Convenience Theory on Crime in the Corporate Sector

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Introduction

Convenience is a concept that was theoretically mainly associated with efficiency in time savings. Today, convenience is associated with a number of other characteristics, such as reduced effort and reduced pain. Convenience is associated with terms such as fast, easy, and safe. Convenience says something about attractiveness and accessibility. A convenient individual is not necessarily neither bad nor lazy. On the contrary, the person can be seen as smart and rational (Sundström & Radon, 2015).

In the marketing literature, convenience store is a term used to define three phases in retailing. First, retailers identified a business opportunity in offering a new retail format based on the self-service idea. Self-service replaced over-the-counter service. Next, retailers identified customers' willingness to pay a little more if the store was always open and situated in the neighborhood or joint with the gas station. Finally, e-commerce represents another kind of convenience, where the ordering process can take place from home (Sundström & Radon, 2015). In all three instances, there are costs associated with convenience (Locke & Blomquist, 2016). In the case of self-service, customers have to find and physically handle items themselves. In the case of online shopping, customers have to find and electronically handle items themselves. Just like convenience is a driver for consumers when shopping, convenience is a driver for executives and other members in the elite when struggling to reach personal and organizational goals.

In the marketing literature, distinctions are made between decision convenience, access convenience, benefit convenience, transaction convenience, and post-benefit convenience (Seiders, Voss, Godfrey, & Grewal, 2007). In our convenience theory for white-collar crime, we make distinctions between economical convenience, organizational convenience, and behavioral convenience.

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Convenience Orientation

Convenience orientation is conceptualized as the value that individuals and organizations place on actions with inherent characteristics of saving time and effort. Convenience orientation can be considered a value-like construct that influences behavior and decision-making. Mai and Olsen (2016) measured convenience orientation in terms of a desire to spend as little time as possible on the task, in terms of an attitude that the less effort needed the better, as well as in terms of a consideration that it is a waste of time to spend a long time on the task. Convenience orientation toward illegal actions increases as negative attitudes toward legal actions increase. The basic elements in convenience orientation are the executive attitudes toward the saving of time, effort, and discomfort in the planning, action, and achievement of goals. Generally, convenience orientation is the degree to which an executive is inclined to save time and effort to reach goals.

Convenience orientation refers to person's general preference for convenient maneuvers. A convenience-oriented person is one who seeks to accomplish a task in the shortest time with the least expenditure of human energy (Berry, Seiders, & Grewal, 2002).

In the marketing literature, convenience orientation is, for example, measured in terms of stage in a person's life cycle, family size, economic status, social status, and education (Sundström & Radon, 2015). Similar characteristics of convenience orientation might be developed for individuals in the elite regarding white-collar crime.

Convenience in the decision-making process is not only concerned with one alternative being more convenient than another alternative. Convenience is also concerned with the extent to which an individual collects information about more and goals (Puranam, alternatives and collects more information about each alternative. Market research indicates that consumers tend to make buying decisions based on little information about few alternatives (Sundström & Radon, 2015). A similar process can be explored for white-collar crime where the individual avoids the effort of collecting more information about more alternatives that might have led to a non-criminal rather than a criminal solution to a challenge or problem.

It is not the actual convenience that is important in convenience theory. Rather it is the perceived, expected, and assumed convenience that influences choice of action. Berry et al. (2002) make this distinction explicit by conceptualizing convenience as individuals time and effort perceptions related to an action. White-collar criminals probably vary in their perceived convenience of their actions. Low expected convenience can be one of the reasons why not more members of the elite commit white-collar offenses.

Convenience is of value because time and effort are associated with value. Time is a limited and scarce resource. Saving time means reallocating time across activities to achieve greater efficiency. Similarly, effort can be reallocated to create value elsewhere. The more effort is exerted, the more outcomes can be expected in return (Berry et al., 2002).

Convenience in white-collar crime relates to savings in time and effort by privileged and trusted individuals to reach a goal. Convenience is here an attribute of an illegal action. Convenience comes at a potential cost to the offender in terms of the likelihood of detection and future punishment. In other words, reducing time and effort now entails a greater potential for future cost. 'Paying for convenience' is a way of phrasing this proposition (Farquhar & Rowley, 2009).

Convenience is the perceived savings in time and effort required to find and to facilitate the use of a solution to a problem or to exploit favorable circumstances. Convenience directly relates to the amount of time and effort that is required to accomplish a task. Convenience addresses the time and effort exerted before, during, and after an activity. Convenience represents a time and effort component related to the complete illegal transaction process or processes (Collier & Kimes, 2012).

People differ in their temporal orientation, including perceived time scarcity, the degree to which they value time, and their sensitivity to time-related issues. Facing strain, greed, or other situations, an illegal activity can represent a convenient solution to a problem that the individual or the organization otherwise finds difficult or even impossible to solve. The desire for convenience varies among people. Convenience orientation is a term that refers to a person's general preference for convenient solutions to problems. A convenience-oriented individual is one who seeks to accomplish a task in the shortest time with the least expenditure of human energy (Farquhar & Rowley, 2009).

Convenience motivates the choice of action. An important element in convenience is saving time in terms of efficiency in time savings, and another element is avoiding more problematic, stressful, and challenging situations. Convenience can be both an absolute construct and a relative construct. As an absolute construct, it is attractive to commit crime as such. As a relative construct, it is more convenient to commit crime than to carry out alternative actions to solve a problem or gain benefits from a possibility. Convenience is an advantage in favor of a specific action to the detriment of alternative actions. In white-collar crime, it seems that convenience is mainly a relative construct. Decision-making implies a choice between alternatives, where one alternative might be relatively more convenient. Convenience is a matter of perception in advance of possible criminal actions. Convenience must be viewed as a significant variable whose understanding involves complexity in multiple meanings (Sundström & Radon, 2015).

For example, the flexibility to choose the exact moment for making a deal or another kind of action can also be perceived as a matter of convenience. Convenience can also mean selecting a proper occasion, which, in turn, is about timing. There may be more reluctance to do something at a certain point in time than willingness to save or spend time. Thus, when something is convenient, it could mean saving time as well as spending time and doing it at the right moment (Sundström & Radon, 2015).

In addition to time convenience and timing convenience, there may be place convenience, where a potential offender finds the spatial circumstances convenient for crime (Sundström & Radon, 2015). In white-collar crime, the organizational setting is typically characterized by spatial convenience.

Three main dimensions to explain white-collar crime have emerged. All of them link to convenience (Gottschalk, 2016, 2017). The first dimension is concerned with economic aspects, where convenience implies that the illegal financial gain is a convenient option for the decision-maker to cover needs. The second dimension is concerned with organizational aspects, where convenience implies that the offender has convenient access to premises and convenient ability to hide illegal transactions among legal transactions. The third dimension is concerned with behavioral aspects, where convenience implies that the offender finds convenient justification.

Desire for Profits

Convenience theory as an explanation for white-collar crime suggests that offenders are attracted by convenience in three dimensions (Gottschalk, 2016, 2017). First in the economical dimension, offenders are attracted by crime as a convenient way of satisfying desires for personal and organizational profits. For some offenders, it is all about the American dream (Trahan, Marquart, & Mullings, 2005). Second in the organizational dimension, offenders are attracted by organizational opportunities for financial crime in a setting where offenders enjoy professional access and trust by others. Finally in the behavioral dimension, offenders perceive their own deviant behaviors as unproblematic and justified (O'Connor, 2005).

Convenience is a term often applied in studies of consumer behavior. Convenience theory adds something important to our understanding because it:

(a) Disaggregates the components of a consumer's decisions about services and similarly disaggregates the dimensions of a white-collar criminal's decisions about deviant behavior
(b) Explains why illegitimate actions may be chosen at the detriment of legitimate actions
(c) Provides a way to think about why organizations might not do anything about being an arena for crime

The key components of convenience theory are similar to Felson and Boba's (2017) problem triangle analysis in routine activity theory. Routine activity theory suggests three conditions for crime to occur: a motivated offender, an opportunity in terms of a suitable target, and the absence of a capable or moral guardian. The existence or absence of a likely guardian represents an inhibitor or facilitator for crime. The premise of routine activity theory is that crime is to a minor extent affected by social causes such as poverty, inequality, and unemployment. Motivated offenders are individuals who are not only capable of committing criminal activity but are willing to do so. Suitable targets can be something that are seen by offenders as particularly attractive.

When introducing routine activity theory, Cohen and Felson (1979) concentrated upon the circumstances in which offenders carry out predatory criminal acts. Most criminal acts require convergence in space and time of (1) likely offenders, (2) suitable

targets, and (3) the absence of capable guardians against crime. The lack of any of these elements is sufficient to prevent the successful completion of a crime. Though guardianship is implicit in everyday life, it usually is invisible by the absence of violations and is therefore easy to overlook. Guardians are not only protective tools, weapons, and skills but also mental models in the minds of potential offenders that stimulate self-control to avoid criminal acts.

When compared to convenience theory, routine activity theory's three conditions do not cover all three dimensions. The likely offenders can be found in the behavioral dimension, while both suitable targets and absence of capable guardians can be found in the organizational dimension. While routine activity theory defines conditions for crime to occur, convenience theory defines situations where crime occurs. White-collar crime only occurs when there is a financial motive in the economical dimension.

Another traditional theory is worthwhile to compare to convenience theory. Fraud theory with the fraud triangle suggests three conditions for fraud (Cressey, 1972): (1) incentives and pressures, (2) opportunities, and (3) attitudes and rationalization. Incentives and pressures belong in the economical dimension; opportunities belong in the organizational dimension, while attitudes and rationalization belong in the behavioral dimension. As such, the fraud triangle covers all dimensions of convenience theory. However, at the core of convenience theory is convenience in all three dimensions as well as opportunity found in the organizational setting based on professional role and trust by others. Furthermore, convenience theory emphasizes the relative importance of convenience, where offenders have alternative legitimate actions available to respond to incentives and pressures, but they choose illegitimate actions since these actions are considered more convenient.

Convenience theory relates to Clarke's (1999) hot products, where he studied the targets of theft. He found that hot products include residential burglary, theft from cars, theft of cars, commercial vehicle theft, and shoplifting. Hot products are targets for crime.

Convenience orientation is conceptualized as the value that individuals and organizations place on actions with inherent characteristics of saving time and effort. Convenience orientation can be considered a value-like construct that influences behavior and decision-making. Mai and Olsen (2016) measured convenience orientation in terms of a desire to spend as little time as possible on the task, in terms of an attitude that the less effort needed, the better, as well as in terms of a consideration that it is a waste of time to spend a long time on the task. Convenience orientation toward illegal actions increases as negative attitudes toward legal actions increase. The basic elements in convenience orientation are the executive attitudes toward the saving of time, effort, and discomfort in the planning, action, and achievement of goals. Generally, convenience orientation is the degree to which an executive is inclined to save time and effort to reach goals. Convenience orientation refers to person's general preference for convenient maneuvers. A convenience-oriented person is one who seeks to accomplish a task in the shortest time with the least expenditure of human energy.

White-collar crime is committed for economical gain, which implies that items of value that belong to others are taken over in an illegal way. The takeover can occur directly by theft or indirectly by corruption, where competitors loose because the customer is bribed by another competitor. Other ways of depriving others of assets include fraud and manipulation.

The economical dimension of convenience theory is concerned with threats and possibilities where white-collar crime can help in terms of illegal financial gain. An illegal financial gain can help reduce or eliminate threats, and an illegal financial gain can help explore and exploit possibilities.

Not all members of the elite are as successful as they would like to be. Some feel that they are not provided the ability to achieve their ambitious goals. They blame the system rather than themselves for their lack of success, and they compensate by white-collar crime (Wood & Alleyne, 2010).

Organizational Opportunity

The organizational dimension sets white-collar criminals apart from other financial criminals. Abusing social security benefits, committing tax evasion, or committing Internet fraud on a personal level is not considered a white-collar crime. White-collar crime is defined as financial crime committed in a professional capability in an organizational context.

While possibilities in the economical dimension are concerned with convenient abilities for achievement of goals (avoid threats and gain benefits such as real estate and foreign establishment), opportunities in the organizational dimension revolve on how crime can be committed conveniently. The economical dimension answers the why question, while the organizational dimension answers the how question of white-collar crime. We distinguish between economic ability to realize wishes, meet needs, and fulfil desires and professional opportunity to implement white-collar crime in connection with regular business activities. Corruption, bank fraud, and embezzlement are typical examples of financial crime in professional settings.

An organization is a system of coordinated actions among individuals and groups with boundaries and goals (Puranam, Alexy, & Reitzig, 2014). An organization can be a hierarchy, a matrix, or a network or any other kind of relationships between people in a professional work environment (Dion, 2008).

Ahrne and Brunsson (2011) argue that an organization is characterized by membership, hierarchy, monitor, and sanctions. Organizations decide about membership, about who will be allowed to join the organization as employees. Membership brings a certain identity with it, an identity that differs from that of nonmembers. Organizations include a hierarchy, a duty to oblige others to comply with decisions. Hierarchy entails a form of organized power. Organizations can issue commands and can also decide upon rules that its members are expected to follow in their actions. An organization has the right to monitor compliance with its commands and

rules. Organizations have the right to decide about sanctions, both positive and negative. They can decide to change a member's status by using promotions, grading systems, awards, diplomas, and medals.

Organizational members have different roles that lead to different extent of power and influence. Some organizational members have to do and also do what they are told. Other members decide what should be done. Power and influence is associated with level in the organizational hierarchy, tasks to be performed, as well as individual freedom. Some members enjoy substantial individual freedom although they can be found at lower levels of the organization.

White-collar crime is committed by privileged individuals in the elite. They do typically enjoy substantial individual freedom in their professions with little or no control. A typical example is the chief executive officer (CEO). The CEO is the only person at that hierarchical level in the organization. Below the CEO, there are a number of executives at the same hierarchical level. Above the CEO, there are a number of board members at the same hierarchical level. But the CEO is alone at his or her level. The CEO is supposed to be controlled by the board, but the board only meets once in a while to discuss business cases. Executives below the CEO are typically appointed by the CEO and typically loyal to the CEO.

Power, influence, and freedom are typical professional characteristics not only of CEOs. Some politicians, government officials, heads of religious organizations, and other leading figures in society enjoy trust without control. Some independent professions, such as lawyers and doctors, enjoy the same kind of freedom.

The organizational anchoring may cause some revealed white-collar criminals to avoid investigation, prosecution, and conviction. The business may be too powerful or important to collapse (such as banks), and the criminals may be too powerful to jail. After the downturn in the US economy in 2008, many expected bank executives to be prosecuted, but they were not. Pontell, Black, and Geis (2014: 10) explain why it did not happen:

> From a criminological standpoint, the current financial meltdown points to the need to unpack the concept of status when examining white-collar and corporate offenses. The high standing of those involved in the current scandal has acted as a significant shield to accusations of criminal wrongdoing in at least three ways. First, the legal resources that offenders can bring to bear on any case made against them are significant. This would give pause to any prosecutor, regardless of the evidence that exists. Second, their place in the organization assures that the many below them will be held more directly responsible for the more readily detected offenses. The downward focus on white-collar and corporate crimes is partly a function of the visibility of the offense and the ease with which it can be officially pursued. Third, the political power of large financial institutions allow for effective lobbying that both distances them from the criminal law and prevents the government from restricting them from receiving taxpayer money when they get into trouble.

Similar lack of prosecution and punishment can be found in private fraud investigations. For example, Valukas (2010) identified executive misconduct as the reason for the bankruptcy at Lehman Brothers, but the investigation nevertheless concluded that executives were legally not to blame. Therefore, they were never prosecuted.

The organizational setting focuses on profession and position associated with a business or other kind of entity that makes it possible to carry out criminal acts. A profession is an occupation where a person is eligible by virtue of education and experience. In a narrow sense, a profession is a group of professionals with the exclusive right to perform certain work because they have completed a special education. Examples are medical doctors and attorneys. This definition is too narrow in our context. Profession is here broadly defined as a qualified occupational practice based on knowledge and experience. Dion (2009) argues that organizational culture makes it possible to adopt organizational purposes and objectives, which are basically deviant in comparison with social norms yet in line with the competition. Deviant purposes can be chosen when business corporations are trapped by doubtful, immoral, or disloyal means that are used by competitors. They could also be trapped by the business milieu as a social institution. Furthermore, they could be trapped by their own sector-based morality, which is oriented toward profit maximization.

Organizational opportunity is a distinct characteristic of white-collar crime that varies with the persons who are involved in crime (Michel, 2008). An opportunity is attractive as a way to respond to needs (Bucy, Formby, Raspanti, & Rooney, 2008). It is the organizational dimension that gives white-collar criminals the opportunity to commit economic crime and hide it in seemingly legal activities in the business.

Aguilera and Vadera (2008: 434) describe a criminal opportunity as "the presence of a favorable combination of circumstances that renders a possible course of action relevant." Opportunities for crime occur when individuals and groups can engage in illegal and unethical behavior and expect, with a certain confidence (Haines, 2014), that they will avoid detection and punishment. Opportunity to commit white-collar crime can be found at the community level, the business level, and the individual level. At the community level, control regimes might be absent, and entire industries may be available for financial crime. An example here could be the construction industry, where one can find instances of both cartels and undeclared work. Another example could be tax collection authorities that are unable to trace and control accounting figures from businesses, thereby opening up for tax evasion with minimal risk of detection and punishment.

Huisman and Erp (2013) argue that a criminal opportunity has the following five characteristics: (i) the effort required to carry out the offence, (ii) the perceived risks of detection, (iii) the rewards to be gained from the offense, (iv) the situational conditions that may encourage criminal action, and (v) the excuse and neutralization of the offense.

At the business level, ethics and rules can be absent, while economic crime is a straightforward business practice. An example here is subsidy fraud, where ferry companies report lower traffic number to ensure greater government transfers. Another example is internal invoice fraud, where the accounting department lacks overview over who is allowed to approve what invoices.

At the individual level, greed can dominate, where the business does not have any relevant reaction to economic crime. An example here might be law firms where

partners abuse money in client accounts. Another example is corruption, where the bribed person receives money from the bribing person, without anybody noticing on either side.

Benson and Simpson (2015) write that the organizational opportunity to commit white-collar manifests itself through the following three characteristics: (1) the offender has lawful and legitimate access to the premises and systems where crime is committed, (2) the offender is geographically separated from his victim, and (3) criminal acts appear to be legitimate business.

This is very different from street crime such as violence and burglary, where the offender has no legal access, the offender is at the same place as his victim, and the offense does not appear to be legal. A fundamental difference between white-collar crime and street crime is that while white-collar people conceal their crime but do not hide themselves, street criminals do not conceal their crime but hide themselves. Street crime is easily detected, while street criminals are not always easy to find. White-collar crime is hardly detected, but white-collar criminals are easy to find.

White-collar crime does not take place privately; it takes place on the job. The organization is the venue for crime. McKenndall and Wagner (1997) describes the opportunity by context and environmental conditions that facilitate rather than prevent the carrying out of criminal activities. For example, in the case of corruption, both the briber and the bribed are linked to a job context. The briber typically uses company money to pay, while the bribed receives the money personally because his organization is attractive to the bribing company.

The organizational dimension through work represents the offender's scope for crime. By virtue of employment, ownership, position, relations, and knowledge, the offender can explore and exploit his association with the organization to commit financial crime. As sales executive, the person can pay bribes, and as procurement executive, the person can receive bribes. As finance executive, the person may safely commit embezzlement by fixing accounting figures, and as chief accountant, the person can manipulate accounting to providing tax evasion. As chief executive, the person can sign fake contracts or order fraudulent appraisals that open up for bank fraud by asking the bank to finance future income to be expected from contract partners and sale of real estate. There are ample opportunities for economic crime by executives and others linked to enterprises. Examples of others include administrative managers, attorneys, auditors, bank managers, board members, boat dealers, car dealers, concert organizers, councilmen, management consultants, district managers, entrepreneurs, investors, mayors, medical doctors, members of parliament, nursery owners, property developers, real estate agents, ship brokers, stockbrokers, and surveyors.

White-collar crime opportunities occur through the three characteristics described by Benson and Simpson (2015). The opportunities are greatest for top executives and other members of the elite in society. In relation to convenience theory, the three characteristics make it comfortable, easy, and convenient to commit financial crime to solve a problem or answer to a challenge. It may be relatively simple and thus convenient for white-collar elite members to hide criminal activities in the stream of legal activities and thus give crime an outer semblance of credibility in a respectable business (Pickett & Pickett, 2002).

Opportunity makes a thief, it is sometimes stated. If the availability of legal opportunities to solve problems and exploit possibilities deteriorates, while illegal opportunities flourish and are considered convenient, then white-collar individuals will become less law-abiding. If fraud, theft, manipulation, and corruption are easily docked in the enterprise, while law-abiding alternatives are invisible or hard to implement, then opportunity makes an offender.

Organizational opportunity for economic crime depends on intellectual and social capital that is available to the potential white-collar criminal. Intellectual capital is knowledge in terms of understanding, insight, reflection, ability, and skill. Social capital is relations in hierarchical and transactional exchanges. Social capital is the sum of actual and potential resources available for white-collar individuals by virtue of his or her position in formal and informal hierarchies, networks, and matrices (Adler & Kwon, 2002). Formal as well as informal power means influence over resources that can be used for crime.

White-collar offenders are often not alone when committing financial crime. They may cooperate with people internally as well as with people externally. If there is internal crime cooperation, then it may be more convenient for each individual to participate. An environment where crime is accepted strengthens the organizational opportunity. If there is external crime cooperation, then it may again be more convenient for each individual to participate. External actors, who, for example, submit fake invoices or receive bribes, enter into a relationship with the internal actor(s) with a code of silence.

The organizational dimension of white-collar offenses is particularly evident when crime is committed on behalf of the business. A distinction is often made between white-collar criminals who commit financial crime for personal gain and white-collar criminals who do it for their employer (Trahan, 2011). The first is labelled occupational crime, while the second is labelled corporate crime. Examples of corporate crime include manipulation of financial figures for tax evasion and unjustified government subsidies, bribery to obtain contracts, false loan applications to obtain credit in banks, and money laundering in tax havens to recruit securities clients. The organizational anchoring of crime is evident in corporate offenses as crime takes place within the business and to the benefit of business (Bradshaw, 2015).

While occupational crime is often hidden by the individual to enrich himself by abusing corporate resources (Hansen, 2009), corporate crime is often hidden by a group of individuals to improve business conditions. In both cases, crime is committed by virtue of position and trust in the organization, which prevents monitoring, control, and accountability.

Heath (2008) found that individuals who are higher up on the ladder in the company tend to commit larger and more serious occupational crimes. The same is probably the case also for corporate crime. Empirical studies by Gottschalk (2016, 2017) show that corporate criminals are older, commit crime for a larger amount of money, and are connected to larger organizations than occupational criminals. The studies support the assumption that white-collar criminals at the top of the ladder commit financial crime for far larger amounts than white-collar collar offenders further down the hierarchical ladder. This finding applies both to occupational and corporate crime.

Corporate crime, often called organizational offenses or business crime (Reed & Yeager, 1996), typically results from actions of several individuals in more or less rooted cooperation. If a business representative commits a crime on behalf of the organization, it is defined as corporate crime. If the same person commits crime for personal gain, it is defined as occupational crime. At criminal prosecution in the criminal justice system, both occupational crime and corporate crime are individualized, because a company cannot be sentenced to prison. A business can only be fined (Bookman, 2008). The Norwegian database with 405 convicted white-collar criminals contains 68 offenders (17%) who committed financial crime on behalf of the organization. Corporate crime represents violations of integrity as well as failure to comply with moral standards, as in the example of corruption managed by Siemens in Germany (Eberl, Geiger, & Assländer, 2015).

The organizational dimension implies that the business is the basis for deviant acts. Sometimes the organization is also a victim of crime. In the Norwegian study, 28 percent of all convicted white-collar criminals victimized their own employers. Nineteen percent caused damage to society at large, for example, by tax evasion. Eighteen percent caused harm to customers, 15 percent caused bank losses, and 8 percent caused loss among shareholders, while 12 percent hurt others.

The organizational dimension of white-collar crime becomes also evident when several from the same enterprise are involved in offenses (Ashforth, Gioia, Robinson, & Trevino, 2008), and when the organization is characterized by a criminal mindset (O'Connor, 2005), whether it concerns occupational crime or corporate crime. A single, standalone white-collar criminal can be described as a rotten apple, but when several are involved in crime, and corporate culture virtually stimulates offenses, then it is more appropriate to describe the phenomenon as a basket of rotten apples or as a rotten apple orchard, like Punch (2003: 172) define them:

> The metaphor of "rotten orchards" indicate(s) that it is sometimes not the apple, or even the barrel that is rotten but the *system* (or significant parts of the system).

White-collar crime is characterized by opportunism. There must be an opportunity to commit elite crime. If opportunities are limited, there will be less crime. This is evident when looking at the gender distribution between women and men. There are far fewer women than men in positions of trust with privileges and little control. Therefore, it is not surprising that there are far fewer white-collar offenders among women than men. In Norway, women constitute only 7 percent of white-collar inmates, while the rest are men.

Opportunity arises out of certain jobs. For example, the opportunity to engage in health-care fraud is obviously facilitated if one has a job in the health-care system. Individuals who are in key positions and involved in networks based on trust have increased access to criminal opportunities. The opportunity perspective is important, because these offenses usually require special business-related access to commit conspiracies, frauds, embezzlements, and other kinds of financial crime (Benson & Simpson, 2015).

Offenders take advantage of their positions of power with almost unlimited authority in the opportunity structure (Kempa, 2010), because they have legitimate

and often privileged access to physical and virtual locations in which crime is committed, are totally in charge of resource allocations and transaction, and are successful in concealment based on key resources used to hide their crime. Offenders have an economic motivation and opportunity (Huisman & Erp, 2013), linked to an organizational platform and availability and in a setting of people who do not know, do not care, or do not reveal the individual(s) with behavioral traits who commit crime. Opportunity includes people who are loyal to the criminal either as a follower or as a silent partner.

Deviant Behavior

Most theories of white-collar crime can be found along the behavioral dimension. Numerous suggestions have been presented by researchers to explain famous people who have committed financial crime.

Crime is not committed by systems, routines, or organizations. Crime is committed by individuals. White-collar criminals practice a deviant behavior to carry out their offenses. White-collar crime is committed by members of the privileged socioeconomic class who are using their power and influence. Offenders are typically charismatic, have a need-to-control, have a tendency to bully subordinates, fear losing their status and position, exhibit narcissistic tendencies, lack integrity and social conscience, have no guilt feelings, and do not perceive themselves as criminals.

Convenience theory argues that white-collar crime is most common among people in their forties, an age when one is most ambitious and opportunities often are the greatest. Ambitions can be significant both on behalf of oneself and on behalf of the organization. At this age, many have taken on positions that enable and make it relatively convenient to carry out financial crime. The maximum extent of criminogenity is normally reached in a time frame where ambitions and opportunities are at a peak.

White-collar criminals are often effortlessly both before and after they have committed financial crime. They feel no discomfort at their crime, and they may live well with their crime. This lack of guilt feeling and lack of bad conscience can be explained by a number of behavioral theories, such as neutralization theory and self-control theory. Neutralization techniques help remove potential guilt feeling both before and after an offense, while a lack of self-control causes the threshold for committing an offense to decline.

Many theories applied to white-collar crime and criminals are developed along the behavioral dimension. By behavior is meant human movement patterns, actions, and reactions. A person's behavior is the sum of his or her responses to external and internal stimuli. For example, criminals are often more innovative than most people (Elnan, 2016).

Researchers have introduced numerous explanations for the behavior of known white-collar offenders such as Madoff, Rajaratman, and Schilling in the United States. Typical explanations include differential association theory (Sutherland, 1983),

self-control theory (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990), slippery slope theory (Welsh, Oronez, Snyder, & Christian, 2014), and neutralization theory (Sykes & Matza, 1957). Deterrence theory (Comey, 2009), obedience theory (Baird & Zelin, 2009), and negative life events theory (Engdahl, 2015) are other relevant theories.

The theories help illustrate how financial crime may be the most convenient action from a behavioral perspective to exploit an opportunity for profit. It is convenient for offenders to abuse their positions, resources, and power to inflict losses on others while at the same time enriching themselves or their organization (Pickett & Pickett, 2002).

Research by Ragatz, Fremouw, and Baker (2012) is an example of work that explores psychological traits among white-collar offenders. Their research results suggest that white-collar offenders have lower scores on lifestyle criminality but higher score on some measures of psychopathology and psychopathic traits compared to nonwhite-collar offenders. Similarly, McKay, Stevens, and Fratzi (2010) examined the psychopathology of the white-collar criminal acting as a corporate leader. They looked at the impact of a leader's behavior on other employees and the organizational culture developed during his or her reign. They found narcissism, and narcissistic behavior is suggested often to be observed among white-collar offenders (Ouimet, 2009, 2010). Narcissists exhibit an unusually high level of self-love, believing that they are uniquely special and entitled to praise and admiration.

Galvin, Lange, and Ashforth (2015) studied a number of well-known white-collar offenders in the United States and found that many of them identified themselves so strongly with the organization that they regarded themselves as the core of the business. This phenomenon can be called narcissistic identification with the organization. Such a strong identification with the organization can in itself lead to a higher level of white-collar crime. When the organization is perceived as himself or herself, he or she may argue that he or she is entitled to enrichment at the expense of the organization.

Criminal behavior is prevalent across all classes, and newcomers develop the attitudes and skills necessary to become delinquent by associating with individuals who are carriers of criminal norms. The essence of differential association is that criminal behavior is learned, and the main part of learning comes from within important personal groups. Exposure to the attitudes of members of the organization that either favor or reject legal codes influences the attitudes of the individual. The individual will go on to commit crime if the person is exposed more to attitudes that favor law violation than attitudes that favor abiding by the law (Wood & Alleyne, 2010).

Differential association can occur in the organizational setting but does not as such increase organizational opportunity to commit white-collar crime. Rather, differential association belongs to the behavioral dimension of convenience theory, as crime learning makes it more convenient to favor law violation.

Differential association by individuals can occur outside the organizational setting, such as exposure to law-violating attitudes early in life, exposure to law-violating attitudes over a prolonged period of time in different situations, and exposure to law-violating attitudes from people they like and respect. Once the

appropriate attitudes have developed, young people learn the skills of criminality in much the same way as they would learn any other skills, which is by example and training (Wood & Alleyne, 2010).

Individuals embedded within structural units by differential association are exposed to attitudes in favor of or opposed to delinquent and criminal behavior. Differential reinforcement of crime convenience develops over time as individuals are exposed to various associations and definitions conducive to delinquency (Hoffmann, 2002).

Control theory can be used in two different ways. First the theory of self-control proposes that individuals commit crime because of low self-control. The theory contends that individuals who lack self-control are more likely to engage in problematic behavior – such as criminal behavior – over their life course because its time-stable nature (Gottfredsson & Hirschi, 1990). Second, the desire to control and the general wish to be in control of everything and everybody might be a characteristic of some white-collar criminals, meaning that low self-control can be combined with control of others. Desire for control is the general wish to be in control over everyday events related to the organization (Piquero, Schoepfer, & Langton, 2010).

Self-control is the ability and tendency to consider all potential implications of a particular action. Individuals with low self-control fail to carry around with them a set of inhibitions, meaning they do not consider implications of their actions. As a consequence, these individuals who are low in self-regulation will engage in delinquent behavior (Ward, Boman, & Jones, 2015).

Self-control is the ability to consider consequences of actions that provide immediate rewards. The underlying assumption is that their rewards of offending are apparent to all. Individuals readily perceive the benefits of offending, but individuals with high self-control also perceive, and weight more heavily, the costs associated with immediate gratification. Conversely, those with low self-control place more weight on the here-and-now and fail to consider or appreciate the long-term costs associated with satisfying one's immediate impulses. Aspects of low self-control include impulsivity, risk seeking, a preference for physical (as opposed to mental) activities, opting for simple tasks (compared with challenging ones), temper, and insensitivity to others (Jones, Lyman, & Piquero, 2015).

Control theory diverts attention away from why offenders offend to why conformists do not offend. However, control theory posits that communities with a deteriorating social structure are a breeding ground for delinquency. The central contention of control theory is that people are inherently disposed to offend because offending offers short-term gains, and the central aim of those with criminal dispositions is to satisfy desires in the quickest and simplest way possible. Offending is prevented by the social bond, which operates on individuals' conscience (Wood & Alleyne, 2010).

Desire-for-control can be defined at the degree to which individuals want to be in control over whatever goes on in the organization. Those high in desire-for-control tend to manipulate events to avoid unpleasant situations and to ensure desired outcomes. They tend to attribute organizational success solely to their own hard work, while they blame failures on others. These individuals also tend to engage in more

risk-taking behaviors and work harder at a challenging task (Craig & Piquero, 2016). Therefore, many executives with a high degree of desire-for-control often have a low degree of self-control.

While it is expected that a high degree of self-control is required to climb the corporate ladder, executives who have reached the top may quickly loosen up their self-control and instead develop a desire for control. Craig and Piquero (2016) found that both low self-control and high desire-for-control are consistent predictors of intentions to offend.

Discussion Questions

1. What kinds of financial crime are committed by members in the elite in society?
2. How do members of the elite in society commit financial crime?
3. Why do members of the elite commit financial crime?
4. What is meant by convenience in crime?
5. How can white-collar crime be made less convenient?
6. How does willingness to commit crime increase organizational crime opportunities?
7. How does desire for profit increase organizational crime opportunities?
8. How can detection of white-collar crime be improved?
9. How can prevention of white-collar crime be improved?
10. What are the strengths and weaknesses of convenience theory?

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