

Self-Reported Delinquency
Grade 8 / Year 9
Fast Track Project Technical Report
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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 : C9AD

Scored : SRD9

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 9 normative (n=304) and Cohort 1 high-risk control samples (n=125, overlap is 62). One hundred seventy three students were missing the entire measure (20% of the sample), including from the normative sample (21% of the sample) and from the control sample (20% of the sample). The non-respondents included 25 students from the Durham site, 39 from Nashville, 25 from Penn State and 34 from the Seattle site. The

non-respondents included 59 white and 54 black students, 80 boys and 43 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 (c9ad1a, c9ad2a, c9ad3a).
 - o interpersonal violence (c9ad26a, c9ad27a, c9ad28a, c9ad29a, c9ad30a, c9ad32a)

- 2 summary scales
 - o index offenses (c9ad10a, c9ad15a, c9ad16a, c9ad20a, c9ad22a, c9ad26a, c9ad27a, c9ad28a, c9ad30a, c9ad31a, c9ad32a, c9ad33a, c9ad34a)
 - o general delinquency (c9ad5a, c9ad8a, c9ad9a, c9ad10a, c9ad13a, c9ad14a, c9ad15a, c9ad16a, c9ad18a, c9ad19a, c9ad20a, c9ad21a, c9ad22a, c9ad23a, c9ad24a, c9ad25a, c9ad26a, c9ad27a, c9ad28a, c9ad29a, c9ad30a, c9ad31a, c9ad32a, c9ad33a, c9ad34a)

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	0.47	0.43
SRD Interpersonal Violence	0.54	0.54
SRD Index Offenses	0.76	0.80
SRD General Offenses	0.84	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. Results are listed below.

Variable	Class	N	Mean	StdErr	Probt
SRD Status Offenses	C	125	0.1387	0.0208	0.3473
SRD Status Offenses	N	242	0.1157	0.0139	.
SRD Interpersonal Violence	C	125	0.0547	0.011	0.2430
SRD Interpersonal Violence	N	242	0.0399	0.007	.
SRD Index Offenses	C	125	0.0357	0.009	0.1836
SRD Index Offenses	N	242	0.0229	0.0051	.
SRD General Delinquency	C	125	0.0438	0.0092	0.1819
SRD General Delinquency	N	242	0.0306	0.0053	.

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.

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
C9AD1A	Past Year, Have You Run Away From Home?	124	0.065	0.247
C9AD2A	Past Yr, Skipped Class/Schl w/out Excuse	125	0.224	0.419
C9AD3A	Past Yr, Lied About Age to Get Something	125	0.128	0.335
C9AD4A	Past Year, Hitchhiked Where Illegal?	125	0.008	0.089
C9AD5A	Past Yr, Have You Carried Hidden Weapon?	125	0.112	0.317
C9AD6A	Been Too Loud/Rowdy & People Complained?	125	0.200	0.402
C9AD7A	Past Yr, Begged for Money From Strangers	125	0.024	0.154
C9AD8A	Past Year, Been Drunk in a Public Place?	125	0.056	0.231
C9AD9A	Past Yr, Damaged/Destroyed Others Prop?	125	0.096	0.296
C9AD10A	Have or Tried to Set Something on Fire?	125	0.016	0.126
C9AD11A	Past Yr, Have Avoided Paying for Things?	125	0.104	0.306
C9AD12A	Past Yr, Have Tried to Steal Something?	125	0.032	0.177
C9AD13A	Past Yr, Tried Stealing Item Worth < \$5	125	0.096	0.296
C9AD14A	Past Year, Tried Stealing \$5-\$50 Item?	125	0.064	0.246
C9AD15A	Past Year, Tried Stealing \$50-\$100 Item?	125	0.024	0.154
C9AD16A	Past Year, Tried Stealing Item > \$100?	125	0.024	0.154
C9AD17A	Past Year, Stolen Any Item From a Store?	125	0.080	0.272
C9AD18A	Past Year, Stolen Someones Purse/Wallet?	125	0.008	0.089
C9AD19A	Past Year, Stolen Something From a Car?	125	0.040	0.197
C9AD20A	Past Yr, Knowingly Bought/Sold Stolen Pr	125	0.040	0.197
C9AD21A	Past Yr, Taken Vehicle W/O Owners Permis	125	0.024	0.154
C9AD22A	Past Yr, Have Tried/Stole Motor Vehicle?	125	0.024	0.154
C9AD23A	Past Year, Used Fake Money/Checks to Pay	125	0.008	0.089
C9AD24A	Past Yr, Used Credit/Bank Card W/O Permi	124	0	0
C9AD25A	Past Year, Have Tried to Cheat Someone?	125	0.032	0.177
C9AD26A	Past Yr, Attacked Ind W/ Intent to Hurt/	125	0.024	0.154
C9AD27A	Past Yr, Hit Someone W/ Idea of Hurting	125	0.120	0.326
C9AD28A	Past Yr, Used Weapon to Get \$ From Peopl	125	0.016	0.126
C9AD29A	Past Yr, Thrown Objects at People?	125	0.096	0.296
C9AD30A	Past Yr, Been Involved in Any Gang Fight	125	0.064	0.246
C9AD31A	Past Yr, Paid for Having Sex W/ Someone?	125	0.016	0.126
C9AD32A	Past Yr, Sex W/ Someone Against Their Wi	125	0.008	0.089
C9AD33A	Past Yr, Have You Sold Marijuana/Hashish	125	0.056	0.231
C9AD34A	Past Yr, Have Sold Heroin/Cocaine/LSD?	125	0.032	0.177

Scales:

Variable	Label	N	Mean	Std Dev	Minimum	Maximum
srdsto	'SRD Status Offenses'	125	0.139	0.233	0	1.000
srdipv	'SRD Interpersonal Violence'	125	0.055	0.123	0	0.667
srdind	'SRD Index Offenses'	125	0.036	0.100	0	0.615
srdgen	'SRD General Delinquency'	125	0.044	0.103	0	0.760

Normative Sample: Items:

Variable	Label	N	Mean	Std Dev
C9AD1A	Past Year, Have You Run Away From Home?	303	0.043	0.203
C9AD2A	Past Yr, Skipped Class/Schl w/out Excuse	304	0.224	0.417
C9AD3A	Past Yr, Lied About Age to Get Something	304	0.105	0.307
C9AD4A	Past Year, Hitchhiked Where Illegal?	304	0.003	0.057
C9AD5A	Past Yr, Have You Carried Hidden Weapon?	304	0.092	0.290
C9AD6A	Been Too Loud/Rowdy & People Complained?	304	0.201	0.401
C9AD7A	Past Yr, Begged for Money From Strangers	304	0.016	0.127
C9AD8A	Past Year, Been Drunk in a Public Place?	304	0.036	0.187
C9AD9A	Past Yr, Damaged/Destroyed Others Prop?	304	0.089	0.285
C9AD10A	Have or Tried to Set Something on Fire?	304	0.013	0.114
C9AD11A	Past Yr, Have Avoided Paying for Things?	304	0.063	0.242
C9AD12A	Past Yr, Have Tried to Steal Something?	304	0.036	0.187
C9AD13A	Past Yr, Tried Stealing Item Worth < \$5	304	0.076	0.265
C9AD14A	Past Year, Tried Stealing \$5-\$50 Item?	304	0.043	0.203
C9AD15A	Past Year, Tried Stealing \$50-\$100 Item?	304	0.020	0.139
C9AD16A	Past Year, Tried Stealing Item > \$100?	304	0.013	0.114
C9AD17A	Past Year, Stolen Any Item From a Store?	304	0.076	0.265
C9AD18A	Past Year, Stolen Someones Purse/Wallet?	304	0	0
C9AD19A	Past Year, Stolen Something From a Car?	304	0.020	0.139
C9AD20A	Past Yr, Knowingly Bought/Sold Stolen Pr	304	0.030	0.170
C9AD21A	Past Yr, Taken Vehicle W/O Owners Permis	304	0.026	0.160
C9AD22A	Past Yr, Have Tried/Stole Motor Vehicle?	304	0.016	0.127
C9AD23A	Past Year, Used Fake Money/Checks to Pay	304	0.003	0.057
C9AD24A	Past Yr, Used Credit/Bank Card W/O Permi	304	0	0
C9AD25A	Past Year, Have Tried to Cheat Someone?	304	0.033	0.179
C9AD26A	Past Yr, Attacked Ind W/ Intent to Hurt/	304	0.013	0.114
C9AD27A	Past Yr, Hit Someone W/ Idea of Hurting	304	0.112	0.316
C9AD28A	Past Yr, Used Weapon to Get \$ From Peopl	304	0.007	0.081
C9AD29A	Past Yr, Thrown Objects at People?	304	0.076	0.265
C9AD30A	Past Yr, Been Involved in Any Gang Fight	304	0.033	0.179
C9AD31A	Past Yr, Paid for Having Sex W/ Someone?	304	0.013	0.114
C9AD32A	Past Yr, Sex W/ Someone Against Their Wi	304	0.003	0.057
C9AD33A	Past Yr, Have You Sold Marijuana/Hashish	304	0.026	0.160
C9AD34A	Past Yr, Have Sold Heroin/Cocaine/LSD?	304	0.016	0.127

Scales:

Variable	Label	N	Mean	Std Dev	Minimum	Maximum
srdsto	'SRD Status Offenses'	304	0.124	0.224	0	1.000
srdipv	'SRD Interpersonal Violence'	304	0.041	0.107	0	0.833
srdind	'SRD Index Offenses'	304	0.024	0.077	0	0.769
srdgen	'SRD General Delinquency'	304	0.032	0.080	0	0.720

VII. Scale Correlations

Full sample:

Pearson Correlation Coefficients, N = 367 Prob > r under H0: Rho=0				
	srdsto	srdipv	srdind	srdgen
srdsto 'SRD Status Offenses'	1.00000	0.37943 <.0001	0.38319 <.0001	0.43746 <.0001
srdipv 'SRD Interpersonal Violence'	0.37943 <.0001	1.00000	0.83790 <.0001	0.83459 <.0001
srdind 'SRD Index Offenses'	0.38319 <.0001	0.83790 <.0001	1.00000	0.93447 <.0001
srdgen 'SRD General Delinquency'	0.43746 <.0001	0.83459 <.0001	0.93447 <.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.