

Psychopath in Society: How to Recognize Psychopaths and the Relationships Between the Psychopaths and the Society

Shuchang Zhao^{1,*}

¹Hangzhou Foreign Language School, Hangzhou, 310023, China

*Corresponding author. Email: 1930947144@qq.com

ABSTRACT

Psychopathy is no longer just a subject of psychology and biology. Psychopathy is part of our social fabric and has a significant impact on society. The psychopath is a community that needs to be recognized and given help, assist them to overcome their physical or personal defects and bring safety and peace to society. Sociologically, a psychopath is often associated with antisocial behavior, but this behavior is not unique to psychopath groups because antisocial personality disorder is a much broader concept that encompasses a much larger population, Psychopath is just a small subset of antisocial personalities. The violent and criminal tendencies we commonly see from psychopaths can be explained scientifically, and the causes and conditions of a psychopath are varied, and in addition to a congenital psychopath, some people can be found to ameliorate symptoms similar to those of a psychopath can be prevented and ameliorated by waking up early. To solve the problems that psychopath causes in our society, we first need to identify psychopath, this requires us to have a basic set of standard tests for identifying psychopath, and to improve their social behavior the society should accept their presence and find out ways that are appropriate for them.

Keywords: psychopath, Antisocial personality disorder, social support and social hindrances, society, prevent harm from psychopath

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Psychopath

Psychopathy is a neuropsychiatric disorder have long been considered a hallmark of mental illness, with the feature of insufficient emotional responses, a deficiency of empathy, and poor behavioral control, those often lead to persistent antisocial and criminal behavior [1]. The psychopathy scale (PCL-R) (Appendix figure 1) and psychopathic personality scale (PPI) (Appendix figure 2) as the more accurate and detailed measurement tools further defined "psychopathy", including 20 items that assess interpersonal, emotional, developmental, and behavioral symptoms of the disorder. Then breaking the psychopath concept down according to two specific factors :(1) interpersonal and emotional personality features and (2) antisocial lifestyle features [1]. However, the PCL-R test has limitations for adolescents, Therefore, PCL-YV was developed to evaluate the psychopathy of adolescents aged 12-17. It can be completed by the individual, parents, teachers, or clinicians. The development of this method

has created a tool for measuring psychopathy outside of clinical and forensic settings.

1.2. Antisocial Personality

In the beginning (1968) DSM defined antisocial personality like that:

Unsocialized and whose behavior patterns bring them repeatedly into conflict with society. They are incapable of significant loyalty to individuals, groups, or social values. They are grossly selfish, callous, irresponsible, impulsive, and unable to feel guilt or to learn from experience or punishment. Frustration tolerance is low. They tend to blame others or offer plausible rationalization for their behavior.

The International Classification of Diseases uses personality traits and behaviors to diagnose antisocial PD, which is conceptually similar to psychosis [2]. However, Antisocial PD and Dissocial PD do not measure the same symptoms as the PCL-R and the meaning of psychopathy discussed does not equate to antisocial PD or antisocial

PD. For that matter, are significantly different from one another. Research indicates that only one-third of people with ASPD meet the criteria for psychopathy.

1.3. In The Society

The societal impact of psychopathy is substantial and pervasive [3]. And Dennis also suggested that psychopathy is an early risk factor for severe and chronic violence, so psychopath is a potentially dangerous group for the health of society. Referring to Savastano's work, which links morality to a psychopath, I also agree that moral feelings are an important factor in social harmony, so a psychopath's lack of moral awareness is a good way to prove that they are antisocial(2018) [4]. To determine social factors and the relationship between behavior and moral functioning, the researchers asked participants to provide a psychopathic personality scale (PPI) and randomly assigned it to a social factor (social support or social hindrance), and then looked at the underlying moral conditions described, such as harm, fairness, or controlling sketched behavior. Participants then expressed their willingness to participate in the behavior and how ethical they thought the behavior was. Social support refers to some good people or things in social life, such as family and pets, while social hindrance refers to some bad things in society, such as bullies and riots. Participants in the social hindrance condition were more willing to engage in moral deviance associated with justice, while participants in the social support condition were more willing to engage in something relating to harm. So psychopaths are more likely to exhibit antisocial behavior when their social environment is corrupt, dark, and violent.

2. CAUSES OF PSYCHOPATHY

Psychopath in this study can be caused by two factors. One is congenital, in which people lack fear of threats and the skills to learn from negative outcomes. Another reason is their aberration in attention, which is mainly reflected in their actions with impure antisocial purposes

2.1. Low Fear Theory

This theory suggests that primary psychopaths are born with below-average fear levels (low fear IQ). To study psychopaths, we set up an experiment related to passive avoidance. The experiment measured the reaction of the subjects when they were punished for making certain mistakes and their ability to avoid the next punishment when they completed the specified task.

The fearlessness of psychopaths makes it difficult for them to integrate into society.

Psychopath based on the Low Fear doctrine exhibits the following characteristics:

1. Anticipation of aversive events (e.g. noise, electric shock) has mild autonomic arousal (i.e., electrical

dermal response), but manifests as a normal cardiac response

2. Lack of passive avoidance (learning from punishment)
3. Poor fear conditioning (learning paired associations)
4. Lack of starkness enhancement when viewing unpleasant and neutral images, although this may be time-limited
5. Neuroimaging evidence suggests that psychopaths have less amygdala activation than control groups for conditioning, moral decision-making, social cooperation, and memory of emotionally prominent words
6. Neuroimaging data showed OFC, vmPFC, and amygdala connectivity problems.

2.2. Abnormalities in Attention

Another contributing factor for psychiatric patients is a defect in response regulation, which interferes with their ability to use secondary or non explicit information to regulate goal-directed. behavior. As Patterson & Newman explained, response regulation is a complex process, including temporarily suspending the dominant response set and temporarily diverting the attention of the organization and team response to its evaluation and implementation goal orientation [5].

Peoples' attention is usually presented in two ways when people process information. One is when we process the received information in serial mode, that is, we consider the attention we think most important and ignore the others. The other is in parallel mode, that is, we comprehensively consider the consequences of our behavior other words, they will do whatever it takes to achieve their goals. On the other hand, psychopathic individuals are more likely to use serial methods for processing information or doing things, which can cause them to go to any lengths to get their way without any consequences.

One question is whether or not they can experience feelings of regret. In interactions with psychopathic individuals who have taken part in various tests, we have found that they can experience feelings of regret after receiving negative feedback, but it does not prevent them from correcting their bad behavior the next time.

2.3. How psychopath developed

An example of how psychopath develops from a young age can be seen in the form of Conduct disorder, which consists of four major components, Aggression, Destruction of property, the deceitfulness of Theft, and Serious rule Violations. Another sign that an adolescent might be at risk of becoming a psychopath is called callous-unemotional (CU) Traits, they often include Thrill-

seeking, fearlessness, Insensitivity to Punishment, and greater premeditated aggression. CU is not equal to psychopath but it will pathway to antisocial behavior, and will become more severe without intervention in the early phase. CU and CD appear. The causes of CU formation mainly include Heritable Pathway, Parenting Pathway, and G x E Interaction. This indicates that the child may have some BEHAVIORS of CU at birth, and may also start to have behaviors of CU due to the negligence of parents in the daily upbringing and education process, certainly, they may also be reduced by the good parenting they receive later in life.

3. DISCUSSION

3.1. How to prevent psychopathies from harming society

Psychosis is a relatively serious public health problem. The key question of whether violence committed by psychiatric patients can be prevented before it occurs remains largely unanswered. It's important to keep more people from becoming psychopaths in the first place. We can't change the traits of CU or CD traits we're born with from childhood, but it can be helped by parenting. As long as a child is raised by someone who doesn't exhibit strong antisocial behavior and is given a warm home environment, the child will largely not grow up to be a psychopath and harm society. For people who have been identified as a psychopath by the PCL-R test, it's clear that psychopathic individuals caused by low fear can be difficult to ameliorate, but for the psychopath community in abnormal attention, It is necessary to give psychopaths enough social support. In a harmonious social environment, it is harder for a psychopath to generate anti-moral, anti-social attention. Psychopaths may use Serial to deal with problems, but it's not without its benefits. If we properly direct psychopaths to do just and socially beneficial things, they may be more effective because they're less susceptible to other things. So you can use that to get psychopathic individuals to focus on protecting society against antisocial behavior. So there is a serious problem with parenting, and in my opinion, all parents should be blamed for encouraging their children to grow up in a positive way, but given

that many parents have antisocial personalities, So how to improve the environment for those children is a severe problem.

4. CONCLUSION

Psychopath is pervasive in society, and we can recognize them because they show unsocial traits. So if we talk about Psychopath sociologically, we can classify them as a group of antisocial individuals, but that doesn't mean that all people who tend to have antisocial personalities are psychopathy since antisocial personality is a separate subgenus. However, for society, all the people who bring disadvantages to society can be counted as anti-social, but they need to be dealt with in different ways. Studies on social support suggest that low social support further reduces psychopaths 'empathic attention to others and prevents them from understanding others' psychology in society. This causes them to have more psychopath or anti-social traits and more violence or crime, As far as I am concerned, we need to strengthen social support for psychopath groups and conduct different management education methods for people with only antisocial personalities. To improve the problem of a psychopath, we also need to look more closely at people's childhood and treat them both physically and mentally as they grow up, which can greatly reduce the number of a psychopath, This is an effective way for the whole society to reduce crimes and achieve a more harmonious state.

APPENDIX

Interpersonal aspect	Affective aspect	Behavioral aspect	Antisocial aspect
Item 1 – superficial charm	Item 6 – lack of remorse or guilt	Item 3 – need for stimulation and proneness to boredom	Item 10 – poor behavioral control
Item 2 – grandiose sense of self-worth	Item 7 – shallow affect	Item 9 – parasitic lifestyle	Item 12 – early behavior problems
Item 4 – pathological lying	Item 8 – callousness/lack of empathy	Item 13 – lack of realistic, long-term goals	Item 18 – juvenile delinquency
Item 5 – conning/manipulative	Item 16 – failure to accept responsibility for own actions	Item 14 – impulsivity	Item 19 – revocation of conditional release
		Item 15 – irresponsibility	Item 20 – criminal versatility
Item 11 – promiscuous sexual behavior			
Item 17 – many short-term marital relationships			

Figure 1. Structure of the PCL-R

PPI scale	Cluster size (k)	Montreal Neurological Institute coordinates x, y, z	Z	Family-wise error, probability	Anatomical area	Brodmann area	Spearman's r
Fearlessness	5	3, 21, -12	3.87	0.007	Right orbitofrontal	11	-0.74, P<0.001
	33	12, 42, -9	3.53	0.021	Right orbitofrontal	11	-0.70, P<0.001
Coldheartedness	61	-45, 12, -24	4.21	0.005	Left temporal pole ^a	38	-0.75, P<0.001
	20	33, 18, -33	3.47	0.051	Right temporal pole ^a	38	-0.61, P=0.001
Machiavellian egocentricity	16	18, 0, 24	4.07	0.005	Right caudate	n/a	-0.75, P<0.001
	9	-3, 6, -6	3.53	0.030	Left caudate	n/a	-0.65, P=0.001
Social potency	10	3, -42, 15	4.00	0.003	Right posterior cingulate	29	-0.67, P<0.001
Stress immunity	13	-39, -18, 21	3.70	0.035	Left insula ^a	n/a	-0.54, P=0.006
	31	33, -18, 6	3.89	0.019	Right insula ^a	n/a	-0.75, P<0.001

a. Result remained significant after covarying for age.

Figure 2. An example of Psychopathic Personality Inventory (PPI) scale

REFERENCES

- [1] Glenn, A. L., Iyer, R., Graham, J., Koleva, S. & Haidt, J. (2009). Are all types of morality compromised in psychopathy? *Journal of Personality Disorders*, 23(4), 384-398. doi: 10.1521/pedi.2009.23.4.384
- [2] World Health Organization. N.p., n.d. Web WHO; 2014 Jul 31. Public health surveillance. http://www.who.int/topics/public_health_surveillance/en/
- [3] Reidy, Dennis E, and Megan C. Kearns. Why Psychopathy Matters: Implications for Public Health and Violence Prevention. HHS Public Access, 18 May 2015.
- [4] Savastano, Louis. : An Examination of Psychopathy Relating to Social Motivation and Moral Decision-Making. May 2018.
- [5] Patterson, C. M., & Newman, J. P. (1993). Reflectivity and learning from aversive events: Towards a psychological mechanism for the syndromes of disinhibition. *Psychological Review*, 100, 716–736.
- [6] Abdalla-Filho, Elias, and Birgit Völlm. “Does Every Psychopath Have an Antisocial Personality Disorder?” *Brazilian Journal of Psychiatry*, vol. 42, no. 3, 14 Feb. 2020, 10.1590/1516-4446-2019-0762.
- [7] Anderson, Nathaniel E, and Kent A Kiehl. “Psychopathy: Developmental Perspectives and Their Implications for Treatment.” *Restorative Neurology and Neuroscience*, vol. 32, no. 1, 2014, pp. 103–17, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4321752/, 10.3233/RNN-139001.
- [8] Blair, R. J. (2007). The amygdala and ventromedial prefrontal cortex in morality and psychopathy. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 11, 387-392. doi: 10.1016/j.tics.2007.07.003
- [9] Forgas, J. P., Williams, K. D., & Laham, S. M. (2005). *Social motivation: Conscious and unconscious processes*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- [10] Gough, Harrison G. “A Sociological Theory of Psychopathy.” *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 53, no. 5, Mar. 1948, pp. 359–366, 10.1086/220203.
- [11] Karau, S. J., & Hart, J. W. (1998). Group cohesiveness and social loafing: Effects of a social interaction manipulation on individual motivation within groups. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 2(3), 185-191. Doi: 10.1037/1089-2699.2.3.185