

PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSONALITY TRAITS OF SEXUAL OFFENDERS

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ABSTRACT

Criminality is an extremely heterogeneous social phenomenon that includes various kinds of deviant behavior. It also includes sexual criminality (crimes against sexual freedom and moral), which has a highly negative impact on society and endangers the most intimate parts of a person's life. The aim of this survey is to outline a structure of psychological features of sexual offenders, to determine the degree of their development and the way in which they are connected. The results that have been achieved during this survey will successfully be implemented into the practical work of penal institutions in the Republic of Macedonia in order to ensure successful resocialisation and reintegration of sexual offenders in the society. Our experience and knowledge are compatible with world-wide trends saying that sexual offenders are mentally healthy people and that they cannot be included in any diagnostic category. The main results of this survey can be summed up into several points: in general, sexual offenders are male, aged between 26 and 33, with minimal education and without profession or employment. Usually, they do not behave in pathological manner and they are mentally healthy people. It is believed that resocialisation as well as complex treatment will be necessary for people convicted of sexual offences; not only will it represent prevention from committing new crimes, it will also be a breeding ground for their active participation in life out of the penal institutions.

Keywords: Sexual criminality, sexual offence, homicide, personality, personality features/traits, urges, resocialization, treatment



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Introduction

In contemporary conditions of life in different countries of the world criminal legal issue which treats and regulates behaving that threatens the freedom of an individual when doing sexual relationship is not regulated in the same way. A wide variety of sexual criminal attacks (of which the most serious is rape) is mainly classified as a separate group of criminal acts, which essentially are the most numerous, and at the same time attack the dignity of a human. Some other torts, especially those connected with prostitution, organized crime and sexual abuse of children in most countries of the world receive much more attention not only from scientific and professional circles but from the general public as well.

- Although sexual criminality constitutes an insignificant part of the total crime rate, (which is typical of other countries worldwide), this type of criminality is an actual issue because:
 1. It is a very serious form of a crime with typical violent elements which are directed against human freedom of sexual behaving.
 2. Because of this, all clasified forms of rape (as well as other more serious forms of sexual offences) disturb the public and cause fear, anxiety and revolt.

The review of the research that concerns the psychological characteristics of perpetrators of sex crimes indicates that sex offenders are not aggressive, hostile or impulsive and that they cannot be diagnosed with being sexual psychopaths. Sex offenders are emotionally deranged personalities who cannot fit their sexual practice in legal frames. Considering some researches in which some of the characteristic features of the sex offenders are given, it will be useful to determine the personality traits typical of perpetrators of sex crimes, the level at which they are developed and what their mutual connection and structure is. More specifically, attention will be paid on the intelligence quotient (IQ), the dimension of the psychoticism, the psychological type of the individual (introversion-extraversion) and the dimensions of emotional stability-neuroticism.

The goal of this research is to determine the psychological structure of sex offenders and to show their social characteristics.

The target of this research is to give answer to the following questions:

1. To determine if there is a difference regarding the intellectual abilities between perpetrators of sexual and blood offences;
2. To determine if there is a difference regarding the dimension of psychoticism between perpetrators of sexual and blood offences;
3. To determine if there is a difference regarding the psychological type (introversion – extraversion) between perpetrators of sexual and blood offences;
4. To determine if there is a difference regarding the dimension of the neuroticism-stability between perpetrators of sexual and blood offences;
5. to determine if there is a difference regarding the personality trait opposition (rigidity) on the behaviour of the perpetrators of sexual or blood offences

In this research, a method of sample of perpetrators of sexual offenses and perpetrators of blood tort is applied. Perpetrators of sexual offenses make an experimental group while perpetrators of blood tort make a control group. The experimental group consists of 64 respondents who committed a sexual offense, while the control group consists of 63 respondents who committed blood tort. The total number of the two groups is 127 respondents who have been serving prison sentence in CPA - Idrizovo near Skopje.

The experimental group consisted of male respondents aged between 18 and 66. 39 respondents from this group were convicted of a criminal offense “Raping“ under the article 186 of the CC of the Republic of Macedonia. In addition to the criminal offense “Raping“ 2 of the respondents were also convicted of criminal offense “Incest” under the article 194 of the CC of the Republic of Macedonia. In addition to the criminal offence raping one of the respondents was also convicted of the criminal offense “Kidnapping” under the article 141 of the CC of the Republic of Macedonia; besides the criminal offense raping, 2 of the respondents were also convicted of criminal offense “murder” under the article 123 of the CC of the Republic of Macedonia. 10 respondents were convicted of criminal offense “Sexual assault of a child“ under the article

188 of the CC of the Republic of Macedonia, 3 respondents were convicted of criminal offense “Unnatural fornication” under the article 185 from the CC of the Republic of Macedonia, 6 respondents of criminal offense “Statutory rape of a helpless person” under the article 187 of the CC of the Republic of Macedonia and 4 of the respondents were convicted of criminal offense “Incest“ under the article 194 from the CC of the Republic of Macedonia. For these criminal offenses sentences of imprisonment in duration of 1-10 years were pronounced.

The control group consisted of 63 respondents who committed blood tort. 53 respondents were convicted of criminal offense “murder” under the article 123 of the CC of the Republic of Macedonia, 7 respondents were convicted of criminal offense “attempted murder” under the article 123 att. 19 from the CC of the Republic of Macedonia and 3 respondents were convicted of criminal offense “manslaughter” under the article 125 from the CC of the Republic of Macedonia. For these criminal offenses sentences for imprisonment in duration of 3 years to life imprisonment were pronounced. This group consisted of respondents aged between 18 and 60. Participation in the interview was voluntary, and one of the basic conditions was good command of Macedonian language.

Data collection lasted from June 1999 to June 2001. All the respondents were questioned individually. Raven’s progressive matrices were used to test the intellectual abilities (nonverbal test for measuring intelligence). Literacy and education were irrelevant factors for the application of this test.

Two questionnaires were used to examine personal features: EPI test (Emotions Profile Index) and EPQ (Eysenck Personality Questionnaire). Both questionnaires were given separately. A questionnaire for data collection was used as well. Statistical procedures such as χ^2 (xi-square), t (t-test), factor analysis and percentages were used for processing the data obtained.

1. The influence of intellectual abilities on perpetrators of sexual and blood crimes

The research presupposes that both groups (perpetrators of sexual and blood crimes) statistically differ in a significant manner in regards to the influence of intellectual abilities on behavior¹. 35 respondents or 27,5% belong to the category of Definite feeble-mindedness (IQ up to 70). 18 of the respondents or 51,4% committed a sexual crime, while 17 or 48,6% are perpetrators of blood torts. This result implies that it is an equal possibility for respondents who belong to this category to commit a sexual or a blood offense. of investigated cases to commit crime. 22 of the respondents or 17,3% belong to the category of Borderline deficiency (IQ 70- 79); 15 respondents or 68,2% committed sexual crime and 7 or 31,8% committed blood delict. This result implies that there is a greater possibility that respondents in this category to commit sexual offense rather a blood offense; 26 respondents or 20,4% belong to the category of Dullness (IQ 80-89); 14 respondents or 53,8% committed sexual crime and 12 or 46,2% committed blood delicts. These results show that there is an equal possibility for the respondents in this category to commit sexual or blood delict. 37 respondents or 29,1% belong to the category of Normal or average intelligence (IQ 90-109). 13 respondents or 35,1% committed a sexual offense and 24 respondents or 64,9% committed blood offences. These data imply that there is a slightly higher possibility for the category of people with average intelligence to commit a sexual delict rather than a blood offence. 6 respondents or 4,7 % belong to the category of superior intelligence (IQ 110-119). 3 of them committed a sexual offence (50,0%), while other 3 (50%) committed a blood offence. This number is insignificant.

1 respondent or 0,78% belongs to the category of people with very superior intelligence (IQ 120-128) and he committed a sexual crime. This number is insignificant, too. This hypothesis was disproved because $\chi^2 = 7.354$; $df=5$ $p>0.05$ and is statistically insignificant.

¹ Тодороска Ѓурчевска, С. (2004). *Карактеристиките на сторителите на сексуални престапи*. Доктроска дисертација. Институт за социолошки и политичко-правни истражувања. Скопје, стр. 395.

It concluded that intellectual abilities of perpetrators of sexual and blood offences are an irrelevant factor when it comes to committing sexual or blood offences.

2. The influence of psychoticism on the behavior of perpetrators of sexual or blood crimes

The research presupposes that both groups (perpetrators of sexual and blood crimes) statistically differ in a significant manner in regards to the influence of psychoticism on their behaviour². 124 respondents or 97,6% belong to the category of a very low score (up to 12). 61 respondent or 49,2% committed a sexual offence and 63 or 49,2% committed a blood offence. This data show equal tendency for both groups to commit sexual or blood crimes; 3 respondents or 2,36% belong to the category of moderate intensity score (13-15). All of them committed sexual crimes.

On the basis of the these data, this hypothesis is proved to be correct because $\chi^2=3.025$; $df=1$; $p>0.05$ and is statistically insignificant, but has a borderline significance of 0.08. The perpetrators of sexual offences are more likely to manifest moderate psychoticism (rigidness, emotional numbness, difficulties in regards to emotional and interpersonal relations, difficulties in memory, absence social attitudes). None of the respondents belongs to the category of explicit psychoticism. All respondents with moderate psychoticism are perpetrators of sexual crimes, while those who have a low score show an equal tendency to commit both sexual and blood offences.

Moderate psychoticism is a relevant factor when it comes to committing sexual and blood crimes.

² Тодороска Ѓурчевска, С. (2004). *Карактеристиките на сторителите на секуларни престапи*. Доктроска дисертација. Институт за социолошки и политичко-правни истражувања. Скопје, стр. 398.

3. The influence of the personality type (extroversion v.s. introversion) on the behavior of perpetrators of sexual and blood offences

The research presupposes that both groups (perpetrators of sexual and blood crimes) statistically differ in a significant manner in regards to the personality type (extroversion v.s. introversion)³. 14 respondents or 11,0% of the whole sample belong to the category of introvert personality type (score up to 7). 9 respondents or 64,3% committed a sexual offence and 5 respondents or 35,7% committed a blood offence. These parameters show that introvert respondents are more likely to commit sexual crimes; 28 respondents or 22,0% belong to the category of both extrovert and introvert personality type (score 8-10). 16 respondents or 57,1% committed a sexual offence, while 12 or 42,9% committed a blood offence. These results show that those who belong to the this category are more prone to committing sexual offences; 36 respondents or 28,3% have are moderately extrovert (score 11-13). 18 respondents or 50,0% committed a sexual offense and the same number applies to those who committed a blood offence. These results show that those respondents who belong to this category manifest an equal tendency for both sexual or blood offences. 49 respondents or 38,5% belong to the category of extreme extrovert personality type (score higher than 14). 21 respondents or 42,9% committed a sexual offence, while 28 respondents or 57,1% committed a blood offence. This is an indication that those respondents who are extremely introvert are more likely to commit blood offences.

Based on the these data ($\chi^2=2.707$; $df=2$; $p>0.05$), we can conclude that introvert personality type (more prone to introspection and isolation, difficulties in communication) are more prone to sexual offences. Respondents with characteristics of both introversion and extroversion and those who are moderately extrovert have an equal tendency to commit sexual and blood offences. On the other hand, respondents who are extremely extrovert, have more likely to commit sexual offences.

Personality type (extroversion, introversion) is a relevant factor when it comes to committing sexual and blood offences

³ Тодороска Ѓурчевска, С. (2004). *Карактеристиките на сторителите на секуларни престапи*. Доктроска дисертација. Институт за социолошки и политичко-правни истражувања. Скопје, стр. 400.

4. Influence of the dimension of neuroticism-stability on the behaviour of the perpetrators of sexual or blood offences

The research presupposes that both groups (perpetrators of sexual and blood crimes) statistically differ in a significant manner in regards to the dimension neuroticism-stability⁴. 30 respondents or 23,6% belong to the category of low level neuroticism i.e they manifest emotional stability (score up to 8). 17 respondents or 56,7% committed a sexual offence and 13 respondents or 43,3% committed a blood offence. These parameters show that respondents with low level of neuroticism have an equal tendency to commit sexual and blood offences; 26 respondents or 20,4% belong to the category of people which show both neuroticism and emotional stability (score 9-11). 14 respondents or 53,8% committed a sexual offence and 12 or 46,2% committed a blood offence. These data indicate that respondents who belong to this category manifest an equal tendency to commit sexual or blood offences; 23 respondents or 18,1% belong to the category of moderate level of neuroticism (score 12-15). 11 respondents or 47,8% committed a sexual offence, while 12 respondents or 52,2% committed a blood offence. These data show that those respondents who belong to this category have an equal tendency to commit sexual or blood offences; 48 respondents or 37,7% belong to the category of people with expressed neuroticism (score higher 15). 22 respondents or 45,8% committed a sexual offence, while 26 respondents or 54,2% committed a blood offence. These data show that the respondents who belong to this category manifest an equal possibility to commit sexual or blood offence.

Based on these data ($\chi^2=1.056$; $df=3$; $p>0.05$), the category of respondents with low neuroticism manifests an equal possibility of committing sexual or blood offences. Those respondents who fall in the category of people between emotional stability and neuroticism have an equal possibility for committing sexual and blood crimes. The respondents who show neuroticism and emotional stability have also the same tendency. The

⁴ Тодороска Ѓурчевска, С. (2004). *Карактеристиките на сторителите на секуларни престапи*. Доктроска дисертација. Институт за социолошки и политичко-правни истражувања. Скопје, стр. 402.

same tendency is noticed among those respondents who have extreme manifestation of neuroticism.

The dimension of neuroticism-stability is an irrelevant factor when it comes to committing sexual and blood offences.

5. Influence of the personality trait *opposition (rigidity)* on the behaviour of the perpetrators of sexual or blood offences

The emotion of rejection/repulsion is the core of the personality trait of opposition. The research presupposes that both groups (perpetrators of sexual and blood crimes) statistically differ in a significant manner in regards to the personality trait *opposition (rigidity)*⁵. 71 respondents or 55,9% belong to the category of low score for this personality trait (score up to 40). 29 respondents or 40,8% committed a sexual offence and 42 respondents or 59.2% committed a blood offence. These parameters show that respondents in this category are more prone to committing blood offences; 33 respondents or 25,3% belong to the category of people with average score for this personality trait (score 41-60). 23 respondents or 69,7% committed a sexual offence and 10 or 30,3% committed a blood offence. These data indicate that respondents who belong to this category manifest are more prone to committing sexual offences; In the category of high scores for this personality trait (above 61), there 23 respondents or 18,1%. 12 respondents or 52,2% committed a sexual offence, while 11 respondents or 47,8% committed a blood offence. These data show that there is an equal possibility for the respondents in this category to commit sexual and blood offences.

Based on these data ($\chi^2=7.538$; $df=2$; $p<0.05$), it concluded that in regards to this dimension there are differences which are statistically significant. The perpetrators of sexual crimes are more likely to manifest opposition; they are prone to rejection and negation. They are rigid and are likely to criticize others. These personality traits can be correlation with disregard of rules and regulation. The respondents with a low score for this

⁵ Тодороска Ѓурчевска, С. (2004). *Карактеристиките на сторителите на сексуални престапи*. Доктроска дисертација. Институт за социолошки и политичко-правни истражувања. Скопје, стр. 404.

personality trait (indecisiveness, dependency, lack of initiative, conformism) are more likely to commit blood offences. The respondents who have average and high scores for this personality trait are more prone to committing a sexual offence.

The personality trait *opposition (rigidity)* is a relevant factor when it comes to committing sexual offences.

Conclusion

Bearing in mind the scientific findings in the field criminology, psychology, sociology, psycho-pathology, as well as the empirical research presented in my PhD thesis, we have enough relevant data which show that sexual delinquency as a separate kind of deviant behaviour is not determined by a specific personality profile typical of sexual delinquents. The findings presented in this paper indicate that specific behaviour of perpetrators of both sexual as blood offences in regards to committing a sexual or a blood offence is determined by a certain psychological traits. More precisely, their behaviour is influenced by the personality trait opposition, the dimension of of psychoticism and the personality type (extraversion v.s. introversion). The findings show that the perpetrators of sexual offences cannot be classified in any of the personality typologies. Our experience is compatible with the world-wide knowledge according to which perpetrators of sexual offences are sane individuals without psychological and personality abnormalities.

This information is essential for the process of resocialisation during imprisonment. These perpetrators need a specific approach depending on the type, forms, methods and means of resocialisation and will correspond to the personality traits of these perpetrators. The resocialisation process should not be based on the offence itself, but on the personality traits with separate sophisticated methods aimed at intensive group and individual work. In this context, it is important to encourage implementation of value system with positive attitudes through group and individual psychotherapy. For successful dealing with this type of delinquency, attention should be paid on the prevention of sexual offences on various levels. Prevention starts within the family through socialization and appropriate identification models for young individuals (the parents). The

next phase takes place in school though mandatory sexual education courses with a view to properly understanding the differences between the sexes and to encourage appropriate relationship between them by observing biological and sexual differences. We consider that this research will trigger other researched in this field, which will contribute to better understanding and illuminating the aetiology of sexual delinquency.

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