

*Sarajevo, 22 July 2019*

# **Corruption, Rational Choice Model of Crime and White Collar Crimes**

*Prof. Michelangelo Pascali  
University of Naples Parthenope*



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI NAPOLI  
"PARTHENOPE"

# Introduction

Is crime (also) the result of a rational choice?

Is the "corruptive choice" rational?

Is there a connection between the upper classes and corruption?

Is it possible to outline particularities in corruption?

# Rational choice theory

Social behavior as rational behavior

Objectives, costs and benefits in the choice of actions

# Historical context of rational choice theory

Cesare Beccaria (18th century)

Deterrence, situational crime prevention, routine activity theory

Application to many crimes

Neuropsychological literature

# Remuneration criterion of the sentence

Classical penal system:

Idea of rational delinquent

# Background of the rational choice theory - 1

Weber:

Importance of basing sociological explanations on clearly articulated ideas about rational action

# Background of the rational choice theory - 2

Utilitarian Economics:

Sociologists and economic models

# Background of the rational choice theory - 3

Pareto:

*Pareto optimum*

# Basic principles of rational choice theory

Individuals are rational

Individuals have interests

Individuals make choices

Individuals make choices in a rational way to increase their utilities

# Assumptions of the rational choice theory - 1

Resources

Interests, preferences, needs

Courses of social action

Benefits

Costs

Optimality of decision

# Assumptions of the rational choice theory - 2

Individualism

Optimality

Structures

Self-Regarding Interest

Rationality

# Strengths of the rational choice theory

Generality

Parsimony

Predictive

# Weaknesses of rational choice theory

Inadequate information

Human social complex

Macro/micro

Norms and habits

All it is rational?

Instrumental rationality

# How “rational” is the offender?

Pure?

Limited?

## Gary Becker: Crime and Punishment: An Economic Approach (1968)

“A person commits an offense if the expected utility to him exceeds the utility he could get by using his time and other resources at other activities”

# Cornish and Clarke (1986)

Criminal Event

Criminal Involvement

# General strategies for controlling “rational crime”

General deterrence

Specific deterrence

Incapacitation

# White collar crime

What is White Collar Crime?

White collar crime refers to those offenses that are designed to produce financial gain using some form of deception

Sutherland (1949)

# Types of white collar crimes

Tax Fraud

Money laundering

Bank fraud

Computer fraud

Blackmail

# Causes of white collar crime

Thinking that it's not really a crime

Not realizable

Lack of awareness

Greed

Necessity

# Dangers of white collar crime

Billions of euro lost at the expense of tax payers

Ignored safety regulations for employees

Unsafe products on market

Above the law attitude

Excessive greed

# Features of white collar crime

Opportunity

Apparent harmlessness

Theoretical implications

# How to prevent white collar crime

Social awareness

Strong law

Education

# Corruption

Definition:

(Public/private relationship)

Deviation-abuse

Oxford Dictionary

# Some illustrations

Uneconomical projects

“Speed money”

Misappropriation of confidential information

Unmeritocratic civil service

# Types of corruption

SYSTEMATIC

INDIVIDUAL

GRAND

PETTY

# Classifications

AUTOGENIC

DEFENSIVE

EXTORTIVE

INVESTIVE

NEPOTISTIC

SUPPORTIVE

# Causes of corruption

Structural level

Individual aspects

Relational sphere

# Consequences of corruption

Systemic and individual damage

***Thank you for your attention***

***micelangelo.pascali@uniparthenope.it***