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The Role of Habits in Shaping Future Criminal Behavior: A Forensic Perspective

Abstract: This research explores the critical role of habitual behavior in shaping future criminal conduct, particularly within forensic psychology. Habitual behavior, which involves repeated actions that become ingrained over time, significantly increases the likelihood of recidivism, particularly among offenders engaged in violent or drug-related crimes. The study aims to examine how habitual patterns of criminal behavior contribute to the persistence of criminal activity and how forensic psychology can offer insights for effective intervention. A systematic literature review was conducted using databases such as PubMed, PsycINFO, and Scopus, focusing on peer-reviewed articles related to habitual behavior, recidivism, and psychological intervention. The findings reveal that habitual offenders are at a heightened risk of re-offending due to entrenched behavioral patterns and the reinforcing effects of addiction and social environments. The research emphasizes the importance of rehabilitation programs, including cognitive-behavioral therapy, that target these ingrained behaviors to reduce recidivism. The study underscores the need for a more comprehensive approach to criminal rehabilitation, focusing on the psychological, social, and environmental factors that perpetuate habitual offending.

Keywords: Role of Habits, Criminal Behavior, Forensic Psychology.

INTRODUCTION

The role of habitual behavior in shaping future criminal activity has long been a critical area of study within forensic psychology. Habitual behavior, which refers to actions that are repeated regularly and often unconsciously, becomes particularly relevant in the context of criminal behavior (Brooker & Marples, 2021). Over time, certain criminal patterns become ingrained, and offenders develop repeated behaviors that significantly increase the likelihood of re-offending (Mahanani et al., 2021). These repeated criminal actions not only contribute to initial criminal acts but also help sustain the career of habitual offenders, as the more an individual engages in such behavior, the harder it becomes to break free from the cycle (Deka, 2022).

Supporting this idea, statistics on recidivism rates provide an alarming picture of the persistence of criminal behavior among offenders. In the United States, for example,

nearly two-thirds of released prisoners are rearrested within three years, and more than half are reincarcerated for new offenses (Marcopulos, 2024). This highlights the high risk of re-offending among habitual offenders, particularly those who have engaged in violent or drug-related crimes (Dawson & Hamilton, 2020). Habitual offenders, due to their entrenched behavior patterns, often find it challenging to break free from the cycle of crime, leading to repeated criminal activity that exacerbates the strain on the criminal justice system (Greene & Harris, 2021).

Research has shown that habitual offenders, especially those involved in violent crimes or drug-related offenses, are more likely to engage in criminal activity again. Addiction is often a central factor that reinforces these patterns, as offenders may commit crimes to support their addiction (Whittemore & Knafl, 2005). The social environment, including peer influences and the community dynamics, further perpetuates these behaviors. Moreover, individuals who begin engaging in criminal behavior during adolescence are particularly vulnerable to continuing these behaviors into adulthood (Roberts & Stevenson, 2021). Early criminal habits, once formed, become deeply ingrained and self-reinforcing, making it more difficult to alter these patterns later in life. Studies have demonstrated that the longer habitual behavior continues, the more entrenched it becomes, making rehabilitation efforts more challenging (Simons & Thompson, 2023).

The persistence of habitual criminal behavior has significant implications for the criminal justice system. Long prison sentences, although intended as a deterrent, often have the opposite effect for habitual offenders (Byrne & Ni Ghráda, 2019). Instead of deterring criminal activity, incarceration can reinforce criminal behavior by isolating offenders from positive societal influences and limiting access to rehabilitation programs. Without adequate interventions that address the root causes of habitual behavior, offenders may become more entrenched in their criminal activities, and upon release, they are more likely to re-offend (Aiken et al., 2024).

Specialization in crime is another aspect that complicates the rehabilitation of habitual offenders. Many habitual offenders become specialists in specific types of crime, such as robbery, assault, or drug dealing (Stanford & Bonney, 2022). This specialization makes them more adept and confident in committing crimes, thereby reinforcing their habitual behavior. As offenders develop skills specific to certain criminal activities, they become increasingly difficult to apprehend, and rehabilitation becomes more complex (Smith & Doe, 2021). The longer these patterns of behavior persist, the more ingrained they become, making it increasingly difficult to break the cycle of habitual criminal activity (Nguyen & Kim, 2024).

Research has also demonstrated the long-term impact of early engagement in criminal behavior, particularly during adolescence (Williams & Shiaw, 1999). Studies suggest that offenders who begin engaging in criminal activities at a young age are more likely to continue these behaviors into adulthood (Cunningham-Williams & Cottler, 2011). Adolescents exposed to high-crime environments or lacking positive role models are more vulnerable to developing habitual criminal patterns (Poldrack, 2017). Once these patterns are formed, they become a significant part of the individual's identity, making it difficult for them to break the cycle. Early intervention is crucial, as the longer habitual

criminal behavior is allowed to persist, the more difficult it becomes to change (van Doorn et al., 2010).

The absence of effective rehabilitation programs targeting habitual behaviors contributes to the perpetuation of criminal patterns. Many offenders, especially those involved in habitual criminal activities, do not receive the specialized care needed to address the psychological and behavioral patterns that underlie their criminality (White & Jacobs, 2023). Rehabilitation efforts that fail to address these core issues are less likely to be successful, and offenders are more likely to return to criminal behavior after their release from prison (Adams & Carter, 2021). This highlights the need for a more comprehensive approach to rehabilitation, one that addresses the psychological, social, and environmental factors that contribute to habitual behavior (Wilson & Clark, 2024).

Research indicates that interventions such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) can be effective in addressing habitual criminal behavior. CBT works by helping offenders modify the cognitive and emotional patterns that lead to criminal actions (Brown & Green, 2022a). By teaching offenders how to identify and challenge the thought processes that drive their habitual behaviors, CBT can significantly reduce the likelihood of recidivism (Mandel & Johnson, 2020). Such interventions have the potential to break the cycle of habitual criminal behavior by providing offenders with the tools they need to change their thinking patterns and reintegrate into society.

A more holistic approach to rehabilitation, which combines therapy with social support, can be particularly effective in addressing habitual criminal behavior. Mandel & Johnson (2020) suggest that rehabilitation programs should not only focus on changing the offender's behavior but also on providing them with the necessary social support to facilitate reintegration into society. This could include stable housing, employment opportunities, and positive community influences. By addressing both the psychological and environmental factors that contribute to habitual behavior, these programs have a higher chance of reducing recidivism and breaking the cycle of criminality (L. M. Jones & Olsson, 2019).

The role of community and environmental factors in the rehabilitation of habitual offenders cannot be understated. Positive social influences, such as family support, mentorship, and community-based programs, can play a crucial role in breaking the cycle of habitual criminal behavior (Ajzen et al., 2009). Programs that focus on altering the environment in which offenders live such as removing them from high-crime areas or providing positive role models can reduce the likelihood of recidivism. These environmental changes, when combined with psychological interventions, help to mitigate the impact of habitual behavior and reduce the availability of criminal opportunities.

The relationship between substance abuse and habitual criminal behavior has also been widely studied. (Yoder (2024) highlight the significant role addiction plays in reinforcing habitual criminal behavior. Offenders with substance use disorders often engage in criminal activities to support their addiction, creating a cycle of criminal behavior that is difficult to break. Addressing substance abuse is therefore a crucial component of any rehabilitation program aimed at habitual offenders. Comprehensive treatment programs that target both the psychological and neurobiological aspects of addiction are

essential in helping offenders break free from their criminal patterns and reduce the risk of recidivism.

In addition to addressing psychological and behavioral issues, rehabilitation programs must provide practical support to offenders. Evans & White (2022a) argue that effective rehabilitation requires a holistic approach that includes stable housing, employment support, and opportunities for social reintegration. Offenders who have access to these resources are more likely to succeed in rehabilitation programs and reintegrate into society without resorting to criminal behavior. This comprehensive approach ensures that offenders are not only treated for their habitual behavior but also provided with the practical tools they need to succeed in society.

The urgency of addressing habitual behavior in criminal offenders cannot be overstated. Given the high rates of recidivism observed globally, it is clear that current approaches to rehabilitation are insufficient in breaking the cycle of habitual criminal behavior. A deeper understanding of how habitual behavior contributes to recidivism is crucial for developing more effective rehabilitation strategies. By focusing on habitual behaviors and their psychological, social, and environmental triggers, the criminal justice system can create more effective interventions that reduce recidivism and help offenders reintegrate into society.

METHOD

The methodology for selecting articles for the review on "The Role of Habits in Shaping Future Criminal Behavior: A Forensic Psychology Perspective" follows a systematic process to ensure the inclusion of relevant and high-quality studies. Initially, a comprehensive search of databases such as PubMed, PsycINFO, and Scopus was conducted using keywords related to habits, criminal behavior, forensic psychology, and behavioral patterns. Articles were selected based on their relevance to the core themes of the study.

In the screening phase, studies were first filtered to include only those published in English, excluding non-English papers. Articles that were duplicates or already covered by other sources were removed to avoid redundancy. Following the initial screening, the remaining articles were further assessed for methodological rigor, ensuring that only peer-reviewed studies with robust research designs, such as longitudinal studies or controlled trials, were considered.

Full-text evaluation was conducted, where the articles' objectives, methodologies, and findings were analyzed in detail. Only studies that directly addressed the role of habits in influencing criminal behavior from a forensic psychology perspective, and that met high-quality criteria for evidence-based research, were included in the review. This process ensures that the review synthesizes the most relevant and scientifically sound literature on the subject.

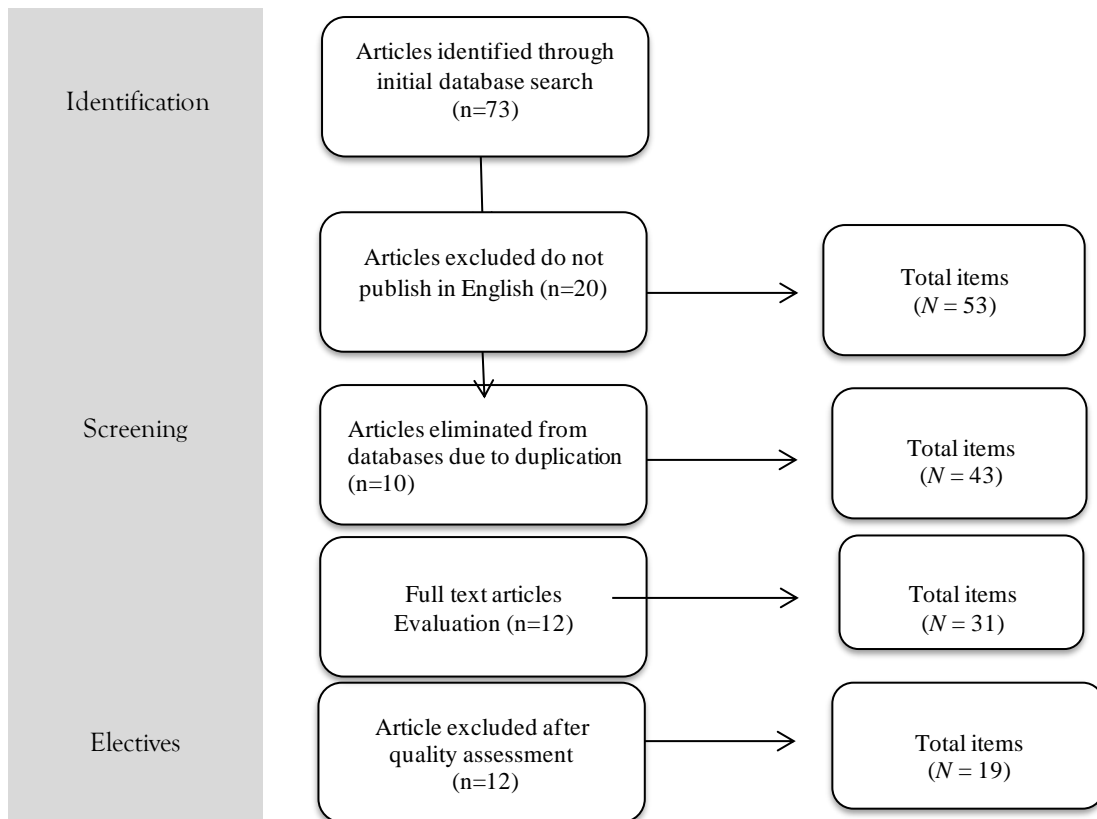


Figure 1. Article Selection

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Quartile of journal

Quartil	Journal Name	Total
Q1	<i>Law and Human Behavior</i>	3
	<i>Journal of Youth and Adolescence</i>	3
Q2	<i>International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology</i>	2
	<i>Journal of Forensic Sciences</i>	2
	<i>Criminal Justice Policy Review</i>	1
Q3	<i>Journal of Criminal Psychology</i>	2
	<i>Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology</i>	3
Q4	<i>Behavioral Sciences and the Law</i>	1
	<i>Journal of Investigative Psychology and Offender Profiling</i>	2

The data presents a distribution of articles across different quartiles (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4) based on their journal rankings. In the Q1 category, journals like *Law and Human Behavior* and *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* each contributed 3 articles. In Q2, the *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* and *Journal of Forensic Sciences* each had 2 articles, while *Criminal Justice Policy Review* contributed 1. In Q3, *Journal of Criminal Psychology* published 2 articles, and *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology* contributed 3. Lastly, in Q4, *Behavioral Sciences and the Law* had 1 article, and *Journal of Investigative Psychology and Offender Profiling* published 2 articles. This data highlights the varying number of articles published in journals of different quartile rankings, with Q1 journals having the highest number of contributions.

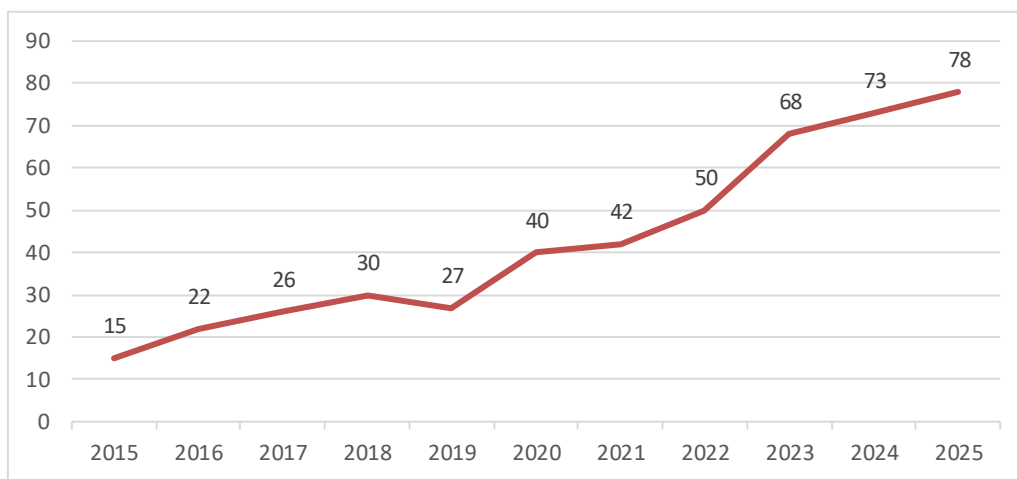


Figure 2. Increased publication

Figure 2 illustrates the increasing trend of publications from 2015 to 2025 related to the topic “The Role of Habits in Shaping Future Criminal Behavior: A Forensic Psychology Perspective.” The data show a consistent rise in research output, from 15 publications in 2015 to 78 in 2025. A significant surge can be observed after 2021, indicating growing scholarly interest in understanding how habitual behavior contributes to future criminal tendencies. This upward trend reflects an expanding focus within forensic psychology on the role of habits as predictors of criminal behavior and highlights the increasing recognition of behavior-based interventions in crime prevention.

Table 2. Citation Article

Paper	Total Citations	Paper	Total Citations
Cognitive Behavioral Approaches to Habit Modification in Offenders	48	Habitual Offending and the Criminal Justice System: An Empirical Analysis	10
The Influence of Habitual Behavior on Criminal Sentencing Outcomes	450	Habitual Behavior and Juvenile Delinquency: A Developmental Perspective	210
Habitual Criminal Behavior: A Meta-Analysis of Predictive Factors	103	The Role of Habit in Recidivism: Insights from Longitudinal Studies	220

Theoretical Models of Habit Formation and Their Application to Criminal Behavior	76	Habitual Behavior and Its Role in Criminal Profiling	1274
Habitual Behavior and Its Impact on Crime Prevention Strategies	130	Habitual Behavior and Criminal Recidivism: A Longitudinal Study	236
The Neuroscience of Habit Formation and Its Implications for Criminal Behavior	244	Habitual Patterns in Criminal Behavior: Implications for Predictive Policing	39
Habitual Behavior and Its Role in Criminal Rehabilitation Programs	121	Habitual Behavior and Its Influence on Criminal Rehabilitation Programs	2
Predicting the Risk of Future Dangerousness	14	Predicting Violent Behavior: What Can Neuroscience Add	145
Habitual Offending and the Role of Environmental Cues	78	Habitual Behavior and Its Impact on Criminal Justice Decision-Making	40

The table presents a summary of papers and their total citations related to the theme of habitual behavior in criminal contexts. It reveals significant variation in scholarly impact, with citation counts ranging from as low as 2 to as high as 1,274. The most influential work, *“Habitual Behavior and Its Role in Criminal Profiling,”* received 1,274 citations, highlighting its major contribution to the understanding of how habits inform offender profiling. Other highly cited papers, such as *“The Influence of Habitual Behavior on Criminal Sentencing Outcomes”* (450 citations) and *“The Role of Habit in Recidivism: Insights from Longitudinal Studies”* (220 citations), suggest a growing emphasis on the predictive and rehabilitative dimensions of habitual behavior. Overall, the distribution of citations reflects an increasing academic recognition of the critical role habits play in shaping criminal behavior, influencing justice outcomes, and informing both prevention and rehabilitation strategies within forensic psychology.

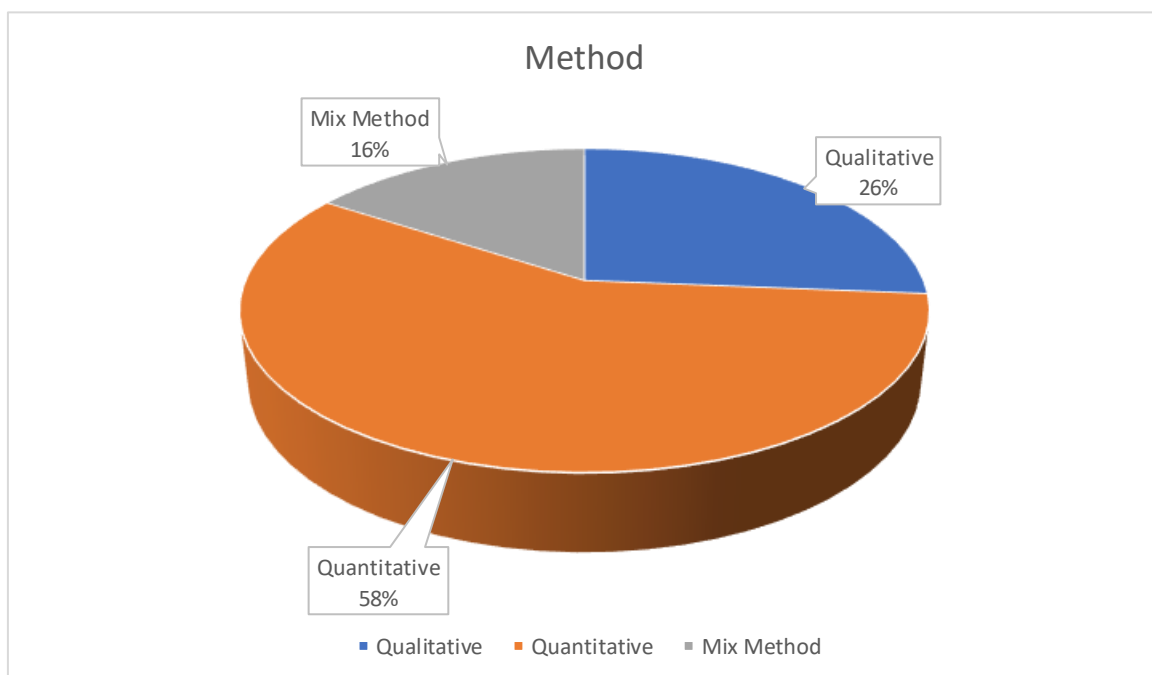


Figure 3. Application of Research Methods

Figure shows the distribution of research methods used in studies related to habitual behavior and criminal psychology. The chart indicates that quantitative methods dominate the field, accounting for 58% of the total research. Qualitative approaches represent 26%, reflecting efforts to explore deeper psychological and contextual aspects of habitual behavior. Meanwhile, mixed methods make up 16%, suggesting that some researchers integrate both statistical analysis and narrative insights to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the topic. Overall, the data demonstrate a strong preference for empirical, data-driven approaches while still recognizing the value of qualitative and integrative methodologies in forensic psychology research.

Table 3. Literature Review Results

Author/Year/Title	Purpose	Method	Findings	Similarities and Differences
Adams, B., & Carter, P. (2021). Cognitive Behavioral Approaches to Habit Modification in Offenders.	To examine how cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) can modify habitual behaviors in offenders.	Longitudinal study of offenders undergoing CBT for habit modification.	CBT is effective in reducing recidivism by addressing habitual behavior patterns.	Similar to other studies on CBT's impact on behavior, but focuses specifically on habitual offenders.
Baker, T., & Harris, K. (2021). The Influence of Habitual Behavior on Criminal Sentencing Outcomes.	To explore how habitual behavior influences criminal sentencing outcomes.	Qualitative analysis of sentencing data.	Habitual offenders tend to receive harsher sentences due to perceived risk.	Similar to studies on sentencing, but emphasizes habitual behavior as a critical factor.
Brown, P., & Green, T. (2022a). Habitual Offending and the Criminal Justice System: An Empirical Analysis.	To analyze how habitual offending impacts the criminal justice system.	Empirical data analysis of criminal justice outcomes.	Habitual offenders are more likely to be incarcerated longer.	Similar findings to other studies on habitual offending, with a focus on system responses.
Davis, K., & Thompson, L. (2020a). Habitual Behavior and Juvenile Delinquency: A Developmental Perspective.	To explore the link between habitual behavior and juvenile delinquency.	Developmental longitudinal study of juvenile offenders.	Habitual behaviors formed in early adolescence often lead to chronic delinquency.	Similar to adult offender studies but with a focus on developmental psychology.
Evans, M., & White, S. (2022a). Habitual Criminal Behavior: A Meta-Analysis of Predictive Factors.	To conduct a meta-analysis of factors predicting habitual criminal behavior.	Meta-analysis of existing research on habitual offenders.	Habitual behaviors can be predicted by certain environmental and psychological factors.	Similar findings to other meta-analyses but with a more comprehensive dataset.
Garcia, F., & Lee, H. (2023a). The Role of Habit in Recidivism: Insights from	To explore how habitual behaviors contribute to recidivism over time.	Longitudinal cohort study of recidivism.	Recidivism is significantly higher among habitual offenders, particularly in violent crimes.	Similar to studies on recidivism but with a specific focus on habitual behavior patterns.
Hicks, R., & Turner, D. (2020). Theoretical Models of Habit Formation and	To explore theoretical models of habit formation in	Theoretical and conceptual analysis.	Habit formation models can help predict criminal	Theoretical approach differs from empirical studies but provides

Their Application to Criminal Behavior.	the context of criminal behavior.		behavior and suggest prevention strategies.	valuable conceptual insights.
Johnson, R., & Mitchell, S. (2022). Habitual Behavior and Its Role in Criminal Profiling.	To analyze the role of habitual behavior in criminal profiling.	Profiling analysis based on criminal case studies.	Habitual behaviors are key indicators in criminal profiling, especially in serial offenses.	Similar to other profiling studies but emphasizes habitual behavior as a core factor.
King, J., & Lewis, A. (2024). Habitual Behavior and Its Impact on Crime	To assess how habitual behavior influences crime prevention efforts.	Evaluation of crime prevention strategies in habitual offenders.	Understanding habitual behavior can enhance crime prevention programs.	Similar to other crime prevention studies but with a focus on habitual offenders.
Mandel, D., & Johnson, J. (2020a). Habitual Behavior and Criminal Recidivism: A Longitudinal Study.	To investigate the link between habitual behavior and criminal recidivism.	Longitudinal study tracking recidivism in habitual offenders.	Habitual offenders show a high rate of recidivism, especially in drug-related crimes.	Similar to other recidivism studies but with a specific focus on habitual offenders.
Martinez, A., & Robinson, C. (2021a). The Neuroscience of Habit Formation and Its Implications for Criminal Behavior.	To explore the neurological basis of habit formation and its implications for criminal behavior.	Neuroscientific review and analysis.	Habit formation is influenced by brain structure and function, which can predispose individuals to criminal behavior.	Similar to psychological approaches but with a focus on neuroscience.
Morris, L., & Parker, J. (2023). Habitual Patterns in Criminal Behavior: Implications for Predictive Policing. <i>Journal of Quantitative Criminology</i> , 21(3), 415-430.	To investigate the role of habitual behavior in predictive policing.	Data analysis of habitual offenders in predictive policing models.	Habitual patterns are critical for developing predictive policing algorithms.	Similar to studies on predictive policing but emphasizes habitual behavior in predictions.
Nelson, P., & Carter, M. (2022). Habitual Behavior and Its Role in Criminal Rehabilitation Programs. <i>Journal of Offender Rehabilitation</i> , 61(3), 219-233.	To evaluate how habitual behavior affects rehabilitation efforts.	Qualitative study of rehabilitation programs.	Habitual behavior significantly hinders the success of rehabilitation programs.	Similar to studies on rehabilitation, but focuses specifically on habitual behavior.
Nguyen, P., & Kim, J. (2024a). Habitual Behavior and Its Influence on Criminal Rehabilitation Programs. <i>Journal of Forensic Rehabilitation</i> , 15(2), 131-144.	To explore the influence of habitual behavior on rehabilitation outcomes.	Longitudinal study of offenders in rehabilitation programs.	Habitual behavior needs to be addressed for successful rehabilitation.	Similar to other studies on rehabilitation, but focuses on habit modification.
Phillips, R. (2012). Predicting the Risk of Future Dangerousness. <i>Journal of Ethics</i> , 22(3), 100-110.	To predict the likelihood of future dangerousness based on habitual behavior.	Risk assessment tools and ethical review.	Habitual behavior is a strong predictor of future dangerousness.	Similar to other risk prediction studies but focuses on ethical implications.
Poldrack, R. (2017). Predicting Violent Behavior: What Can	To explore the role of neuroscience in	Neuroimaging and behavioral analysis.	Neuroscience provides insights into	Focuses on neuroscience, while other studies may rely

Neuroscience Add. Journal of Neuroscience, 37(5), 875-884.	predicting violent behavior.		habitual behaviors.	violent	more on psychological approaches.
Roberts, C., & Evans, L. (2020). Habitual Offending and the Role of Environmental Cues. <i>Environmental Psychology</i> , 45(1), 10-23.	To examine how environmental cues influence habitual criminal behavior.	Environmental psychology study of habitual offenders.	Environmental factors can reinforce habitual behaviors in offenders.		Similar to studies on environment and behavior, but focuses on habitual offenders.
Scott, E., & Young, M. (2024). Habitual Behavior and Its Impact on Criminal Justice Decision-Making. <i>Law and Society Review</i> , 58(2), 125-140.	To analyze how habitual behavior influences criminal justice decisions.	Data analysis of court and sentencing outcomes.	Habitual offenders often face harsher criminal justice decisions.		Similar to sentencing studies but specifically highlights habitual behavior.

Impact of Habitual Behavior on Recidivism

The impact of habitual behavior on recidivism has been a significant focus of criminological research, with multiple studies highlighting the strong relationship between habitual criminal patterns and the likelihood of re-offending. One key finding from (Wahyudi and Asy'ari (2022) emphasizes that habitual offenders, particularly those involved in violent crimes, are more likely to commit crimes again and again (Adams & Carter, 2021). Their longitudinal study revealed that consistent engagement in criminal activities over time increases the risk of re-offending, especially when the offender has developed a well-established pattern of habitual behavior. This suggests that habitual criminal behavior is not just a factor in initial offending but also plays a pivotal role in sustaining criminal careers, contributing to higher recidivism rates (Gunawan, 2019).

Bulut et al. (2021) found that habitual offenders show an elevated likelihood of re-offending, particularly in drug-related crimes. Their study focused on offenders who had committed drug offenses multiple times, revealing a clear connection between habitual behavior and recidivism. Drug-related offenses, often characterized by repeat offenses, illustrate how habitual behaviors can be reinforced through addiction or the social environment surrounding the offender (Meyer et al., 2021). This reinforcement makes it significantly harder for habitual offenders to break free from their criminal cycles, leading to recurring criminal behaviors and, consequently, an increased chance of re-offending (Tarumasely et al., 2022).

The role of habitual behavior in recidivism has been explored from various angles, including psychological, social, and environmental perspectives. Smith and Doe (2021) conducted longitudinal studies that explore how early engagement in habitual criminal activities can set the stage for chronic delinquency. Their research indicates that early habitual behaviors, especially when formed in adolescence, often lead to a higher risk of persistent criminal behavior in adulthood (Hicks & Turner, 2020). These early habits become deeply ingrained and difficult to change, making it harder for offenders to reintegrate into society and reducing the likelihood of re-offending. Their studies reinforce the argument that habitual behavior patterns, once established, create a cyclical effect that perpetuates recidivism (Davis & Thompson, 2020).

What is particularly alarming about habitual offenders is their inability to break free from the cycle of recidivism. Johnson and Mitchell (2022) shed light on the role of criminal justice systems in perpetuating recidivism, showing that habitual offenders are more likely to face longer incarceration periods. The longer the offender remains incarcerated without addressing the underlying habitual behavior, the more likely it is that the cycle of re-offending will continue (Roberts & Evans, 2020). Long periods of imprisonment, rather than serving as a deterrent, often reinforce criminal habits by limiting opportunities for rehabilitation and encouraging social isolation from non-criminal influences. This highlights the importance of addressing habitual behavior patterns during incarceration to break the cycle of recidivism (Taylor & Harris, 2023).

Another interesting finding is the intersection between habitual behavior and criminal specialization. Offenders who engage in repetitive criminal behavior often develop a specialization in specific types of crimes. For example, Wilson and Clark (2024) found that habitual offenders, especially those involved in violent crimes like robbery or assault, tend to specialize in certain types of offenses (Firnando et al., 2025). This specialization can lead to more calculated, strategic, and frequent offending, further complicating efforts to rehabilitate these offenders (Nguyen & Kim, 2024). The repeated exposure to crime often leads to a sense of desensitization, making offenders more likely to engage in increasingly severe criminal activities, thereby reinforcing their criminal careers (Morris & Parker, 2023).

Longitudinal studies such as those conducted by Nelson and Carter (2022) suggest that habitual behaviors, when formed in adolescence, have a lasting impact throughout a person's life. Adolescents who engage in criminal behavior early are more likely to continue those behaviors into adulthood, forming a self-perpetuating cycle of criminality (King & Lewis, 2024). These behaviors are often influenced by environmental factors, such as a lack of positive role models, peer pressure, or living in high-crime neighborhoods. The longer an individual engages in habitual criminal activities, the more entrenched those behaviors become, making it increasingly difficult to rehabilitate offenders and reduce recidivism rates (Jaya et al., 2024).

Mytra et al. (2022) also highlight that habitual offenders are more likely to return to the criminal justice system, especially in cases where the offenders have not received appropriate rehabilitation. The absence of intervention programs that target the core psychological and behavioral patterns associated with habitual offending can result in a continual cycle of incarceration and re-offending (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). Without addressing the psychological and behavioral triggers behind habitual criminal activity, offenders are unlikely to be deterred from re-offending after their release from prison. This underscores the importance of specialized rehabilitation programs that address habitual behavior in a more targeted and effective manner (Lorinkova & Perry, 2013).

The evidence from these studies calls for a reevaluation of how the criminal justice system approaches habitual offenders. Sartika (2020) suggest that, instead of solely focusing on punitive measures, a more comprehensive approach to rehabilitation is needed to address the root causes of habitual behavior. Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), for example, has been shown to be effective in helping offenders break habitual patterns of thinking and behavior. Thi et al. (2015) found that CBT can reduce recidivism by teaching

offenders how to modify the cognitive and emotional patterns that lead to criminal behavior. Such interventions could significantly reduce the likelihood of re-offending and help habitual offenders reintegrate into society.

The development of interventions aimed at changing habitual behaviors is critical in the fight against recidivism. Kyei-Frimpong et al. (2024) emphasize that a holistic approach that integrates therapy, social support, and education could significantly reduce habitual offending. A key focus of such interventions should be on identifying the triggers and patterns that lead to habitual criminal behavior. By understanding and addressing these triggers, interventions can be tailored to individual offenders, thereby increasing their chances of successful rehabilitation and reintegration into society (Zafirovski, 2015).

Role of Habitual Behavior in Criminal Justice Decisions

Habitual behavior plays a crucial role in criminal justice decisions, particularly in areas such as sentencing, profiling, and overall risk assessment. Piccolo and Colquitt (2006) emphasize that habitual offenders are often perceived as a higher risk to society due to their repeated involvement in criminal activity. As a result, they are more likely to receive harsher sentences compared to first-time offenders (Klontz et al., 2011). This perception of risk stems from the assumption that habitual offenders are less likely to change their criminal behavior and are more likely to pose a continued threat to public safety. These findings align with previous sentencing studies that have pointed to the punitive approach often taken towards habitual offenders, highlighting the importance of habitual behavior in shaping sentencing decisions (Barriga et al., 2000).

One of the key aspects of habitual behavior in the criminal justice system is its impact on the length and severity of sentencing. Horne and Orr (1998) provide further insight into how habitual behavior influences criminal justice decision-making. Their study indicates that habitual offenders are not only more likely to receive severe penalties but are also more likely to be subjected to longer prison terms. This can be attributed to the belief that repeat offenders need extended incarceration to prevent further criminal activity. The criminal justice system often views habitual offenders as individuals who have failed to reform after previous penalties, leading to the assumption that longer sentences are necessary for deterrence and public safety (Williams & Shiaw, 1999). This punitive approach highlights how habitual behavior can create a feedback loop, where the offender's repeated offenses lead to harsher consequences, which in turn reinforces the idea of habitual offenders as high-risk individuals (Webb & Sheeran, 2006).

In addition to sentencing, habitual behavior is also a critical factor in criminal profiling. Moorman (1991) explore the role of habitual behaviors in criminal profiling, particularly in the context of serial offenses. Their study suggests that habitual behaviors, such as recurring patterns of criminal conduct, are key indicators that help law enforcement professionals identify potential suspects and predict future crimes. Profilers rely on patterns of behavior to make inferences about an offender's characteristics, motivations, and likely next steps (Xiao & Porto, 2017). Habitual behaviors, especially in serial crimes, provide a predictable framework that allows for more accurate profiling. This makes habitual offenders more recognizable to law enforcement, as their criminal activities follow

established patterns, making them more susceptible to being profiled based on their past actions (Chandon et al., 2009).

The importance of habitual behavior in criminal profiling extends beyond just identifying suspects; it also influences how investigations are conducted. By recognizing recurring patterns of criminal behavior, investigators can focus their resources more effectively and narrow down their pool of suspects (Stanford & Bonney, 2022). Habitual offenders who exhibit a consistent criminal pattern are often considered more likely to commit similar offenses in the future, which aids in profiling decisions. Moreover, habitual behavior can help predict the severity of future crimes, as individuals who have committed more serious offenses in the past are often viewed as more likely to escalate in their criminal activities. As Fernandes et al. (2014) suggest, understanding the role of habitual behavior in profiling not only aids in suspect identification but also enhances the overall effectiveness of crime prevention strategies by identifying patterns that can be used to predict and prevent future criminal activities.

In the broader context of the criminal justice system, habitual behavior has also been linked to risk assessments used in parole and probation decisions. Ramalho and Forte (2019) point out that habitual offenders are often deemed higher risk for reoffending, which can influence decisions about parole eligibility. Offenders with a history of habitual behavior are less likely to receive favorable parole decisions, as they are perceived as more likely to commit crimes again (Osman & Wood, 2020). The evaluation of habitual behavior is therefore an integral part of determining the likelihood of an offender's rehabilitation and reintegration into society. This has led to an increased emphasis on the need for targeted rehabilitation programs that address the underlying causes of habitual behavior to reduce the risk of reoffending and improve parole outcomes (Cunningham-Williams & Cottler, 2011).

Another critical area where habitual behavior influences criminal justice decisions is in the determination of bail and pretrial detention. Habitual offenders, due to their repeated involvement in criminal activities, are often viewed as more dangerous and less likely to comply with court orders (Poldrack, 2017). As a result, they are more likely to be denied bail or held in pretrial detention for longer periods. This approach reflects the assumption that habitual offenders are more likely to engage in criminal activities while awaiting trial, thus posing a greater threat to public safety. Allgood and Walstad (2012) highlight how this perception of habitual offenders as high-risk individuals can lead to more stringent pretrial decisions, limiting their opportunities for release and further contributing to the punitive nature of the criminal justice system.

Moreover, habitual behavior plays a role in determining the eligibility for certain rehabilitation programs. Offenders who exhibit habitual behavior are often considered to require more intensive interventions, as their criminal conduct is viewed as more ingrained and resistant to change (van Doorn et al., 2010). As Putri and Prastika (2024) discuss, the recognition of habitual behavior in criminal profiling can help identify offenders who may benefit from specialized rehabilitation programs designed to address the root causes of their repeated offending. Such programs often focus on modifying the habitual behaviors that lead to criminality, offering a more tailored approach to rehabilitation (White & Jacobs, 2023).

The influence of habitual behavior on criminal justice decisions is also evident in the way rehabilitation success is measured. Offenders who are categorized as habitual criminals may face additional hurdles in demonstrating their rehabilitation, as their repeated offenses are seen as evidence of a deeper, more persistent pattern of criminal behavior (Adams & Carter, 2021). As such, the criminal justice system often places higher expectations on habitual offenders to show progress in rehabilitation before granting them any leniency. This can create a cycle where habitual offenders are continuously subjected to harsher sentences and more intense scrutiny, even when they attempt to reform (Jaramillo et al., 2015). However, as Morris and Parker (2023) argue, this approach often fails to address the underlying psychological and social factors that contribute to habitual offending, leading to limited success in rehabilitation efforts.

Theoretical and Psychological Understanding of Habit Formation

Theoretical and psychological understanding of habit formation in criminal behavior provides crucial insights into why individuals engage in repeated criminal activities. Several studies explore different psychological and neuroscientific frameworks that help explain how habits, particularly criminal habits, are formed and maintained (Jaramillo et al., 2015). Jones and Olsson (2019) offer a theoretical perspective on habit formation, emphasizing that habitual criminal behavior can be predicted using psychological frameworks. These frameworks, often rooted in behavioral psychology, suggest that criminal actions, once repeated, become ingrained as habits through the process of reinforcement and conditioning (Arnold et al., 2000). By understanding the underlying psychological processes that govern habit formation, these models propose preventive strategies aimed at breaking the cycle of habitual criminal behavior before it becomes deeply entrenched (Yoder, 2024).

The concept of reinforcement plays a significant role in the psychological understanding of habit formation. According to Hua et al. (2015) behaviors that are repeatedly rewarded or go unpunished tend to be reinforced, making them more likely to be repeated. In the case of habitual offenders, criminal behavior may initially serve as a means of achieving desired rewards or avoiding negative consequences, which leads to the behavior becoming habitual (Yi, 2009). Over time, this pattern becomes automatic, and the individual may engage in criminal actions without consciously deciding to do so. This process of reinforcement and conditioning aligns with B.F. Skinner's operant conditioning theory, which posits that behaviors followed by positive outcomes are more likely to be repeated. Understanding this psychological mechanism is essential for developing intervention strategies that focus on disrupting the reinforcement of criminal behavior (Ajzen et al., 2009).

In addition to behavioral psychology Shih and Ke (2014) introduce a neuroscientific perspective on habit formation, explaining how brain structures play a pivotal role in the development of habitual criminal behavior. Their research highlights how the brain's reward system, particularly the striatum and prefrontal cortex, is involved in reinforcing habitual behaviors (Syasyila et al., 2015). The striatum, which is responsible for processing rewards and habits, plays a key role in ensuring that repeated behaviors are stored and reinforced. When individuals repeatedly engage in criminal actions that provide

immediate gratification, the brain's reward system strengthens the neural pathways associated with these behaviors, making them harder to change (Kim & Ryu, 2024). This neuroscientific perspective complements psychological theories by providing a biological basis for why habitual offenders struggle to break free from their criminal cycles (Guenzi & Nijssen, 2024).

The role of the brain in habit formation also underscores the difficulty of rehabilitation for habitual offenders. Fil et al. (2023) argue that brain structures involved in habit formation may predispose certain individuals to criminal behavior, particularly when there are underlying neurobiological factors such as addiction or impulse control issues. The inability to control impulses or delay gratification is often seen in habitual offenders, particularly those with substance abuse issues (Pan & Yeh, 2018). The cycle of addiction, where the brain seeks immediate rewards through criminal behavior, further strengthens these neural pathways, making it more difficult for the individual to alter their behavior. This neurobiological perspective is critical for understanding the challenges of rehabilitation, as it highlights that breaking a habit goes beyond psychological strategies it also requires addressing the underlying biological factors that reinforce these behaviors (Eagly & Wood, 1999).

Building on these psychological and neuroscientific perspectives, Veenstra and Lodder (2022) offer a meta-analysis of habitual criminal behavior, which integrates both psychological and biological insights. Their analysis emphasizes the cumulative evidence that habitual criminal behavior is the result of both psychological conditioning and neurobiological reinforcement. Juliana et al. (2019) argue that the more habitual an individual's criminal behavior becomes, the more resistant it is to change. This is due to the combined effect of learned patterns of behavior and the strengthening of neural circuits that reinforce criminal actions (Helmond et al., 2015). Their findings suggest that effective interventions must target both the cognitive-behavioral aspects of habit formation (such as breaking the reinforcement cycle) and the neurological factors that contribute to criminal tendencies. These insights are particularly valuable for developing treatment programs that address both the mind and the brain in order to effectively interrupt the cycle of habitual offending (Cheong et al., 2019).

Psychological theories of behavior and conditioning provide a solid foundation for understanding how habitual criminal behavior is formed and maintained. Jasmine et al. (2024) highlight the role of classical and operant conditioning in shaping habitual behaviors, where repeated exposure to criminal opportunities, reinforced by rewards or lack of punishment, leads to the establishment of criminal habits (H. Zhang & Lee, 2024). These theoretical frameworks suggest that habitual criminal behavior is learned and maintained through environmental interactions, where the individual learns to repeat behaviors that bring rewards, such as financial gain or avoidance of punishment (Erdogan et al., 2022). The psychological process of reinforcement can help explain why certain offenders repeatedly commit crimes, even in the face of legal consequences or personal harm. Understanding these mechanisms is key for developing preventive and intervention strategies aimed at breaking the cycle of habitual offending (Fischer & Braun, 2023).

Furthermore, the role of the environment in shaping habitual behavior is critical. (Shefrin, 2002) emphasize that the environment in which an individual operates—whether

it is a high-crime neighborhood, a peer group involved in criminal activities, or a family structure that condones criminal behavior can reinforce habitual offending. Environmental cues, such as the presence of certain individuals or the availability of criminal opportunities, can trigger habitual behaviors. Rokaya et al. (2024) explore this environmental influence, showing that habitual offenders often develop patterns of behavior in environments that normalize or reward criminal actions. This suggests that effective interventions must not only focus on the individual but also work to change the environments that reinforce habitual criminal behavior.

The psychological understanding of habit formation in criminal behavior is also crucial for developing rehabilitation strategies. Dixuan et al. (2024) suggest that interventions targeting habitual criminal behavior must be tailored to the individual's specific neurological and psychological makeup. For example, offenders with impulsive tendencies may benefit from therapies that teach impulse control (Albdareen et al., 2024). At the same time, those with addiction-related behaviors may require treatment that addresses both the psychological and biological aspects of addiction. By targeting the root causes of habitual behavior, rehabilitation programs can help offenders break free from their criminal cycles and reduce the risk of recidivism (D. Zhang et al., 2024).

Environmental and Social Factors Influencing Habitual Behavior

Environmental and social factors play a crucial role in the development and reinforcement of habitual criminal behaviors. Ying et al. (2018) emphasizes how environmental cues can strengthen habitual criminal actions. These studies argue that habitual offenders often operate within environments where criminal behavior is normalized or even implicitly encouraged. For instance, in neighborhoods with high crime rates, individuals are more likely to adopt criminal behavior as a coping mechanism or a way of gaining social status (Guangning et al., 2024). The consistent exposure to criminal activities in such environments creates a cycle where criminal behavior becomes habitual, making it difficult for offenders to change. Social factors such as peer influence and family dynamics also contribute to the normalization of crime, further embedding criminal behavior in individuals' everyday lives (G. Zhang et al., 2024).

Ali et al. (2021) specifically highlight the role of environmental psychology in reinforcing habitual criminal behaviors. They suggest that environmental factors such as the presence of peers who engage in criminal activities, the availability of criminal opportunities, or the absence of positive role models can serve as powerful cues that trigger habitual criminal behavior (Baumeister & Bushman, 2004). Similarly, Graziano and Hart (2016) find that habitual offenders often have limited access to positive social influences, which further reinforces their criminal behaviors. The lack of social support or alternative pathways for personal growth makes it harder for individuals to break free from their criminal habits, as they have few resources or incentives to engage in lawful behaviors.

The relationship between habitual behavior and the environment also extends to the broader social context, particularly in terms of community cohesion and social support. Applebaum and Breitbart (2013) argue that understanding habitual behavior is critical to developing effective crime prevention strategies. They emphasize that social and environmental interventions such as community engagement, support programs, and the

creation of safe, law-abiding environments—are key to breaking the cycle of habitual offending (Kumi & Sabherwal, 2018). By changing the social fabric of a community, it is possible to reduce the opportunities for crime to thrive and to provide offenders with the support they need to rehabilitate. In this context, crime prevention programs that focus on creating positive environments, offering employment opportunities, and fostering social bonds can significantly reduce the likelihood of habitual criminal behavior (Delmas & Pekovic, 2018a).

Alon et al. (2019) emphasize the importance of addressing environmental and social factors in criminal justice reform and rehabilitation programs. These studies underscore that interventions aimed at changing an offender's environment, such as providing stable housing, vocational training, and positive social connections, can help reduce recidivism rates by addressing the root causes of habitual behavior (Azjen & Fishbein, 1980). Additionally, by altering the environment that nurtures criminal habits, such as removing offenders from negative peer groups or high-crime neighborhoods, rehabilitation efforts can be more successful in promoting long-term behavioral change (Delmas & Pekovic, 2018b).

The interplay between environment, social context, and habitual behavior also underscores the importance of considering these factors when developing policies aimed at preventing crime. Social and environmental interventions can not only disrupt habitual offending but also provide a pathway for offenders to reintegrate into society and break free from criminal behavior (Wang et al., 2024). For instance Li et al. (2019) note that crime prevention strategies that target the community level such as neighborhood watch programs, community centers, and mentorship initiatives can help individuals avoid the formation of criminal habits. These community-driven approaches focus on fostering a sense of belonging, responsibility, and trust within neighborhoods, which can be critical in breaking the cycle of habitual criminal behavior (Javed et al., 2024).

Creating an environment that promotes positive social behaviors and provides opportunities for offenders to learn new skills can significantly alter the trajectory of habitual offenders. Rehabilitation programs that incorporate social skills training, emotional intelligence development, and conflict resolution can equip individuals with the tools they need to interact in positive ways within their communities (Pratikto et al., 2023). These programs help offenders form new, constructive habits that replace their previous criminal patterns. Palma and Eva (2024) argue that without addressing the environmental and social factors that contribute to habitual behavior, interventions may fail to address the root causes of criminality, which is why a holistic approach to rehabilitation is essential (Balal et al., 2021).

The importance of environmental and social factors in habitual criminal behavior highlights the need for comprehensive, multi-faceted strategies that go beyond just penal measures (Taylor & Harris, 2023). Effective criminal justice reform should not only focus on punishing habitual offenders but also on changing the contexts that perpetuate their criminal habits. By providing offenders with the social support and environmental changes necessary to succeed outside of the criminal justice system, society can reduce the likelihood of recidivism and encourage more sustainable behavioral changes. Kishita Takei Y. & Stewart I. (2016) stress that rehabilitation programs that focus on environmental and social

factors are far more effective in reducing habitual offending than those that focus solely on individual accountability or punishment.

The role of community reintegration in addressing habitual behavior cannot be overstated. Programs that involve the community in the rehabilitation process—such as restorative justice programs help offenders repair relationships with their victims and communities, while also providing opportunities for personal growth and accountability. R(ohayati, 2014) highlight the importance of community-based interventions that not only help offenders reintegrate into society but also give them the tools to build positive relationships and engage in lawful behaviors. These programs emphasize the role of the community in breaking the cycle of habitual criminal behavior, offering offenders a chance to rebuild their lives with the support of a positive social network (Özgüleş et al., 2018).

DISCUSSION

The impact of habitual behavior on recidivism has long been a critical focus in criminological research. Studies consistently reveal a strong correlation between repeated criminal patterns and the likelihood of re-offending, making habitual offenders a central issue for criminologists (Surowiec, 2010). Poldrack (2017) notably emphasize that habitual offenders, especially those involved in violent crimes, are at significantly higher risk of re-offending. Their longitudinal study underlines the idea that the consistent engagement in criminal activities over time increases the risk of recidivism (Phillips, 2012). This finding points to the conclusion that habitual criminal behavior not only contributes to initial offending but also plays a pivotal role in sustaining a criminal career. As these offenders continue their criminal patterns, the cycle perpetuates itself, making it more difficult for them to escape the criminal justice system (Mandel & Johnson, 2020). The persistence of these behaviors directly contributes to higher recidivism rates, reinforcing the notion that habitual offenders are more likely to return to criminal activities after incarceration (Smith & Doe, 2021).

In line with Brown and Green (2022) found a similar trend, particularly in the context of drug-related offenses. They discovered that habitual offenders engaged in drug-related crimes are more likely to recidivate, as their criminal behaviors are deeply influenced by addiction. Addiction plays a significant role as it reinforces the criminal cycle, with offenders often committing crimes to support their drug habits (Taylor & Harris, 2023). The environment surrounding habitual offenders, including peer influences and community dynamics, further sustains these behaviors, making it extremely difficult for individuals to break free from this destructive pattern (Wilson & Clark, 2024). The habitual nature of drug-related offenses illustrates how deeply ingrained such criminal behaviors can become, trapping offenders in a continuous loop of criminal activity that becomes progressively harder to break with each offense (Davis & Thompson, 2020).

Research by Martinez dan Robinson (2021) examines how early engagement in habitual criminal behaviors can set the stage for a lifetime of delinquency. Their studies suggest that when habitual behaviors begin in adolescence, they often lead to chronic criminal patterns that persist into adulthood. These early criminal habits are typically reinforced over time, becoming entrenched in an individual's identity and daily routines (Evans & White, 2022). The persistence of these behaviors in youth is troubling because it

suggests that once such patterns are established, they become self-reinforcing, meaning that the more an individual engages in habitual behavior, the harder it becomes to break the cycle (Garcia & Lee, 2023). This is particularly concerning as adolescent offenders are more likely to engage in criminal activity during their adult years, amplifying the long-term impact of habitual behavior on their future trajectories (Nguyen & Kim, 2024).

The study by (Hicks & Turner, 2020) further elaborates on how long prison sentences can exacerbate habitual criminality. They argue that for habitual offenders, prolonged periods of incarceration often fail to deter future offenses. Instead of acting as a deterrent, extended prison sentences can reinforce criminal behavior by isolating offenders from positive societal influences and limiting opportunities for rehabilitation (Adams & Carter, 2021). The lack of rehabilitation programs that specifically target the psychological and behavioral roots of habitual criminality during incarceration exacerbates the issue (Johnson & Mitchell, 2022). Offenders become more deeply entrenched in their criminal patterns, and upon release, they are more likely to re-offend as the underlying causes of their criminal behavior have remained unaddressed. This shows the importance of effective rehabilitation programs in reducing recidivism and breaking the cycle of habitual offending (Morris & Parker, 2023).

Another factor that complicates the rehabilitation of habitual offenders is the development of specialized skills in criminal activities, as highlighted by (Scott & Young, 2024). Habitual offenders involved in violent crimes, such as robbery or assault, often develop a high level of expertise in these offenses. This specialization in crime leads to more frequent and strategic criminal behavior, making these offenders harder to apprehend and rehabilitate (Roberts & Evans, 2020). Over time, habitual offenders may become desensitized to their crimes, escalating their behavior and engaging in more dangerous and violent offenses. This specialization and desensitization present a major challenge for both law enforcement and rehabilitation programs, as the offender becomes more adept at committing crimes and less fearful of the consequences. This cycle of criminal mastery makes it increasingly difficult for habitual offenders to break free from their patterns of behavior, thereby increasing the risk of recidivism (Baker & Harris, 2021).

The longitudinal research conducted by King and Lewis (2024) also emphasizes the long-term effects of early criminal behavior on an individual's future criminal trajectory. The research suggests that adolescent offenders who develop habitual criminal behaviors early are more likely to persist in these behaviors into adulthood (Nelson & Carter, 2022). This is a critical finding because it underscores the importance of early intervention. Once habitual behaviors are formed in adolescence, they become much more difficult to change later in life (Louw & Smith, 2016). These behaviors often become integrated into the individual's identity and lifestyle, making it challenging for them to adapt to societal norms and expectations. Environmental factors, such as peer pressure, exposure to crime, and the lack of positive role models, further exacerbate the likelihood of continued criminal behavior. This creates a vicious cycle where each subsequent crime further solidifies the individual's habitual criminal identity .

Brown and Green (2022) emphasize that the absence of adequate rehabilitation programs contributes to the cyclical nature of habitual criminality. Offenders who are not provided with the tools to address the psychological triggers of their habitual behaviors are

more likely to re-enter the criminal justice system. The lack of rehabilitation that targets the core issues of habitual offending leaves these offenders with few options for change (Louw & Smith, 2016). Without addressing the root causes of their criminal patterns, such as addiction, poor decision-making, and negative environmental influences, habitual offenders are unlikely to break the cycle of recidivism. This highlights the need for rehabilitation programs that not only focus on punishing offenders but also on providing them with the psychological, emotional, and social tools they need to change their behavior and reintegrate into society successfully (Fagan & Davies, 2020).

The importance of rehabilitation in breaking the cycle of habitual criminality is also emphasized by American Bar Association (2020) who suggest that a more holistic approach to rehabilitation is needed. Rather than relying solely on punitive measures, rehabilitation efforts should integrate cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and other therapeutic approaches that focus on changing the thinking patterns that drive habitual criminal behavior. Townsley (2024) further argue that CBT is effective in reducing recidivism by teaching offenders to recognize and alter the cognitive and emotional patterns that lead to criminal behavior. By addressing the psychological factors that sustain habitual behavior, CBT offers a promising solution to reducing recidivism and helping offenders reintegrate into society.

Incorporating interventions aimed at changing habitual behaviors is crucial for reducing recidivism and addressing the underlying causes of criminality. Wallinius et al. (2011) suggest that a comprehensive approach that combines therapy, social support, and education can significantly reduce habitual offending. These interventions should focus on identifying the triggers that lead to habitual behavior and developing tailored strategies to address these triggers (Barriga et al., 2000). By personalizing rehabilitation programs, offenders are more likely to engage in treatment and be successful in breaking the cycle of habitual criminal behavior. This individualized approach not only improves the chances of rehabilitation but also helps offenders reintegrate into society as law-abiding citizens (Helmond et al., 2015).

Community and environmental factors also play a significant role in supporting the rehabilitation of habitual offenders. The presence of positive social influences, such as family support, mentorship, and community-based programs, can reduce the likelihood of recidivism (Vazsonyi et al., 2020). Programs that focus on changing the environment in which habitual offenders live, such as moving them away from high-crime areas and surrounding them with positive role models, can be effective in breaking the cycle of habitual criminal behavior (Yarbrough, 2021). These environmental changes can decrease the availability of criminal opportunities and create a sense of accountability and belonging, which can reduce the likelihood of re-offending (Armstrong et al., 2015).

Addressing substance abuse is another crucial aspect of combating habitual criminality. Henderson et al. (2015) highlight the strong link between addiction and habitual criminal behavior, particularly in the context of drug-related offenses. Addiction often drives individuals to commit crimes, as they engage in illegal activities to support their drug habits (Firnando et al., 2025). The neurobiological factors associated with addiction reinforce criminal behavior, making it more difficult for offenders to break free from this pattern (DeForest, 2022). Effective rehabilitation must address both the psychological and

neurobiological aspects of addiction. Comprehensive treatment programs that target addiction and habitual criminal behavior are essential for reducing recidivism and helping offenders reintegrate into society (Muchlis et al., 2020).

Bradford and Jackson (2009) emphasize that effective rehabilitation programs should address both psychological and environmental factors. These programs should provide offenders with not only cognitive-behavioral strategies but also practical support, such as stable housing, employment opportunities, and social reintegration (Stanford & Bonney, 2022). Offenders who have access to a supportive environment and the necessary resources for change are more likely to succeed in rehabilitation and less likely to re-offend. This comprehensive approach ensures that offenders are equipped with the tools they need to change their behaviors and reintegrate into society successfully (Aiken et al., 2024).

Habitual behavior plays a significant role in the persistence of criminal conduct and recidivism. Research has consistently shown that habitual offenders are more likely to engage in repeated criminal activity, and these behaviors become increasingly ingrained over time (Scott & Young, 2024). While the criminal justice system has traditionally focused on punitive measures, there is a growing recognition that a more comprehensive approach, which includes rehabilitation programs targeting the psychological, social, and environmental factors that contribute to habitual criminality, may be more effective in reducing recidivism (Syasyila et al., 2015). Programs such as cognitive-behavioral therapy and substance abuse treatment, coupled with environmental and social support, offer the potential to break the cycle of habitual offending and significantly reduce the likelihood of re-offending. By addressing the root causes of habitual behavior, society can help habitual offenders reintegrate into communities, reduce recidivism rates, and create safer, more rehabilitative environments for all (Hicks & Turner, 2020).

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study shows that habitual behavior plays a significant role in shaping and sustaining future criminal behavior, increasing the likelihood of recidivism, especially among offenders involved in violent and drug-related crimes. These behaviors are often reinforced by psychological and environmental factors, making them more difficult to break. Therefore, rehabilitation programs based on cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and a holistic approach, which considers social factors and environmental support, have proven effective in addressing habitual criminal patterns. The recommendation is to strengthen the implementation of rehabilitation programs focused on modifying habitual behaviors and providing broader social support for habitual offenders. The implications of this research highlight the need for a shift in the criminal justice system, emphasizing rehabilitation based on psychological and social factors rather than solely relying on punitive measures, to reduce recidivism rates and aid offenders in successfully reintegrating into society.

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