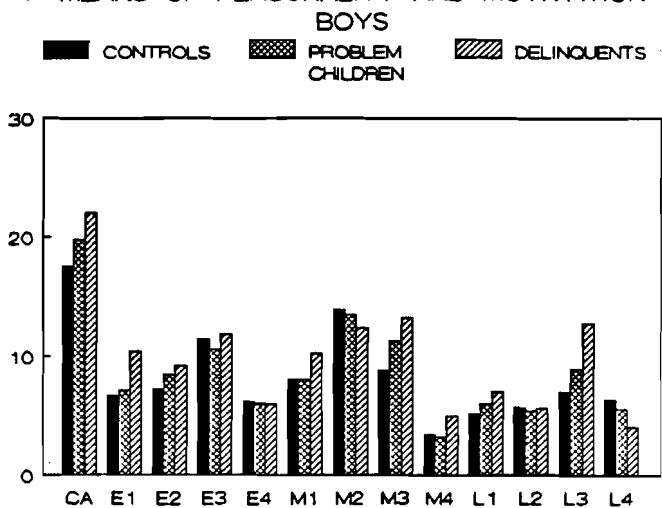
(4) The fourth factors show the independence of extraversion from other variables in control and delinquent groups ($r = .81$), being associated with imaginary and strong motivation in the problem children group (second factor).

TABLE 3

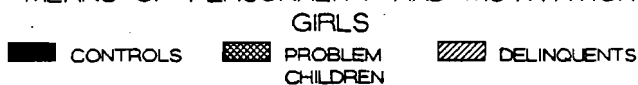
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN FACTORS IN TABLE 2 (OVER .68)

CONTROL GROUP	PROBLEM CHILDREN GROUP	DELINQUENT GROUP
F1 F4 = .69	F1 = .76	F2 = .78
F2	F2 = .81	F1 = .82
F3	F3 = .93	F3 = .84
F4	-----	F4 = .81

TABLE 4.--MEANS OF PERSONALITY AND MOTIVATION



MEANS OF PERSONALITY AND MOTIVATION



FOR KEY TO VARIABLES, SEE TABLE 1

TABLE 5. T-TEST BETWEEN GROUPS (GROUP 1 = CONTROLS; GROUP 2 = PROBLEM CHILDREN; GROUP 3 = DELINQUENTS) OF PERSONALITY AND MOTIVATION VARIABLES

	BOYS			GIRLS		
	1-2	1-3	2-3	1-2	1-3	2-3
CA	-4.29***	-7.85***	-3.39***	-2.09*	-4.60***	-2.18*
E1	-0.96	-7.35***	-5.48***	-0.48	-4.36***	-3.20**
E2	-2.66**	-4.50***	-1.63	-1.74	-5.56***	-2.81**
E3	2.72**	-1.50	-2.95**	2.17*	1.86	0.02
E4	0.78	0.99	0.22	1.99*	0.52	-1.02
M1	-0.04	-3.89***	-3.20**	-0.24	-1.60	-1.09
M2	0.08	2.53*	1.63	2.46*	4.98***	2.41*
M3	-4.67***	-8.84***	-3.32***	-1.52	-5.29***	-3.37***
M4	0.66	-4.34***	-4.31***	0.22	1.12	0.73
L1	-2.95**	-6.04***	-2.80**	-1.44	-5.55***	-3.58***
L2	1.30	0.02	-1.07	2.40*	1.67	-0.58
L3	-4.00***	-10.80***	-6.05***	-1.78	-5.83***	-2.87**
L4	2.48*	8.18***	4.27***	1.08	4.98***	2.95**

(*) $p < .05$; (**) $p < .01$; (***) $p < .001$
 For key to variables, see Table 1

T-tests taking sex into account

The means and differences are shown in Table 4 and Table 5. The most notable comments about these tables are as follows:

(1) We can see that the subjects' assignment to control, problem children and delinquent groups is matched by their high scores in the antisocial behavior and neuroticism variables. Delinquent girls have higher scores in antisocial behavior than control boys. The sequence from high to low scores is: 1. Delinquent boys; 2. Problem boys; 3. Delinquent girls; 4. Problem girls; 5. Control boys and 6. Control girls. It seems that delinquent girls have standard behaviors typically associated

with males. In fact, the delinquent girl is not distinguished from the boy whom the teacher reports as aggressive in the classroom. Neuroticism does not produce differences between sexes within groups, only that delinquent girls are slightly more neurotic than boys, this is the reserve in the other groups.

(2) Elite and dogmatism (E1) works in a similar way to antisocial behavior (CA). Again, delinquent girls have a behavioral style characteristicly masculine.

(3) Extraversion and leadership (E4) does not produce significant differences in the comparison. If we analyze the means between girls and boys, we can see that the results are in disagreement with Eysenck's theory about masculine and feminine delinquency.

(4) The most important result, from the variables obtained by the Questionnaire MA, is in the disinterestedness towards work variable (M3), where again, delinquent girls are near to the masculine psychological functioning.

(5) Finally, the results about locus of control variables suggest that antisocial behaviour goes together with externality, more especially in boys than in girls.

DISCUSSION

Firstly, the internal consistency and the comparison between factor structures suggests that the groups chosen to represent the extremes of the socialization's dimension (control and delinquent groups) are perfectly supported, but not the mid-point group (problem children). The discriminant analyses, with these and other variables, (Báguena y Díaz, 1989; Díaz and Báguena, 1989) showed the worse classification for the problem children group. This result demands a deep analysis of the teacher's report to assigning a teenager to this category.

Secondly, the differential analyses tend to support the original hypothesis for both girls and boys. Thus delinquents as compared to non-delinquents have high scores in antisocial behavior, dogmatism, neuroticism and externality. When we look at boys and girls separately, we see the biggest differences in delinquent girls and boys in the motivational variables. However, our results do not show significant difference in extraversion, perhaps due to the questionnaire used, which assesses the sociability component and not the impulsivity component, this latter being responsible for the differences found in other studies (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1971).

Finally, looking at the means obtained for girls and boys of different groups, we can see that the delinquent girl has a personality profile similar to the boy (delinquent girls' scores are nearer to boys of other groups than girls of other groups). Our results also show that girls, delinquent or not, take more responsibility for their actions, having a more internal locus of control and being no more neurotic than boys, this contrasts with traditional ideas which attributive these personality traits to boys.

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