

A Study on Self Control Theory Vs Social Control Theory

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Abstract – According to recent revisions to self-control theory, influencing variables (bonds) equivalent to self-control in determining whether or not to participate in deviant conduct. Hirschi maintained that, rather than a cognitive scale or a tally of prior actions, self-control should be operationalized as the quantity and importance of an individual's social relationships, as proposed by the original theory. The influence of cognitive self-control, as well as attitudinal self-control, is examined in this article, which adds to the control theory literature. The NYSFS Waves 10 and 11 data were evaluated. Although the findings imply that both new and old types of self-control are equally predictive of criminality, it is unclear that they are capturing the same phenomena throughout maturity. Control theory implications are presented.

Keywords - Self-Control; Social Bonds; Control Theory; Self-Regulation; Adult Crime

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1. INTRODUCTION

The social control and self-control theory that lead to criminal conduct are examined in this article. We use three theoretical models to explain these processes: a social-causes-of-crime paradigm is one that ties crime to social factors. to current social relationships; a social-selection model that links crime to childhood personal characteristics; and a mixed selection-causation model that links crime to both social relationships and childhood characteristics. We looked at measures of poor self-control in children and adolescents, as well as teenage and adult social relationships and criminal activity. We discovered that inadequate self-control in infancy predicted damaged social relationships and criminal offending later in life, which supports social selection. We discovered that social relationships and teenage delinquency predicted later adult crime and that the influence of self-control on crime was primarily mediated by social bonds, demonstrating social causality. Both selection and causality are supported by the evidence. Even when previous levels of self-control were controlled for, the social-causation effects remained substantial, although their impacts lessened. Taken as a whole. These firstdirigs are in favour of theoretical frameworks that include social-selection and social-causation processes.

Sociologists, psychologists, and criminologists have been attempting to explain delinquent behaviour for decades. Despite their tireless efforts and vast expertise, an unmistakable explanation for adolescent misbehaviour has yet to emerge. Only after a comprehensive examination of the literature devoted

to the search for a single answer does one come to the conclusion that it simply does not exist. Rather, there is universal agreement and evidence that crime is the outcome of a combination of causes rather than a single one. As a result, while studying juvenile delinquency, several sociologists have used an integrated approach. Whatever its perspective, a complete theory of crime must explain how delinquent patterns of behaviour form, what causes individuals to engage in a delinquent manner, and what sustains their delinquent behaviours. Travis Hirschi created "Social Bonding Theory" and "Self-Control Theory" in an effort to capture crime. Hirschi collaborated with Michael Gottfredson to create the latter hypothesis.

Social Control Theory has been established as one of the most commonly examined and debated criminological ideas up until recently. However, constraints have emerged as a result of this study and debate, such as the need for a general explanation of crime, as well as the hopes and urgency of establishing a theory that better explains crime and delinquency. Self-Control Theory is one of the ideas that has been used to fill the hole left by the limitations of Social Control Theory. Gottfredson and Hirschi offer a theory in their book A General Theory of Crime (1990) that, in their view, is capable of describing all criminal and deviant behaviour while concentrating on one uni-dimensional feature, poor self-control. While there are several distinguishing characteristics that go into self-control, they all come together to make one overarching dimension. According to the self-control hypothesis, "individuals with great self-control will be much less likely to

participate in criminal activities at all times of life, while those with poor self-control will be very prone to commit crime."

"Crime" is one of the many things that are unavoidable in our life. It's one of those things that, no matter how stringent the regulations are, will never be eradicated. Many times, we can't help but wonder, "Why do individuals do crimes?" and follow up with questions such, "Are people born criminals?" "Are they not afraid of performing the act even when they know the consequences?" and so on. Sociologists like Michael Gottfredson and Travis Hirschi were presumably asking themselves similar questions. They both proposed hypotheses in response to the question, "What causes crimes?" The 'Self-control theory' and the 'Social Control theory' were these theories. We'll look at the fundamental features of both theories, evaluate their differences and similarities, and see if there are any areas where they may be improved.

Given Gottfredson and Hirschi's arguments, it's easy to see why empirical criticisms on Social Control Theory have moved their attention to The General Theory. The relevance of the questions that a theory creates is the justification for experimentally testing it. "Does The General Theory of Crime have the power to supersede all prior criminological theories?" or "Is there still a need for Social Control Theory?" These questions are not only vital, but they are also necessary for establishing crime causes and prevention. Many scholars argue that there is insufficient data to validate or deny the two ideas in dispute at this time. While there is inconclusive evidence in terms of confirming or rejecting these hypotheses, it will stay inconclusive until researchers participate in the discussion via empirical experiments. The goal of this study is to not only participate in the argument, but also to make a tiny contribution to the current body of knowledge on social and self-control theory. These two ideas must be developed before the research's main emphasis may be addressed.

We also investigate whether social relationships modulate the impact of self-control on criminality. While previous research has looked into these topics, this article provides a direct and compelling test of these questions by (a) using self-control measures collected in childhood from a variety of sources using a variety of measurement instruments, and (b) following individuals over time to assess social relationships and criminal participation in adulthood.

2. SOCIAL CONTROL THEORY

Travis Hirschi presented the "Social Bond Theory" in his very important book "Causes of Delinquency" in 1969, and it was originally known as the "Social Bond Theory."

Travis Warner Hirschi was a professor of sociology at the University of Arizona in the United States. For his research and contributions to the subject of

criminology, he received several accolades. In 2016, he received the 'Stockholm Prize in Criminology,' and died in January 2017 at the age of 81.

Everyone has the ability to commit crimes, according to Hirschi, but the social links and ties they have with their friends, family, and other members of society prohibit them from doing so. When people's ties to society begin to fray, they are more likely to commit crimes. In summary, crime is a possibility for almost everyone, but it is shunned by those who want to maintain their ties to society. Hirschi indicated that he believes there are four elements that have a significant influence on a person's chance of becoming a criminal or engaging in harmful behaviour. Attachment, Commitment, Involvement, and Belief are the factors.

- **Attachment** - The capacity to internalise rules, conscience, and superego is determined by an individual's connection. This is the emotional connection we have with others in society. This sort of link may be formed anywhere: at home with our parents, at school with our friends, and in other social settings. Let's look at parental attachment as an example. The bond that children have with their parents after years of living and engaging with them is extremely special. This strong connection is important because children who are shown positive attachment and responsible parenting from an early age are more likely to grow up with similar qualities. They are responsible, courteous, and respectful, and they understand right from wrong. Not only that, but the more they engage with their parents, the better their communication abilities and social skills get. When these youngsters go out into the world, they naturally seek for persons who are similar to their peers, seniors, and so on. This guarantees that they are always surrounded by a productive and healthy atmosphere. Many studies have shown that children who did not have a good bond and whose parents did not spend meaningful time with them as youngsters grow up to be harsh, foulmouthed, aggressive, and prone to drug use. Later on, those youngsters acquired criminal mindsets.
- **Commitment** - People often follow rules out of dread of the repercussions of violating them, which is known as commitment. Everyone should be dedicated to something in which they want to make a difference. A person might be dedicated to anything. Family, accumulating money for the future, starting a job, and other ambitions inspire people to comply and keep them away from crime and deviance. It is only natural that when a person is dedicated to anything, he or she avoids unlawful thinking or conduct because they do not want to lose all they have worked so hard for. Those who are

uncommitted to anything in their lives are like people who are driving a vehicle without steering. They are more prone to illegal thoughts and behaviours since they have nothing to lose, and hence wind up wrecking their lives. A person who is dedicated simply has something for which to live, love, defend, and die. Without commitment, a life has no significance. However, no commitment should be made to criminal conduct or other immoral and unforgivable behaviour.

- **Involvement** - The concept of involvement is that someone who is strongly interested in traditional activities simply does not have time to participate in deviant behaviour. School, religious groups, social clubs, and other activities provide little to no time for anybody to participate in illegal activity. Participation in traditional activities, on the other hand, is inadequate to dissuade criminality.
- **Belief** - Most individuals have some form of belief system, such as morals, values, and society behaviour ethics, that actively opposes the thought that anybody would commit a crime. Some individuals, on the other hand, behave in the opposite manner. They believe in breaching the law and hence commit crimes as a result. Beliefs are a culture's shared value system. A criminal either ignores the belief statement altogether or rationalises their actions such that they may commit crimes while still believing that they are wrong.

These four elements promote standard conformance and socially acceptable behaviour.

People, on the whole, tend to behave according to the principles of logic, reason, and self-interest.

Workplaces, schools, religious organisations, and families give a framework for how society is meant to operate. Most individuals would commit crimes if these institutions did not exist.

People who develop self-control at a young age are less likely to engage in criminal conduct as teenagers.

3. THE SELF-CONTROL THEORY

According to the self-control hypothesis, a lack of self-control increases the probability of criminal and delinquent engagement, as well as a variety of other harmful behaviours. Self-control is virtually entirely governed by parenting, according to this idea (Hollander-Blumoff, 2012). The upbringing of a kid influences whether they will have good or bad self-control. If a kid's bad behaviour is rectified, the youngster will have a high degree of self-control. On the other hand, if a child's wrongdoing is not

reprimanded or addressed, the child's self-control will suffer.

Low self-control was identified by Gottfredson and Hirschi as having specific features such as quick pleasure, physical rather than mental gratification, dangerous conduct, and insensitivity to others (Connor et al., 2009). Individuals with poor self-control struggle in settings that need supervision, limitations on how they behave themselves, or punishment. Those who lack self-control, according to Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990), are not only more prone to participate in dangerous activities, but they are also more likely to do so stubbornly and consistently, regardless of the consequences. These individuals like taking risks, such as embarking on a crime spree, as well as other dangerous behaviours such as smoking and consuming alcohol. Individuals with little self-control are more likely to commit crimes throughout the course of their lives; the offences are consistent and last well into adulthood.

Weakened social relationships, such as attachment and beliefs, produce this lack of self-control or impulsivity. When parents fail to supervise their children and are unable to provide them the attention and guidance they need, their children will develop poor self-control. Furthermore, children's upbringing is dependent on the values, conventions, and ideas established in them at an early age. If the parents do not have any ideas or principles, their children will not mimic them, leading to a life of disobedience to authority.

Self-control issues Individuals desire immediate satisfaction and are unconcerned about long-term obligations such as a job or school. They would rather commit crimes in order to get the immediate benefits of crime, such as money or intoxication. Having a job and a career would need spending time and money on schooling. This is seen as a long-term aim that requires their cognitive abilities, which they lack. These individuals are unconcerned about the dangers of committing crimes or the people they may harm as a consequence; their sole concern is for their own wants and the immediate benefit they will get.

The empirical test of self-control theory is a mature literature, given the variety and heterogeneity of published investigations. The fact that the quantity of relevant articles has been declining for many years indicates that the field is considered saturated. The majority of the obvious moderating factors have been evaluated many times. Of course, the number of research that have accounted for numerous moderators at the same time is less. Even fewer research have looked at how moderator factors interact with self-control or with each other. However, there is a limit to how far this exercise may be taken. Combinatorial explosion happens swiftly.

4. A GENERAL THEORY OF CRIME

The goal of A General Theory of Crime was to propose a theory that could be used to explain all criminal and deviant behaviour by concentrating on a single trait: inadequate self-control. Many academics have praised Gottfredson and Hirschi's "General Explanation of Crime," also known as "Self-Control Theory," for its ability to formulate a comprehensive theory of crime. The authors' hypothesis is meant to be a "all-inclusive" theory, with the authors claiming that it can explain all deviant and criminal behaviours, regardless of their severity or demographic circumstances. Despite its numerous supporters and widespread applicability, the General Theory of Crime, like other theories, is subject to criticism and investigation.

Individual disparities in criminal and comparable behaviour are owing primarily to individual variances in the personality characteristic they label poor self-control, according to Gottfredson and Hirschi's general explanation of crime. It also claims that "individuals with great self-control will be much less likely to participate in criminal activities at all stages of life, while those with poor self-control will be very prone to commit crime" Because both crime and comparable behaviours stem from a lack of self-control, those with poor self-control are more likely to participate in them. Low self-control is important in explaining crime because specific features linked with low self-control tend to cluster in the same individuals and continue throughout their lives. Individuals who participate in criminal behaviour throughout their adolescent years are more likely to continue this behaviour into adulthood, according to Gottfredson and Hirschi. They claimed that self-control is made up of a series of consistent distinctions that incline people to act on impulsive impulses without concern for the consequences

Such statements demonstrate that self-control theory is more concerned with long-term patterns of crime and deviance than with one-time engagement in specific crimes. "Self-control is stable," according to self-control theory, "thus those with poor self-control will have a stronger and stable propensity to commit deviance across all social situations at all stages of life beyond infancy."

Finally, because of their engagement in non-criminal actions similar to crime, such as alcohol and drug misuse, smoking, and unlawful sex, these people are more prone to accidents. Specifically, Gottfredson and Hirschi argue that the following criteria or components make up a full and meaningful assessment of self-control: impulsivity, preference for easy tasks, risk-taking, physical activity, self-centeredness, and anger.

The relevance of the socialisation process in understanding why persons with limited self-control tend to display these qualities, which typically remain over time, must be considered. "Ineffective child-rearing seems to be the primary source of inadequate

self-control" As a result, the significance that is highlighted in respect to parental control and child-rearing techniques may be deduced. "The key circumstances of child upbringing that are necessary to establish self-control in children are monitoring behaviour, detection of aberrant behaviour, and appropriate punishment," Gottfredson and Hirschi write.

5. THE INDIAN SCENARIO

We may observe several instances of how these ideas hold true when applied to Indian society. India is still a developing country. Agriculture is the primary source of income for more than half of the population. Rural regions account for 65 percent of the population, whereas urban areas account for just 35 percent. Furthermore, while accounting for just 2.4 percent of the world's surface area, India maintains and sustains 17.7% of the global population. All of these variables, together with the huge range of faiths, castes, vocations, and lifestyles, result in a massive quantity of criminal activity.

People growing up with superstitious beliefs, a dismissive attitude toward women, dread of parents and other adults, as well as poorly established behaviours, are usually found in rural and highly backward regions of Indian culture. These children grow up with little to no self-control as a result of their 'unhealthy' upbringing. They lack critical thinking skills, a feeling of equality and respect, patience, and perseverance. As a result, these people are more likely to engage in criminal activities such as domestic violence, murder, and rape, or even join local gangs and perpetrate additional crimes. One of the most crucial aspects affecting such persons, as noted in both theories, is a lack of commitment. They become dolls labouring for fleeting gratification due to a lack of knowledge and a desire to live a life with meaning.

Religion and caste are malignant cysts that have developed and evolved in such a manner that they can no longer be treated after all these years. True, things are much better than previously, and today's kids are more educated and informed, but the negative side of these elements still remains, and it is simply awful. We see a lot of situations where tribal women are raped and taught to feel it's normal (Mathura rape case), cases where the parents' 'caste' is an issue and the child's spouse is killed (honour killing cases), and a lot of other caste-based crimes. Due to such skewed thinking, there is no social control over life, and social relationships become practically non-existent over time. More pandemonium ensues, and the cycle continues.

As a result, India, which is rife with animosity and internal strife, strives to keep together its huge people via education, urbanisation, and law, and advances relatively slowly.

6. SIMILARITIES & DIFFERENCES

There are certain parallels between the two hypotheses. As we saw, the Social Control hypothesis required a person to commit a crime if their relationships with others and society were weak or eroding. However, if we look at a situation where the individual has "strong relationships" with, say, their elders, it might be just as terrible. Under the influence of these "seniors," a person may consent to engage in illegal activity in exchange for their approval, intimate friendship, or other benefits. In the self-control theory, we observe the same phenomena. Children who get less training and supervision from their parents from a young age have much less self-control and are therefore more prone to engage in delinquent behaviour.

Another resemblance may be seen in the fact that both theories are said to have 'commitment' as a major component. People who have made no commitments in their life are just concerned with instant gratification and are uninterested in long-term contentment. Both ideas claim that a person's lack of 'commitment' causes them to fall victim to the criminal world.

Another parallel is how having 'beliefs' is claimed to be a factor that prevents individuals from committing crimes. When we speak about individuals who are members of a religious organisation, for example, they have a set of rules that they follow according to their faith, and as a result, they acquire remarkable levels of self-control. Having 'beliefs' in our ability to assist provides a stimulant for self-control.

The distinction between the two theories is that the social control theory talks of society's perpetual chance to conduct crimes, and anybody with weak social relationships will take advantage of these possibilities. The self-control hypothesis, on the other hand, emphasises "self-control" as the most important component, the lack of which, owing to inattentive and negligent parental guidance, leads to the child becoming a criminal in the future. Opportunities don't seem to play a factor in an individual's decision to commit a crime in this case.

7. IMPROVEMENTS AND PROBLEMS

The self-control hypothesis has many flaws, such as the fact that impulsivity alone cannot predict whether or not someone would commit a crime. Other influences include chance, personality qualities such as mental illness, and heredity. There are a variety of different characteristics and events that lead to a criminal career. Counseling and therapy self-control levels, I feel, may be improved with practise. Some research has shown a relationship between heredity and self-control, therefore Gottfredson and Hirschi's argument is debatable. Self-control is impacted considerably by genetic variables, according to the

most recent criminological research, with genes accounting for at least 50% of the variation in self-control levels. The self-control paradigm has to be reformulated to incorporate genetics, according to the conclusions of this study.

Involvement, which is a key component of the social bond hypothesis, may also lead to juvenile criminal behaviour. According to the social link idea, youths who participate in extracurricular or sports activities are less likely to commit crimes. It is confirmed that criminal acts may be committed in a matter of minutes, and that participation in social activities alone is inadequate to dissuade delinquency. My kid, for example, is a member of his school's golf team and attends golf practise on a daily basis. Becoming a member of the golf team does not prevent him from being a delinquent; some of his teammates may be deviant and may urge him to conduct a deviant behaviour. The engagement component of the social bond theory has to be reevaluated to take into account the kind of involvement as well as the characteristics of the people who participate in the activities. Traditional activities, such as religion, may also turn aberrant; there have been several reports of Catholic priests assaulting young boys. Players use illicit performance enhancing medications to improve their performance in sports as well.

Juvenile criminal behaviour may be influenced by involvement, which is a crucial component of the social bond theory. Youths who engage in extracurricular or athletic activities are less likely to commit crimes, according to the social connection theory. It has been shown that illegal actions may be done in a matter of minutes, and that social activities alone are insufficient to deter misbehaviour. My son, for example, is a member of his high school's golf team and practises every day. Joining the golf team does not exclude him from becoming a delinquent; some of his teammates may be deviants and may encourage him to engage in deviant behaviour. The social bond theory's engagement component has to be reevaluated to account for the kind of participation as well as the characteristics of those who participate in the activities. Religious activities, for example, may become deviant; there have been multiple allegations of Catholic priests abusing young boys. In order to increase their performance in sports, players take illegal performance enhancing drugs.

8. CONCLUSION

Social bond theory and self-control theory, developed by Travis Hirschi and Michael Gottfredson, may aid society in understanding the causes of crime. Although the social bond theory states that strong social relationships such as attachment and engagement might dissuade people from committing crimes, it also states that negative and deviant involvement can lead to antisocial conduct. The self-

control hypothesis has to be reconsidered since impulsivity alone does not always lead to criminal behaviour; heredity and other factors may also play a role. Both hypotheses, however, may be modified in certain ways. The lack of self-control that leads to rash or imprudent behaviour cannot be the "sole" characteristic that leads to criminal behaviour. Mental diseases and a person's genetic history are also significant variables. In the social bond hypothesis, however, the variable of 'involvement' has a negative side that cannot be overlooked. It has the potential to be as harmful, leading to young people being engaged in criminal activity.

If the idea is correct, the latter have a considerably lower likelihood of taming their inherent want for instant satisfaction. This should result in a lesser degree of self-control, which in turn should lead to more deviance. Because this method relies on natural variation, it's crucial to account for additional variations between the "treated" group and the "control" group that didn't have to go through the same ordeal. There will be dispute, as with any natural experiment, over whether all reasonable controls have been performed. However, if successful, a research like this would be a powerful confirmation of the General Theory. Whereas it was previously recommended that opportunity should be regarded alongside self-control, this article contends that motivation should be included as a dimension or factor in the analysis and composition of self-control. It's possible that we're not all equally driven to commit crime, as Gottfredson and Hirschi formerly believed and still believe. In any case, to validate or disprove the value of the General Theory of Crime, a more strict definition and a clearer understanding of selfcontrol are required. Make no mistake: until the limitations of what self-control involves and how to assess it are clearly defined, the General Theory will devolve from a "all-encompassing" theory to a "inconclusive" theory.

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