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Psychopathy : A Review of Literature

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ABSTRACT

A wide literature related to Psychopathic Tendencies has been studied to develop an insight into the nature and character of these tendencies. Out of the vast literature available in the field twenty five excerpts of reviewed literature are mentioned in this paper. This review unravels the predictors and correlates of psychopathic tendencies and also emphasizes the link of psychopathy with other criminal and antisocial tendencies.

Keywords: Psychopathy, Criminal and Antisocial Tendencies, Callous–Unemotional.

I. INTRODUCTION

Psychopathy

The literal meaning of "psychopathic" is nothing more specific than psychologically damaged, the term has long since been transmogrified to mean socially damaging, and it implies a specific category of people inherently committed to antisocial behavior as a consequence of personal abnormalities or deficiencies (Blackburn, R. 1988). *Psychopathy* is generally seen as a syndromecomprising a constellation of extreme interpersonal, affective, and behavioural/lifestyle traits and behaviours (Cooke &Michie, 2001; Hare, 2003) whereas, *Psychopathic traits* are defined as the individual traits/symptoms and behaviours that make up the syndrome of psychopathy. A rather common phenomenon in the literature is the use of the term *psychopathy* refers to individual psychopathic traits or to sub factors of psychopathy, such as callous–unemotional (CU) traits.

Psychopathy As Mental Disorder- Psychopathy is a mental disorder in which an individual manifests amoral and antisocial behavior, lack of ability to love or establish meaningful personal relationships, extreme egocentricity, failure to learn from experience, and many more.

Psychopathy As Personality Disorder- Psychopathy is a personality disorder defined by a distinctive cluster of behaviours and inferred personality traits, most of which society views as pejorative. Psychopaths are social predators who charm, manipulate, and ruthlessly plow their way through life, leaving a broad trail of broken hearts, shattered expectations, and empty wallets. Completely lacking in conscience and in feelings for others, they selfishly take what they want and do as they please, violating social norms and expectations without the slightest sense of guilt or regret.

Psychopathic traits increase the risk of being engaged in criminal behavior and alcohol and drug abuse. However, these traits not only are observed in criminal populations, but also can be observed in individuals at many different levels of society, including in some people who have achieved high professional status.

OBJECTIVE

- To review the literature available on psychopathy.

II. PSYCHOPATHY: A LITERATURE

Aharoni and associates (2011) examined whether and in what ways psychopathy is associated with abnormal moral intuitions among criminal offenders. Haidt et al.'s Moral Foundations Questionnaire was administered on 222 adult male offenders to assess five

moral domains: Harm Prevention, Fairness, Respect for Authority, in group Loyalty, and Purity/Sanctity. Psychopathy total score explained a considerable proportion of the difference in reduced support for Harm Prevention and Fairness, but not the other domains. These results showed that psychopathy entails a discrete set of moral abnormalities and suggest that these abnormalities could potentially help to explain the characteristic antisocial behavior of individuals with psychopathy.

Andershed Henrik et al. (2015) investigated Psychopathic traits as predictors of future criminality, intimate partner aggression, and substance use in young adult men. Results of this study showed that psychopathic traits measured with the YPI (approximately at age 25) did not significantly contribute to the prediction of future official criminal charges and self-reported crime, physical aggression against intimate partners, and excessive alcohol and marijuana use, after controlling for several covariates. Findings also revealed that men with higher scores on the YPI were more likely to commit future acts of relational aggression against their partner, even after controlling for prior relational aggression.

Book and associates (2004) studied, Psychopaths: cheaters or warrior-hawks? From a life history perspective, psychopaths can be thought to pursue both social cheating and warrior-hawk strategies. The Cheater Hypothesis suggested that psychopaths would exhibit more resentment, and less empathy and altruism than non-psychopaths. Psychopathic participants scored significantly higher than other participants on measures of indignation and aggression. Consistent with both hypotheses, psychopaths also had a lower ratio of behavioural inhibition to activation than other participants. Opposing to expectations, psychopaths did not score lower on measures of empathy or altruism. 'Cheater-Hawk Hypothesis' while cheating is a part of the psychopathic range, the Cheater Hypothesis does not explain psychopaths tendency to rely on violence to get what they want. Similarly, the Warrior-Hawk hypothesis does a good job of dealing with the latter, but ignores cheating and manipulative tendencies.

Catherine E. Prado and associates (2016) examined the relationships between psychopathic traits and important self-conscious moral emotions such as shame and guilt. In this study researchers examined these relationships in a sub-clinical sample, taking into account the important theoretical differences between the two emotions. Participants were (N = 739) completed a measure of psychopathic traits and a measure of self-conscious affect style. Both primary and secondary psychopathic traits were found to be inversely related to guilt proneness; however, the effect size was greater for primary psychopathic traits. Primary psychopathic traits were unrelated to shame-proneness, while secondary psychopathic traits were positively related to shame-proneness. Both primary and secondary traits were positively related to externalization; however the effect size was greater for primary over secondary traits.

Dargis et al. (2016) clarified the link between childhood abuse history and psychopathic traits in adult criminal offenders. Childhood abuse is a risk factor for the development of externalizing characteristics and disorders, including antisocial personality disorder and psychopathy. 183 samples of incarcerated adult male criminal offenders were selected for this study. The present study confirmed severity of overall childhood maltreatment was linked to severity of both psychopathy and antisocial personality disorder in adulthood. Moreover, this relationship was particularly strong for physical abuse and the antisocial facet of psychopathy. Sexual abuse history was uniquely related to juvenile conduct disorder severity, rather than adult psychopathy or antisocial behaviours. Additionally, there was a significantly stronger relationship between childhood maltreatment and juvenile conduct disorder than between childhood maltreatment and ASPD or psychopathy. These findings clarified the link between childhood maltreatment and antisocial behavior later in life.

Fontaine et al. (2008)investigated the relationships between 3 different dimensions of psychopathy (callous/unemotional traits, narcissism, impulsivity) and cognitive abilities in a large population-based sample of children (age 9, N = 4,713). Findings revealed positive relationship between narcissism and both verbal and nonverbal abilities, even after accounting for conduct problems and hyperactivity. Callous/unemotional traits and impulsivity were negatively related to both types of cognitive abilities but did not remain significant after accounting for conduct problems and hyperactivity.

Interactions between gender and the dimensions of psychopathy were not significant.

Fowles and associates (2009)studied Temperament and psychopathy: A dual-pathway model. The concept of psychopathy refers to a pattern of chronic antisocial behavior and personality features, such as emotional detachment, lovelessness, and guiltlessness, attributable in part to a temperament deficit. Historically, that deficit has been seen as a low reactivity to fear, but recent research has documented a second temperament deficit in adults that involves poor emotional and behavioural control. Both pathways were found in the child psychopathology literature, pointing to multifactorial developmental pathways from childhood to adult psychopathy.

Hicks, B. M., Vaidyanathan, U., & Patrick, C. J. (2010) Studied Validating Female Psychopathy Subtypes: Differences in Personality, Antisocial and Violent Behavior, Substance Abuse, Trauma, and Mental Health. Similar psychopathic subtypes in female prisoners on the basis of personality structure were identified by model-based cluster analysis in this research. Secondary psychopaths (n = 39) were characterized by personality traits of negative emotionality and low behavioural constraint, an early onset of antisocial and criminal behavior, greater substance use and abuse, more violent behavior and institutional misconduct, and more mental health problems including symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder and suicide attempts. Primary psychopaths (n = 31) exhibited few distinguishing personality features but were prolific criminals especially in regards to non-violent crime, and exhibited relatively few mental health problems despite substantial exposure to traumatic events. The results support alternative etiological pathways to antisocial and criminal behavior that are evident in personality structure as well as gender similarities and differences in the manifestation of psychopathic personalities.

Johansson, P., & Kerr, M. (2005)Studied, Psychopathy and intelligence: A second look. Empirical studies using the PCL-R (Hare, 2003) revealed no intelligence differences between psychopaths and non-psychopaths. However, Cleckley (1976) argued that psychopaths often show superior intelligence. The purpose of the present study was to test the hypothesis that the correlation between intelligence and severity of criminal development is the opposite in psychopaths than in non-psychopathic criminals using a sample of 370 men sentenced for violent (nonsexual) crimes. The results showed that for non-psychopaths, higher total IQ and particularly verbal intelligence meant a later start in violent crime. For those diagnosed as psychopaths, however, this association was reversed.

Larsson et al. (2007) found a common genetic factor loaded substantially on both psychopathic personality traits and antisocial behavior, whereas a common shared environmental factor loaded exclusively on antisocial behavior. The genetic overlap between psychopathic personality traits and antisocial behavior may reflect a genetic vulnerability to externalizing psychopathology. The finding of shared environmental influences only in antisocial behavior suggested an etiological distinction between psychopathic personality dimensions and antisocial behavior.

Larsson, H. et al. (2006) studied the importance of genetic and environmental influences on psychopathic personality traits in a sample of 1,090 monozygotic and dizygotic twin pairs, aged 16-17 years. Results showed a strong genetic influence behind the higher order 'psychopathic personality' factor, underpinned by the three psychopathic personality dimensions. Over and above the effects to the higher order factor, significant unique genetic influences were also found in the callous/unemotional and in the impulsive/irresponsible dimension, but not in the grandiose/manipulative dimension.

Lee, Z., &Salekin, R. T. (2010) examined male and female psychopathy subtypes in a large sample of undergraduate students (n = 1229). Model-based cluster analysis of the Psychopathic Personality Inventory-Short Form (PPI-SF) revealed two clusters in both male and female students. In males, the primary subtype evidenced greater psychopathic personality traits (i.e., Social Potency, Fearlessness, and Impulsive Nonconformity) and lower anxiety (i.e., higher Stress Immunity), whereas the secondary subtype displayed fewer psychopathic personality traits (i.e., Machiavellian Egocentricity and Blame Externalization) and higher anxiety (i.e., lower Stress Immunity). In females, the primary subtype exhibited higher scores across all PPI-

SF subscales and lower anxiety whereas the secondary subtype reported lower PPI-SF subscale scores and higher anxiety. Across a diverse array of personality, affective, and behavioural external correlates, differences between the subtypes and with non-psychopaths emerged.

Mahmut et al. (2008) compared the findings from a sample of non-criminals with high and low psychopathy levels to published findings with criminal psychopaths and non-psychopaths. Congruent to findings with criminal psychopaths, participants with high psychopathy traits (High-P) compared to those with low psychopathy traits (Low-P) performed significantly worse on the Iowa Gambling Task, a task sensitive to orbital frontal cortex dysfunction. Moreover, the High-P group also evidenced a lack of empathy, a hallmark feature of psychopathy. These findings could not be explained by differences in estimated IQ or performance on a task sensitive to an executive functioning deficit. The discussion focused on possible differences between non-criminal and criminal psychopaths, concluding criminal psychopaths manifest more extreme degrees of the interpersonal-affective and antisocial features of psychopathy. This study provides evidence that non-criminal and criminal psychopaths are not qualitatively distinct populations but share similar psycho physiological and neuropsychological characteristics. Data indicate that noncriminal and criminal psychopaths most likely differ in terms of degree: specifically, the extent to which criminal and/or antisocial behaviours are engaged and the manifestation of the interpersonal-affective features of the psychopathy.

MalinHemphala and Anders Tengstrom (2010) studied the associations between psychopathic traits and mental disorders among adolescents with substance use problems. 180 adolescents seeking help at a substance abuse treatment clinic was studied. Results showed that across gender, there was a positive correlation between externalizing symptoms and PCL-YV score. Among boys, there was a positive correlation between internalizing symptoms and PCL-YV score. Further, the behavioural dimension of psychopathy was predictive of externalizing symptoms across gender. It is concluded that Psychopathic traits do not only exist among adolescents who are identified because of their criminal behavior. There were gender differences in the association between symptoms and psychopathic traits.

Naomi Sadeh1 and associates (2009)Examined psychopathic tendencies in adolescence from the perspective of personality theory. Objective of this study was to clarify the personality correlates of psychopathic tendencies in adolescents using the Antisocial Process Screening Device [APSD; Frick and Hare, 2001] and a youth adapted version of the Multidimensional Personality Questionnaire [Patrick et al., 2009, unpublished]. A combination of self- and parent-reports on the APSD (n5229) revealed that the three facet model of psychopathic tendencies in youth was characterized by a similar constellation of personality traits as the psychopathic construct in adulthood [e.g., Hall, Benning and Patrick, 2004]. Specifically, low anxiety and trait aggression characterized the APSD Callous/Unemotional dimension, social dominance and trait aggression characterized the APSD Narcissism dimension, and disinhibition and low harm avoidance characterized the APSD Impulsivity dimension. The results were add confidence to the hypothesis that personality relationships to psychopathic tendencies emerge from an early age [Lynam, 2002] and dimensions of psychopathy in youth are associated with distinct personality profiles.

Nestor, P. G. et al. (2002)Studied,Psychosis, psychopathy, and homicide: A preliminary neuropsychological inquiry.This study attempted to statistically distinguish subgroups of murderers with mental disorders from among 26 hospitalized men (mean age=34 years) who were committed to a maximum security forensic hospital. Results showed that Cluster analysis produced two distinct subgroups: one defined by high incidence of psychosis and low level of psychopathy and one by low incidence of psychosis and high level of psychopathy, each corresponding to distinct neuropsychological differences in intellectual abilities, learning disabilities, and social intelligence.

Neumann, C. S., & Hare, R. D. (2008)examined the prevalence and structural nature of psychopathic traits, as well as their association with external correlates in an urban community. The community data (N = 514) represented a stratified random sample of persons

between the ages of 18 and 40 who were assessed on the Psychopathy Checklist: Screening Version (PCL: SV) and also for violent behavior, alcohol use, and intellectual functioning. Structural equation model analyses revealed that a 4-factor model found in offender and forensic psychiatric samples fit the community data well and was invariant across sex and ethnicity.

Ometto, M., de Oliveira, P.A., Milioni, A.L. et al (2016) compared the social functioning and psychopathic traits of maltreated adolescents (MTA) with a control group (CG) and to investigate what types of maltreatments and social skills were associated with psychopathic traits in both groups. The types and intensity of maltreatment were evaluated through the Childhood Trauma Questionnaire (CTQ) in 107 adolescents, divided into the MTA group ($n = 66$) and non-maltreated youths ($n = 41$). The Hare Psychopathy Checklist: Youth Version (PCL: YV) and a detailed inventory for evaluation of social skills in adolescents were also applied in all individuals. MTA presented more psychopathic traits than the CG, in all domains measured by PCL: YV, independently of IQ levels and the presence of psychiatric disorders. Interestingly, the groups did not differ significantly from each other on indicators of social skills. Multiple regression analysis revealed that emotional neglect was the only maltreatment subtype significantly associated with psychopathic traits, more specifically with the PCL: YV interpersonal factor (F1), and that some social skills (empathy, self-control and social confidence) were related to specific psychopathic factors. The results highlight that emotional neglect may be more damaging to social behaviours than physical and sexual abuse, and that neglected children require more specific and careful attention.

Paula J. Fite et al. (2008) studied Relation between Parenting Stress and Psychopathic Traits among Children.Parenting stress was examined as a correlate of psychopathic traits, specifically narcissism, callous/unemotional traits, and impulsivity, among school-aged children while controlling for the variance explained by aggressive behavior. Participants included 212 children ranging from 6 to 12 years of age (M¼8.3 years) who were admitted to an acute child psychiatric inpatient unit for treatment. Multiple regression analyses revealed that high levels of the PSI (parenting stress index) dimension attachment difficulties were associated with high levels of narcissism and callous/unemotional traits among the children while statistically controlling for aggression. The PSI dimension role restriction was also found to be negatively related to narcissism.

Rebecca L Fix and Spencer T Fix (2015) Studied Trait Psychopathy, Emotional Intelligence, and Criminal Thinking: Predicting Illegal Behavior among College Students. This study was focused on individuals high on trait psychopathy. Higher trait psychopathy was associated with lower levels of emotional intelligence and increased participation in illegal behavior. 111 school students were selected for this study. Results showed that higher levels of trait psychopathy were significantly related to less caring for others, intrapersonal understanding, and general mood, and greater interpersonal functioning and stress management. Furthermore, trait psychopathy was a strong predictor of violent, property, drug, and status offenses.

Reidy, D. E., Zeichner, A., & Seibert, L. A. (2011) assessed affective motives that may underlie the relationship between psychopathy and unprovoked aggression. Results indicate that participants who responded faster to happiness words after viewing violent imagery (i.e., sadistic) were significantly more likely to engage in unprovoked aggression. Additionally, Factor 1 psychopathy (emotional detachment) predicted increased probability of unprovoked aggression; however, this relationship was not mediated by sadism. While, Factor 1 and sadism each independently predicted unprovoked aggression. The implications of the data suggest that the individuals who display unprovoked violence may be more likely to employ aggressive plans across situational contexts than the individuals who display only impulsive acts of hostile/reactive aggression.

Rupali Acharya and Mairead Dolan (2012) studied the Impact of antisocial and psychopathic traits on emotional facial expression recognition in alcohol abusers. The relationship between antisocial personality traits and face affect recognition in 23 detoxified inpatient alcohol abusers and 26 healthy controls was examined. All participants were rated on the Antisocial Personality Questionnaire (APQ), and the alcohol abuse

sample was rated on the Psychopathy Checklist: Screening Version. A computerized face affect recognition task was used to assess the six basic emotions. Overall, alcohol abusers were significantly worse than healthy controls at recognizing emotional facial expression, particularly anger and sadness. Recognition of disgust was negatively correlated with psychopathy (particularly the social deviance factor) and with several subscales of the impulsivity/ hostility factor on the APQ. Fear recognition was also negatively correlated with a number of APQ subscales within the impulsive/hostility factor.

Schulz et al. (2016) examined whether gender modified the relationship between 2 criminally relevant constructs, (a) psychopathy and its factors and (b) drug use. 318 participants with criminal histories and substance use were assessed for psychopathy using the Psychopathy Checklist: Screening Version and for illicit drug use using the Structured Clinical Interview for the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. Findings revealed that the impulsive-antisocial traits (Factor 2) of psychopathy were positively related to a number of drug use characteristics whereas the interpersonal-affective traits (Factor 1) showed a negative relationship with drug abuse symptoms and a positive relationship with age of first use. In terms of gender differences, analyses revealed that women showed a stronger association between Factor 1 traits and later age of initiation compared to men, and that Factor 2, and the antisocial facet in particular, were more strongly related to drug abuse in women than men.

Selma Salihovic, Margaret Kerr & HåkanStattin (2014) studied the psychopathic traits in adolescents: High anxious and low-anxious subgroups in a community sample of youths. Subgroups of adolescents based on their levels of psychopathic traits and anxiety was examined in this study. Participants were 914 youths from a community sample. Adolescents' self-reports of psychopathic traits and their parents' reports of the adolescent's anxiety were used to identify distinct subgroups of youths. Five groups that varied in levels of psychopathic traits and anxiety were identified by the researcher through latent class analysis. Two groups were characterized by high levels of psychopathic traits and high or low scores on anxiety. Validation of these subgroups revealed that they differed significantly from each other in theoretically meaningful ways the low-anxious subgroup reported higher levels of psychopathic traits, lower levels of impulsivity and hyperactivity, and lower levels of aggression than the high-anxious group.

Walsh, Z., Swogger, M. T., &Kosson D. S. (2009)examined the relationship between instrumental violence, psychopathy, and psychopathic traits among 248 European American and African American adult male county jail inmates. Researchers assessed instrumentality based on subjective motivations for respondent-identified acts of violence. PCL-R was used to asses Psychopathy. Researchers identified a positive relationship between instrumentality of violence and manipulative interpersonal style. Findings differed from youth studies with regard to relationships between instrumentality and other facets of psychopathy.

III. CONCLUSION

Reviews of several studies showed thatparental stress, mental disorders, genetics, environmental influence, violence, substance use, aggression, lower levels of emotional intelligence and increased participation in antisocial activities are predictors of psychopathic tendencies and these tendencies are predictors of future criminality.

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