

## BRIEF REPORT

### An Exploratory Study of the Relationship between the Big Five and Inmate Recidivism

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The current study was conducted at the Lafayette Parish Correctional Center to examine the relationship between the Big Five and inmate recidivism. The NEO Five-Factor Inventory was administered to inmates in adult education classes. The number of times each inmate had been arrested was obtained from their criminal records. Criminal records were available for 56 of the 68 male inmates who were given the five-factor inventory. Data from an additional five inmates were not included in the analyses because they did not respond to some of the items on the inventory. Multiple linear regression revealed that conscientiousness and openness to experience were negatively correlated with number of arrests. Neuroticism, extraversion, and agreeableness were not significantly related to number of arrests. Of particular interest was an interaction between conscientiousness and openness to experience. The combination of low conscientiousness and low openness to experience was associated with a substantial increase in number of arrests. © 2001

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Personality researchers have consistently identified five broad dimensions of personality through factor analysis of responses of the individuals of interest or others who know them well (Digman, 1990; John, 1990; McCrae & John, 1992; Wiggins, 1996; Wiggins & Pincus, 1992). These five factors are

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