

## **Personality traits, aggressive behaviour, and characteristics of psychological situations: a study among juveniles in an open vs. isolation system of social rehabilitation**

The aim of the research project is to analyze the determinants of aggressive behaviours in the perspective of longitudinal research in a group of socially maladjusted youth. That means that in the course of research I will verify the role of personality traits (included in the *Big Five* model: neuroticism, extraversion, openness, conscientiousness, agreeableness [Costa & McCrae, 1985; McCrae et al., 2005]) and the characteristics of psychological situations (corresponding to the taxonomy of the Situational Eight Diamonds: Duty, Intellect, Adversity, Mating, Positivity, Negativity, Deception, Sociality [Rauthmann et al., 2014b, 2014a; Rauthmann & Sherman, 2015]) as variables determining aggressive behaviour (physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger, and hostility [Buss & Perry 1992]) among juveniles during adolescence. The choice of the longitudinal research perspective will allow for analyzing a wide range of variables (features, behaviours, situations) in the context of changes taking place in the examined persons. As a result, this will allow formulating and proposing recommendations and guidelines for therapists and educators working with socially maladjusted youth concerning interventions developing personality traits and enhancing the perception of situations that may prove effective in reducing a tendency for aggressive behaviour..

It is worth pointing to several aspects of innovation in this research project. Firstly, on the basis of the available source literature, it can be concluded that this is the first study concerning aggressive behaviour among juveniles defined in this way, including determining potential stable (personality traits and psychological situations) and variable determinants using the method of longitudinal measurements. In other words, the research will contribute to filling the gap in the field of personality psychology and criminology regarding analyzing these variables, as there is still no comprehensive model that would allow to describe aggressive behaviours and explain the determinants in the area of personality traits and the perceived psychological situation in the long term. Drawing attention to the joint analysis of variables in the field of personality traits and situational characteristics may better predict different behaviours (Ruthmann, 2015). Secondly, this project will be the first one to analyze the role of perceived psychological situations in a group of socially maladjusted youth. Thanks to such an approach, scientists are now able to study individual differences in perceiving a situation in the same way as they study personality traits, with an additional benefit in the form of being able to define contexts such as, for example, rehabilitation centers. Finally, the results of this project may turn out to be useful for a wide range of specialists dealing with psychological and therapeutic help for juveniles directed to probation centers and youth educational centers, i.e. a study designed for the purposes of this project may contribute to developing more effective forms of psychological assistance for such a group of young people. This also concerns the need to focus the research solely on juveniles and to meet the postulate of other researchers pointing to the need of undertaking research in which the subject of interest would not consist in, as in the case of most analyses so far, comparisons of maladjusted adolescents and adolescents who do not have problems with social and legal norms, because such comparisons lead to presenting juveniles in a negative light.

Although research carried out so far significantly expanded our knowledge concerning aggressive behaviours, the knowledge of their determinants analyzed collectively (personality traits and perceiving the psychological situation), and especially when we pay attention to the group of juveniles referred to rehabilitation centers, is still too small. What are especially needed are studies explaining the mechanisms and aggressive behaviours, as well as research concerning the psychological determinants of such behaviours. That is why in the research project we focus on psychological mechanisms, looking for dynamic correlations between personality traits, perceiving a psychological situation and aggressive behaviour. In order to be able to trace the mechanisms that take place over time, we take advantage of the longitudinal research methodology. Longitudinal studies of juveniles will present the developmental variability of all variables studied in the project over the course of a year. A better understanding of the psychological mechanisms that drive aggressive behaviour as well as developing guidelines and recommendations on how to minimize these behaviours among juveniles is of significant social importance, allowing to develop psychological and therapeutic interventions in several areas, including education, rehabilitation, and even social policy.