

Gender and delinquency

Sociology



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March 22, Biological, Psychological, and Sociological Reasons for Rise in Female Juvenile Crimes Historically, young boys commit more crimes than young girls. According to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Internet Citation: OJJDP Statistical Briefing Book in 2014, of all juvenile crimes in 2012, boys aged 10 to 17 years old committed 5,458 crimes, while girls did 2,352. The same office noted, however, a rise in female juvenile crimes, especially for larceny, simple assault, running away, and disorderly conduct. Rising female juvenile crime rates have biological, psychological, and sociological explanations.

Biological explanations assert that female juveniles have predispositions to crimes because of certain biochemical and genetic factors (Roberson 49). Females who have excessively male characteristics may be more biologically predisposed to crimes, according to Cesare Lombroso (Siegel and Welsh 251). The masculinity hypothesis asserts that women who look more like men, by having excessive body hair and wrinkles and abnormally-sized cranium, tend to be more aggressive than women who do not have these characteristics (Siegel and Welsh 251). Genetics may also explain why some girls are predisposed to crime (Roberson 49). Having certain genetic traits might increase aggression and poor risky behaviors (Roberson 49). Biological reasons assert that the biology of female delinquents can help explain their inclination to crimes.

Besides biological explanations, psychological reasons underscore that psychological mechanisms underlie rising female juvenile crime rates. Girls who are involved in larceny may have a stronger id than superego (Roberson 49). They gain immediate gratification from shoplifting, for instance (Roberson 49). In addition, the psychoanalytical approach underscores that

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traumatic childhood experiences prevent girls from developing their egos and superegos properly (Roberson 49). Female juveniles are often victims of physical and/or sexual abuse while very young (Lawrence and Hesse 61). These abuses damage them psychologically, with some experiencing mental and emotional illnesses, which make them susceptible to poor risk assessment, impulsivity, and desire for immediate pleasures to relieve their anxieties (Siegel and Welsh 254).

Sociological theories differ on the reasons that they believe may be causing the rise in female juvenile crimes though they agree that social changes and factors shape the latter. A poor home environment may have more significant damage on girls than boys (Siegel and Welsh 257). Many girls are running away and are involved in simple assault and disorderly conduct in their homes, schools, and neighborhoods because of underlying aggression due to family problems (Siegel and Welsh 257). Other sociological theories assert that the newfound freedoms and sexual liberation of women increased their attraction to crime, while continued patriarchy may be resulting to girls rejecting it through engaging in male-dominated crimes, such as violent crimes and larceny (Siegel and Welsh 265; Shoemaker 257). Females are particularly at risk for juvenile delinquency if early puberty combines with social stressors, such as poverty, peer groups, poor parental supervision, child abuse, and exposure to violence (Shoemaker 257). A society and family home that do not provide stable and loving interpersonal relationships can be particularly damaging to girls and increase their aggression and affinity for power that can come from conducting various crimes.

Biological, psychological, and sociological theories assert that though male and female juvenile delinquents may have similar characteristics, girls are at <https://assignbuster.com/gender-and-delinquency/>

risk if they have male traits and genetic problems, experience psychological trauma, and undergo social problems. Having unstable home environments seem to be one of the most significant causes of the rise in female juvenile crimes.

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