

Self-Reported Delinquency
Grade 12 / Year 13
Fast Track Project Technical Report
Brenda Heinrichs
September 28, 2004

Table of Contents

- I. Scale Description
- II. Report Sample
- III. Scaling
- IV. Differences Between Groups
- V. Recommendations for Use
- VI. Item and Scale Means and SD's
- VII. Item and Scale Correlations

Citation

Instrument

Elliot, D. S. Huizinga, D., Ageton, S. S. (1985). *Explaining delinquency and drug use*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Report

Heinrichs, B. (2003). *Self-Reported Delinquency* (Fast Track Project Technical Report). Available from the Fast Track Project website: <http://www.fasttrackproject.org>

Data Sources

Raw : C13AD

Scored : SRD13

I. Scale Description

Self-Report of Delinquency instruments are well known and frequently used. Their advantages and disadvantages have been discussed in the literature (Huizinga and Elliott, 1986; Klein, 1988). The latter reference is a book containing several chapters of interest. This particular instrument was previously used for the Pittsburgh Youth Study. In the SRD, participants describe their delinquent activities, tapping the areas of property damage, theft, assault, and substance use. For each type of delinquent act, the participant is asked whether he/she ever committed it, how many times in the past year, if others were involved, and if he/she was under the influence of alcohol or drugs while committing it.

II. Report Sample

Primary analyses were conducted on Cohort 1 year 8 normative (n=387) and Cohort 1 high-risk control samples (n=155, overlap is 79). One hundred twenty five students were missing the entire measure (27% of the sample), including 107 from the normative sample (28% of the sample) and 53 of the control sample (34% of the sample). The non-respondents included 21 students from the Durham site, 42 from Nashville, 27 from Pennsylvania and 35 from the Seattle site. The non-respondents included 61 white and 55 black students, 77 boys and 48 girls.

III. Scaling

The following delinquency scales were created by summing the individual items using the first question for each delinquent behavior (whether the child committed the act or not):

- 2 offense-general category scales:
 - o status offenses (C13ad1a, C13ad2a, C13ad3a).
 - o interpersonal violence (C13ad26a, C13ad27a, C13ad28a, C13ad29a, C13ad30a, C13ad32a)

- 2 summary scales
 - o index offenses (C13ad10a, C13ad15a, C13ad16a, C13ad20a, C13ad22a, C13ad26a, C13ad27a, C13ad28a, C13ad30a, C13ad31a, C13ad32a, C13ad33a, C13ad34a)
 - o general delinquency (C13ad5a, C13ad8a, C13ad9a, C13ad10a, C13ad13a, C13ad14a, C13ad15a, C13ad16a, C13ad18a, C13ad19a, C13ad20a, C13ad21a, C13ad22a, C13ad23a, C13ad24a, C13ad25a, C13ad26a, C13ad27a, C13ad28a, C13ad29a, C13ad30a, C13ad31a, C13ad32a, C13ad33a, C13ad34a)

The internal consistency of each score was examined by computing the alpha coefficients for the normative and high- risk control samples:

Subscale	Normative Raw Alpha_	Control Raw Alpha_
SRD Status Offenses	0.24	0.44
SRD Interpersonal Violence	0.68	0.64
SRD Index Offenses	0.82	0.80
	0.88	0.87

IV. Differences Between Groups

T-tests of equality of means were conducted comparing the normative (non-high-risk) sample to the high-risk control sample. As expected, control kids report more delinquent acts with the exception of status offenses. Results are listed below.

Variable	Class	N	Mean	StdErr	Probt
SRD Status Offenses	C	102	0.1797	0.0253	335
SRD Status Offenses	N	235	0.1645	0.0134	.
SRD Interpersonal Violence	C	102	0.0294	0.01	335
SRD Interpersonal Violence	N	235	0.0284	0.0068	.
SRD Index Offenses	C	102	0.0279	0.0088	335
SRD Index Offenses	N	235	0.0252	0.006	.
SRD General Delinquency	C	102	0.0349	0.0088	335
SRD General Delinquency	N	235	0.0281	0.0057	.

V. Recommendations for Use

The analyst should be cautioned that the scales are extremely skewed towards the lower part of the scale, because of the low frequency of the occurrence. This is true for the method of scoring as calculated here, but is even more exaggerated if the second question for each item, frequency of events is used. The frequency of most delinquent behaviors are highly skewed with higher variances for offenders. If frequency of events scores are used, the analyst should be advised that there are outliers present and each item should be inspected and evaluated for them.

Low alpha variables indicate there may be problems with the reliability of these scores

For study of whether the student was associated with somebody else while committing the offense, or under substance influence, the analyst should refer to the individual items.

VI. Item and Scale Means and SD's

Control Sample: Items:

Variable	Label	N	Mean	Std Dev
C13AD1a	Past Year, Have You Run Away From Home?	102	0.098	0.299
C13AD2a	Past Yr, Skipped Class/Schl w/out Excuse	102	0.324	0.470
C13AD3a	Past Yr, Lied About Age to Get Something	102	0.118	0.324
C13AD4a	Past Year, Hitchhiked Where Illegal?	102	0.020	0.139
C13AD5a	Past Yr, Have You Carried Hidden Weapon?	102	0.088	0.285
C13AD6a	Been Too Loud/Rowdy & People Complained?	102	0.108	0.312
C13AD7a	Past Yr, Begged for Money From Strangers	102	0.039	0.195
C13AD8a	Past Year, Been Drunk in a Public Place?	102	0.137	0.346
C13AD9a	Past Yr, Damaged/Destroyed Others Prop?	102	0.059	0.236
C13AD10a	Have or Tried to Set Something on Fire?	102	0.029	0.170
C13AD11a	Past Yr, Have Avoided Paying for Things?	102	0.020	0.139
C13AD12a	Past Yr, Have Tried to Steal Something?	102	0.029	0.170
C13AD13a	Past Yr, Tried Stealing Item Worth < \$5	102	0.039	0.195
C13AD14a	Past Year, Tried Stealing \$5-\$50 Item?	102	0.059	0.236
C13AD15a	Past Year, Tried Stealing \$50-\$100 Item?	102	0.010	0.099
C13AD16a	Past Year, Tried Stealing Item > \$100?	102	0.020	0.139
C13AD17a	Past Year, Stolen Any Item From a Store?	102	0.039	0.195
C13AD18a	Past Year, Stolen Someones Purse/Wallet?	102	0.010	0.099
C13AD19a	Past Year, Stolen Something From a Car?	102	0.039	0.195
C13AD20a	Past Yr, Knowingly Bought/Sold Stolen Prop	102	0.039	0.195
C13AD21a	Past Yr, Taken Vehicle W/O Owners Permission	102	0.020	0.139
C13AD22a	Past Yr, Have Tried/Stole Motor Vehicle?	102	0.020	0.139
C13AD23a	Past Year, Used Fake Money/Checks to Pay?	102	0.010	0.099
C13AD24a	Past Yr, Used Credit/Bank Card W/O Permission	102	0.010	0.099
C13AD25a	Past Year, Have Tried to Cheat Someone?	102	0.010	0.099
C13AD26a	Past Yr, Attacked Ind W/ Intent to Hurt/Kill	102	0.029	0.170
C13AD27a	Past Yr, Hit Someone W/ Idea of Hurting Them	102	0.039	0.195
C13AD28a	Past Yr, Used Weapon to Get \$ From People?	102	0.020	0.139
C13AD29a	Past Yr, Thrown Objects at People?	102	0.029	0.170
C13AD30a	Past Yr, Been Involved in Any Gang Fights?	102	0.059	0.236
C13AD31a	Past Yr, Paid for Having Sex W/ Someone?	102	0.010	0.099
C13AD32a	Past Yr, Sex W/ Someone Against Their Will	102	0	0
C13AD33a	Past Yr, Have You Sold Marijuana/Hashish?	102	0.069	0.254
C13AD34a	Past Yr, Have Sold Heroin/Cocaine/LSD?	102	0.020	0.139

Scales:

Variable	Label	N	Mean	Std Dev	Minimum	Maximum
srdsto	'SRD Status Offenses'	102	0.180	0.256	0	1.000
srdipv	'SRD Interpersonal Violence'	102	0.029	0.101	0	0.667
srdind	'SRD Index Offenses'	102	0.028	0.088	0	0.692
srdgen	'SRD General Delinquency'	102	0.035	0.089	0	0.600

Normative Sample: Items:

Variable	Label	N	Mean	Std Dev
C13AD1a	Past Year, Have You Run Away From Home?	279	0.022	0.145
C13AD2a	Past Yr, Skipped Class/Schl w/out Excuse	279	0.416	0.494
C13AD3a	Past Yr, Lied About Age to Get Something	279	0.079	0.270
C13AD4a	Past Year, Hitchhiked Where Illegal?	278	0.007	0.085
C13AD5a	Past Yr, Have You Carried Hidden Weapon?	279	0.075	0.264
C13AD6a	Been Too Loud/Rowdy & People Complained?	279	0.065	0.246
C13AD7a	Past Yr, Begged for Money From Strangers	279	0.007	0.085
C13AD8a	Past Year, Been Drunk in a Public Place?	279	0.100	0.301
C13AD9a	Past Yr, Damaged/Destroyed Others Prop?	279	0.047	0.211
C13AD10a	Have or Tried to Set Something on Fire?	279	0.011	0.103
C13AD11a	Past Yr, Have Avoided Paying for Things?	279	0.039	0.195
C13AD12a	Past Yr, Have Tried to Steal Something?	279	0.018	0.133
C13AD13a	Past Yr, Tried Stealing Item Worth < \$5	279	0.047	0.211
C13AD14a	Past Year, Tried Stealing \$5-\$50 Item?	279	0.047	0.211
C13AD15a	Past Year, Tried Stealing \$50-\$100 Item?	279	0.029	0.167
C13AD16a	Past Year, Tried Stealing Item > \$100?	279	0.025	0.157
C13AD17a	Past Year, Stolen Any Item From a Store?	279	0.039	0.195
C13AD18a	Past Year, Stolen Someones Purse/Wallet?	279	0.018	0.133
C13AD19a	Past Year, Stolen Something From a Car?	279	0.014	0.119
C13AD20a	Past Yr, Knowingly Bought/Sold Stolen Prop	279	0.032	0.177
C13AD21a	Past Yr, Taken Vehicle W/O Owners Permission	279	0.014	0.119
C13AD22a	Past Yr, Have Tried/Stole Motor Vehicle?	279	0.007	0.085
C13AD23a	Past Year, Used Fake Money/Checks to Pay?	279	0.011	0.103
C13AD24a	Past Yr, Used Credit/Bank Card W/O Permission	279	0.007	0.085
C13AD25a	Past Year, Have Tried to Cheat Someone?	279	0.011	0.103
C13AD26a	Past Yr, Attacked Ind W/ Intent to Hurt/Kill	279	0.022	0.145
C13AD27a	Past Yr, Hit Someone W/ Idea of Hurting Them	279	0.065	0.246
C13AD28a	Past Yr, Used Weapon to Get \$ From People?	279	0.018	0.133
C13AD29a	Past Yr, Thrown Objects at People?	279	0.014	0.119
C13AD30a	Past Yr, Been Involved in Any Gang Fights?	279	0.043	0.203
C13AD31a	Past Yr, Paid for Having Sex W/ Someone?	279	0.007	0.085
C13AD32a	Past Yr, Sex W/ Someone Against Their Will	279	0.011	0.103
C13AD33a	Past Yr, Have You Sold Marijuana/Hashish?	279	0.043	0.203
C13AD34a	Past Yr, Have Sold Heroin/Cocaine/LSD?	279	0.014	0.119

Scales:

Variable	Label	N	Mean	Std Dev	Minimum	Maximum
srdsto	'SRD Status Offenses'	279	0.172	0.211	0	1.000
srdipv	'SRD Interpersonal Violence'	279	0.029	0.103	0	1.000
srdind	'SRD Index Offenses'	279	0.025	0.088	0	1.000
srdgen	'SRD General Delinquency'	279	0.029	0.086	0	1.000

VII. Scale Correlations

Full sample:

Pearson Correlation Coefficients, N = 337 Prob > r under H0: Rho=0				
	srdsto	srdipv	srdind	srdgen
srdsto 'SRD Status Offenses'	1.00000	0.21466 <.0001	0.23183 <.0001	0.31503 <.0001
srdipv 'SRD Interpersonal Violence'	0.21466 <.0001	1.00000	0.90306 <.0001	0.83206 <.0001
srdind 'SRD Index Offenses'	0.23183 <.0001	0.90306 <.0001	1.00000	0.94772 <.0001
srdgen 'SRD General Delinquency'	0.31503 <.0001	0.83206 <.0001	0.94772 <.0001	1.00000

References:

Elliot, D. S., Huizinga, D., & Menard, S. (1989). Multiple problem youth: Delinquency, substance use, and mental health problems. New York: Springer-Verlag.

Huizinga, D. & Elliott, D.S. (1986) Reassessing the Reliability and Validity of Self-Report Delinquency Measures. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* (2) 293-327.

Klein, M.W. (ed), (1988). Cross-National Research in Self-Reported Crime and Delinquency. Kluwer Academic Publishers, Netherlands.