Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Iuridica Lublinensia **http://studiaiuridica.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 17:35:00

Articles

Studia Iuridica Lublinensia vol. XXX, 5, 2021
DOI: 10.17951/sil.2021.30.5.93-105

Joanna Brzezińska
University of Wrocław, Poland
ORCID: 0000-0002-5030-3363
joanna.brzezinska@uwr.edu.pl

On the Phenomenon of Female Crime from the Perspective of Integrated Theories*

O zjawisku przestępczości kobiet z perspektywy teorii zintegrowanych

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to analyse selected theories of crime of an integrated nature (biosocial), functioning in criminology, from the perspective of explaining the conditions of the phenomenon of female crime. It was pointed out that single-factor theories older than integrated theories (anthropological, biological, sociological, psychological), assuming in their assumptions only one category of variables, occurring in the analysis of the course of female criminal activities, did not contribute sufficiently to the explication of the studied, negative phenomenon, giving the inducement to search and develop a different category of theory. Therefore, the article attempts to determine whether the integrated (multi-factorial) theories, presented on the example of the considerations of two criminologists: A. Walsh and D.W. Denno, taking into account the findings of the former single-factor concepts, allow to find a comprehensive solution to the doubts, concentrating around the issue of conditions and specificity of the development of the phenomenon of female crime, which for several decades has occupied the activity of criminologists in Poland and worldwide.

Keywords: theories of crime; female crime; single-factor concepts; integrated theories

CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS: Joanna Brzezińska, PhD, Assistant Professor, University of Wrocław, Faculty of Law, Administration and Economics, ul. Uniwersytecka 22/26, 50-145 Wrocław, Poland.

* Publication has been prepared as part of the research project financed by the National Science Centre, Poland (decision no. DEC 2015/19/B/HS5/03042). The coordinator of the project is Dr. J. Brzezińska, Ph.D.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Iuridica Lublinensia **http://studiaiuridica.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 17:35:00

INTRODUCTION

Focusing on the phenomenon of female crime, two major trends can be observed among criminologists in this respect, aimed at finding answers to the question of why and to what extent it occurs and according to what criteria it is formed.[1] The first group is made up of scientists who try to explain the phenomenon under investigation by means of a single, essential criterion determining the criminal activity of perpetrators,[2] thus distinguishing it from a number of other causes and indicating that it may be anthropological, biochemical, genetic, psychological or sociological[3] aspect. The second category of criminological concepts are integrated theories, also referred to as multifactorial.

It is worth stressing that integrated theories have appeared relatively recently, as a result of "fusion" or crystallization of already existing theories.[4] In criminological literature they are usually described as theories of a different category; however, the question arises as to the validity of this theoretical term, especially in the context of its creation. It should be noted that the integration, which is the basic factor of the analyzed concept, concerns individual elements separated from the already existing concepts of female crime, whose integration is primarily aimed at finding a new model explaining the existing criminal mechanisms.

The phenomenon of crime in general, including female crime, has long been an area of interest for criminologists, seeking to identify the full spectrum of its causes. According to the report of the Interdisciplinary Group of Criminologists, which was formulated in 1978, three main types of variables can be identified which determine the occurrence of criminal behaviour: predisposing variables (they

[1] M. Cabalski, *Przemoc stosowana przez kobiety*, Kraków 2014, pp. 173–178; Z. Majchrzyk, *Kiedy kobieta zabija. Motywy, osobowość, relacja sprawca–ofiara, strategie obronne*, Warszawa 2009, pp. 74–75; K. Ostrowska, D. Wójcik, *Teorie kryminologiczne*, Warszawa 1986, p. 102; J. Błachut, *Kobiety recydywistki w świetle badań kryminologicznych*, Wrocław 1981, pp. 15–19; M. Budyn-Kulik, *Zabójstwo tyrana domowego. Studium prawno-karne i wiktymologiczne*, Lublin 2005, p. 21; W.J. Thomas, *Sex and Society: Studies in the Social Psychology of Sex*, Chicago 1907, p. 241; K. Dalton, *Premenstrual Syndrome Goes to Court*, Ohio 1990, p. 75; K. Sitnik, *Teorie biologiczne w procesie wyjaśniania etiologii przestępczości kobiet*, www.bibliotekacyfrowa.pl/Content/40774/12_Katarzyna_Sitnik.pdf [access: 10.08.2021], pp. 201–202; T.E. Kuczma, *Genetyczne ujęcie przestępstwa*, Poznań 1939, p. 90; K. Biel, *Przestępczość dziewcząt. Rodzaje i uwarunkowania*, Kraków 2008, p. 178.

[2] A. Rackdenwald, K. Parker, *The influence of gender inequality and marginalization on types of female offending*, "Homicide Studies" 2008, vol. 12(2), pp. 208–226.

[3] A. Worrall, *Offending Women: Female Lawbreakers and the Criminal Justice System*, London–New York 1990, pp. 5–13; F. Heidensohn, *Women and Crime*, London 1996, pp. 110–113; O. Pollak, *The Criminality of Women*, Pensylavania 1950, pp. 137–148; A. Morris, *Women, Crime and Criminal Justice*, Cambridge 1993, pp. 1–18; C. Smart, *Women, Crime and Criminology*, Boston 1977, pp. 1–27; N. Naffine, *Female Crime: The Construction of Women in Criminology*, New York 2016, pp. 89–104.

[4] K. Biel, *op. cit.*, p. 192 ff.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Iuridica Lublinensia **http://studiaiuridica.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 17:35:00

increase the probability of criminal behaviour), facilitating variables (their combination results in the occurrence of variables which make the occurrence of criminal behaviour more probable), inhibiting variables (they counteract the occurrence of predisposing variables, thus reducing the possibility of criminal behaviour).[5] This selection of factors helps to clarify to a certain extent the determinants of criminal behaviour, also taking into account the sex of the perpetrators, and allows attention to be drawn to the fact that some of the factors are much more significant than others and are indeed the determinants of criminal activity.[6] A more in-depth study of crime towards genetic, biological and psychological variables allowed for the creation of biosocial[7] concepts of crime, some elements of which appeared in the works of a broad group of criminologists (A. Walsh, D.W. Denno, D.O. Lewis and S.S. Shanok, B. Pasamanick and H. Knobloch, T.M. Robins, F. Schulsinger, R. Shah, J.A. Roth). Given the limited framework of this study, a critical analysis, of only selected authors, of the assumptions of the concept of multi-factorial theories of female crime is presented.

In criminology, it is a common question why it is men who are more likely than women to exhibit all kinds of anti-social and deviant behaviour to a higher degree. For several decades, criminologists have been wondering why the differences between the two sexes, highlighted on this plane, occur in virtually all historical periods and cultural contexts. Criminologists see the differences in the existence of different socialization practices, references to the concept of social roles and cultural values in terms of norms and practices.[8] Therefore, during the course of research, the conviction has become established that it is necessary to create a specific paradigm of biosocial aetiology that would allow to explain the existing inconsistencies.[9]

Analysing the assumptions of the biosocial paradigm, it should be emphasized that it is complex because it focuses on indicating that in practice human being as

---

[5] D.W. Denno, *Biology and Violence: From Birth to Adulthood*, New York 1990, p. 4.

[6] *Ibidem*.

[7] J. Wright, P. Boisvert, *What Biosocial Criminology Offers Criminology*, "Criminal Justice and Behavior" 2009, vol. 36(11), pp. 1228–1239; R. Wiebe, *Psychopathy*, [in:] *Biosocial Criminology: New Directions in Theory and Research*, eds. A. Walsh, K. Beaver, New York 2009, pp. 224–242.

[8] A. Walsh, *Feminist Criminology Through a Biosocial Lens*, New York 2011, p. 3; A. Walsh, H.H. Wu, *Differentiating antisocial personality disorder, psychopathy, and sociopathy: Evolutionary, genetic, neurological, and sociological considerations*, "Criminal Justice Studies" 2008, vol. 21(2), pp. 135–152.

[9] Among the representatives of integrated theories, combining biological, sociological and cultural elements, the following should be mentioned: J.Q. Wilson, R. Herstein, D. Elliot, D. Howkins, J. Sederstrom. See J.Q. Wilson, R. Herstein, *Crime and Human Nature*, "Criminology" 1985, vol. 23(2), pp. 381–388; J.G. Weis, J. Sederstrom, *The Prevention of Serious Delinquency: What to Do?*, Washington 1981; L.J. Siegel, *Criminology: Theories, Patterns and Typologies*, St. Paul 1992, pp. 242–244.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Iuridica Lublinensia **http://studiaiuridica.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 17:35:00

an individual is a combination of the biological and social plane. I. Hacking addresses this notion by saying: "Biosocial is a new word, but its genealogy, although short, remains the best".[10] The biosocial paradigm is applicable to all humanities, including criminology. One of the world's leading criminologists – F.T. Cullen[11] – stated that he was first a supporter of the sociological paradigm and hence his conclusion: "[…] convinced that only the sociological conditions of criminology are exhausted [the author stated that] such an assumption shows that the causes of crime should be sought in other conditions, new paradigms".[12] He defined the biosocial paradigm as the one that has a stronger and deeper character – as the paradigm of the 21st century. He pointed to the failure of the assumptions of sociological theories, which expressed themselves in indicating huge, multifaceted differences in criminal behaviour between men and women. Biosocial concepts, on the other hand, have been well accepted in many disciplines because they allow the study of human behaviour from multiple, independent perspectives, from biological to social aspects.[13] As A. Moir and D. Jessel point out, "the biological agent is central to the crime, but it interacts with cultural, social and economic factors in a highly advanced and powerful way".[14]

ANALYSIS OF SELECTED THEORIES

1. A. Walsh theory

A. Walsh remains the best-known promoter of the biosocial concept, aimed at explicating female crime through the integration of multiple factors. In his research on crime, the author posed a legitimate question concerning the differences in the level of male and female crime, and especially the predisposition to commit antisocial and deviant behaviour. According to his observations, gender-specific biological conditions have specific effects on deviant behaviour. In the case of women, they act as an inhibitor to the development of aggression and violent crime, while in the case of men, they cause a rise in violent behaviour and a serious increase in their

[10] I. Hacking, *Genetics, biosocial groups & future of identity*, www.college-de-france.fr/media/ian-hacking/UPL9148763916900608100_Genetics.pdf [access: 15.08.2021], p. 81.

[11] J.P. Wright, F.T. Cullen, *The Future of Biosocial Criminology Beyond Scholars' Professional Ideology*, "Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice" 2012, vol. 28(3), pp. 237–253.

[12] *Ibidem*.

[13] J.P. Wright, P. Boisvert, *op. cit.*, pp. 1228–1239; A. Walsh, K. Beaver, *The Promise of evolutionary psychology for criminology: The examples of gender and age*, [in:] *Evolutionary Forensic Psychology*, eds. J. Duntley, T. Shackleford, New York 2008.

[14] A. Moir, D. Jessel, *Płeć mózgu. O prawdziwej różnicy między mężczyzną a kobietą*, Warszawa 2017, p. 10.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Iuridica Lublinensia **http://studiaiuridica.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 17:35:00

crime. Among the conditions inhibiting multidimensional violent and aggressive behaviour in women, the researcher pointed out: the development of altruistic tendencies (which in relation to the female gender are predominant in the personality structure), a more reduced degree of reaction to stressful situations (women are less impulsive), and above all, a decisive development of communication skills. Thus, a woman's ability to communicate with her environment and to determine her own needs, feelings or emotions, helps to minimize the growth of behaviours that indicate frustration, and thus to reduce illegal behaviour.

Analyzing further the structure of the brain, the author concluded that there are fundamental differences in the development of this part of the body in women and men, which results in specific differences in their functioning. A. Walsh emphasizes that the female brain has a more developed left hemisphere, where the centers of positive emotions and altruism towards people are located.[15] Meanwhile, the male brain is characterized by the development of the right hemisphere, and thus remains a source of negative emotions, with a predominance of anger and aggression. At the same time, men, given the structure of the brain (the dominance of the right hemisphere), remain more focused on their own needs and often pursue them without regard for the good of other individuals or the general good, which predisposes them to a higher degree of activity to update their criminal inclinations.[16] Women, on the other hand, by focusing their behaviour on other people from their environment, are less susceptible to crime with elements of aggression or common acts of violence (fights, assaults). Against the background of differences in the functioning of individual hemispheres of the brain in psychology, the concept of its lateralization has appeared. This process means in a different way the so-called "bias" of the brain, means the fact that brain functions will be concentrated in one of its hemispheres.

[15] *Ibidem*, p. 118.

[16] It should be noted that men are much more prone to aggression as a result of their biological conditions. Research shows that males are prone to hostile and aggressive behaviour as a result of brain response to testosterone production. Its high condition has a concrete impact on the formation and consolidation of anti-social behaviour: fights, assaults, aggressive confrontations. Initial stimulation of aggression due to high testosterone levels can be further intensified in men, which in turn intensifies any aggressive tendencies in male behaviour. Research on male aggression highlights that it tends to grow and develop with age into behaviours with elements of cruelty, which in principle never occur in women. There is also no doubt that the tendency to deviant behaviour remains more appropriate for men. See *ibidem*, p. 110 ff.; H. Persky, *Relation of psychologic measures of aggression and hostility to testosterone production in man*, "Psychosomatic Medicine" 1971, vol. 33(3), p. 265 ff.; W. Grove, *The effect of age and gender on deviant behaviour: A biopsychological perspective*, [in:] *Gender and the Life Course*, ed. A.S. Rossi, New York 1985, pp. 115–144; K.E. Moyer, *The biological basis for dominance and aggression*, [in:] *Dominance Aggression and War*, ed. D. McGuinness, New York 1987, pp. 23–25; H. Driscoll, A. Zinkivskay, K. Evans, A. Campbell, *Gender differences in social representations of aggression: The phenomenological experience of differences in inhibitory control?*, "British Journal of Psychology" 2006, vol. 97(2), p. 139 ff.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Iuridica Lublinensia **http://studiaiuridica.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 17:35:00

Lateralization will result in the unit showing a higher specialisation of one of the hemispheres of the brain in the creation and reception of information. Importantly, from the perspective of the deliberations conducted, according to A. Walsh, women have brains that are less lateralized than men, so the level of integration of both brain hemispheres is higher in their case, hence the domination of either of them is rather unnoticeable, which makes women more likely to engage in altruistic behaviours than men.[17] In this context, it is worth quoting the results of H. Landsell's research, which shows that in women the division concerning brain function between its two hemispheres is not sharply outlined. In fact, both hemispheres work in an advanced way. In men, the situation is different and their brains remain more specialized – the left hemisphere is dominant in thought analysis. This results in a higher degree of focus on the task at hand.[18]

Further observations of A. Walsh focus on the analysis of the course and influence of educational processes on adult behaviour. He stresses that all dysfunctional elements that occur during the stage of development of the girls' nervous system then have an impact on their further functioning. According to A. Walsh, the female perpetrators usually come from homes with severe dysfunctions. Thus, it proves that the pathological environment of origin has a radical influence on the direction of brain development, making it impossible to keep things in order. Girls who have not been properly educated and taught how to react to stressful situations experience them to a higher degree than boys, and at the same time it disturbs their adaptation to functioning in difficult conditions for the future. If they have not been "prepared" for certain external circumstances to exacerbate stress, they unfortunately become very vulnerable to it. The consequence of such reactions is that girls from pathological families develop atypical mental states: subreactivity, when they stop reacting to moderate stress due to permanent experience of stressful stimuli, and overreactivity, when they react unnaturally and extremely rapidly to events of conflict aetiology.

In the course of the crime research carried out in 2004 by M. Robinson (together with N. Tinbergen), which was of a multi-faceted nature, three-part analyses were made. They started from the lowest level, referring to the biological aspects – cells, organs, tissues – and then moved on to the level of individuals, groups and communities and finally reached the highest level of organization – society. According to

[17] T. Górska, A. Grabowska, J. Zagrodzka, *Mózg a zachowanie*, Warszawa 1997.

[18] H. Lansdell, *Laterality of Verbal Intelligence in the Brain*, "Science" 1962, vol. 135(3507), pp. 922–923; A. Moir, D. Jessel, *op. cit.*, pp. 61–70; D. Blum, *Mózg i płeć. O biologicznych różnicach między kobietami a mężczyznami*, Warszawa 2000, p. 74; S. Butler, *Sex Differences in Human Cerebral Function*, "Progress in Brain Research" 1984, vol. 61, pp. 443–455; R.A. Harshman, E. Hampson, S.A. Berenbaum, *Individual differences in cognitive abilities and brain organization: I. Sex and handedness differences in ability*, "Canadian Journal of Psychology / Revue canadienne de psychologie" 1983, vol. 37(1), p. 144 ff.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Iuridica Lublinensia **http://studiaiuridica.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 17:35:00

the observations obtained, there is no simple division of the causes that determine crime. However, the search for its conditions certainly cannot be reduced by limiting the findings to only one discipline of knowledge, which would set arbitrarily limits and indicate non-binding solutions. It is essential that the analysis of identifying the determinants of a particular behaviour or behavioural system should not start from the most advanced level, but rather from the least advanced level, and it is therefore necessary to start from an understanding of the most basic level – the biological one – and then move towards higher levels, with an increased degree of complexity and different from the underlying aetiology. The next two levels of research take into account sociological connections, and thus allow to indicate the relationships that determine the reasons for directing the behaviour of individuals and subsequently individuals against the background of society, thus determining the circumstances of the emergence of deep dysfunctions, which then transform into criminal behaviour.[19]

2. D.W. Denno theory

The theory of integrated crime, which cumulates the biological and social aspects of behaviour, is one of the methods of explicating the determinants of crime. Many disorders related to crime and criminal activity may be related to complications occurring before and immediately after the birth of children. A child at risk of premature birth, with low birth weight, has more problems adapting to a bad environment than a fully healthy child. It follows that the relatively more immature or stressed central nervous system of less developed children is less able to integrate with the unmet needs of the individual.

One of the best-known integrated concepts nowadays have been developed by D.W. Denno. The researcher stresses that pressure from both groups of factors, i.e. biological and environmental, has a part to play in shaping criminal behaviour and may in turn help to detect those factors which may ultimately lead to the prevention of violence.[20] In the concept presented by the researcher, two terms in particular – "biological" and "environmental" – are definitely important. The first includes non-social factors, non-behavioural means of existence and functioning, such as physical growth and development.[21] On the other hand, environmental factors are

[19] A. Walsh, *Feminist Criminology…*, p. 4; idem, *Review of Biosociology: An Emerging Paradigm*, New York 1995; M. Lafrance, N.M. Henley, [in:] *Kobiety, mężczyźni i płeć*, ed. M. Walsh, Warszawa 2003, pp. 127–146; K.M. Beaver, M.G. Vaughn, M. DeLisi, J.P. Wright, R. Wiebe, H.H. Cleveland, A. Walsh, *The heritability of common risk and protective factors to crime and delinquency*, [in:] *Criminological Theory: A Life-Course Approach*, eds. M. DeLisi, K.M. Beaver, Burlington 2014, pp. 99–112.

[20] D.W. Denno, *op. cit.*, p. 15 ff.

[21] *Ibidem*.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Iuridica Lublinensia **http://studiaiuridica.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 17:35:00

contained in biological factors. In the structure of environmental factors, a focus on the concept of personality is visible. They therefore include intellectual or cognitive skills and accomplishments and may have a partially biological background that can undergo environmental fixation or change. D.W. Denno argues that differences in behaviour between the two sexes should be placed in sociological and developmental factors. In general, developmental and biological factors are more closely linked to female crime, for two reasons: women are less subject to physical environmental conditions and more subject to socialisation, corresponding to social and cultural norms. Thus, women who enter a crime scene are subject to a higher but unusual degree of negative biological conditions than men, because female aggression is atypical to the highest degree.[22]

In the course of her research, the author created a bio-social concept of crime (integrated), assuming that the participation of specific biological, personality and sociological factors can significantly increase the probability of criminal behaviour. In the course of her research, she found that there is a particularly strong correlation between biological conditions and the use of violence. In her study, D.W. Denno indicated which disorders of biological aetiology may contribute to the increase in violence and crime in society. Among the catalogue of disorders, she indicated the following dysfunctions:

- attention deficit disorder (ADD, previously referred to as brain dysfunction) and psychomotor hyperactivity (ADHD),[23]
- atypical impulsivity,
- low level of intellectual development,
- mental defect disability,
- developmental delay and developmental disorders,[24]
- disorders of the senses, especially speech,
- abnormalities of biological or neurophysiological aetiology (e.g., low birth weight, damage to individual body organs).[25]

D.W. Denno pointed out that some of the indicated dysfunctions may be a consequence of the inheritance of negative genetic conditions in the family structure,

[22] Cf. D. Steffensmeier, H. Zong, J. Ackerman, J. Schwartz, S. Agha, *Gender gap trends for violent crimes, 1980 to 2003*, "Feminist Criminology" 2006, vol. 1(1), pp. 71–98; D. Waschbusch, W. Pelham, J. Jennings, A. Greiner, R. Tarter, H. Moss, *Reactive Aggression in Boys with Disruptive Behavior Disorders: Behavior, Physiology, and Affect*, "Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology" 2002, vol. 30, pp. 641–656.

[23] D.W. Denno, *op. cit.*, pp. 15–16; F. Levy, D. Hay, K. Bennett, M. McStephen, *Gender differences in ADHD subtype comorbidity*, "Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry" 2005, vol. 44(4), pp. 368–376.

[24] A. Neubauer, A. Fink, *Intelligence and neural efficiency*, "Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews" 2009, vol. 33(7), pp. 1004–1023.

[25] *Ibidem*.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Iuridica Lublinensia **http://studiaiuridica.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 17:35:00

moreover, they may be the result of disorders which were the consequences of perinatal complications or disorders appearing at the stage of foetal life.[26] The author also emphasized that the indicated disorders may also be the result of irregularities that occurred in connection with the influence of the home, school or other social environments on the individual.

Organic dysfunctions identified by D.W. Denno may sometimes be the result of a cumulative combination of different factors.[27] The author has shown in her research that women who commit acts of violence are much more likely to show a high degree of connection between two elements: the occurrence of adverse biological factors in the structure of the body and the assimilation of aggressive behaviour. This means that the occurrence of various dysfunctions of biological aetiology (e.g., in the form of a low level of intelligence or mental handicap) dominates over the influence of social factors (e.g., the way of education or socialisation). According to D.W. Denno, factors of biological and environmental aetiology that do not take a pathological form have an inhibitory effect on the development of female crime.

CONCLUSIONS

Representatives of integrated theories (in the case of the present study biosocial theories have been analysed) aim to show that the justification of crime phenomenon should be sought between variables with different aetiologies (taking into account biological, social or psychological conditions) and it becomes necessary in this case to find an answer to the question which of the analysed factors are dominant in triggering criminal behaviour. "Biological theories are an essential part of a multi-factorial approach to investigating criminal behaviour. This means that the presence of certain biological factors may increase the probability, but it cannot absolutely decide that an individual will engage in criminal activity. These factors generate criminal behaviour when they interact with psychological and sociological factors".[28]

Focusing on the analysis of biosocial theory assumptions in the context of the determinants of crime as a phenomenon, it should be noted that it is a variant of the integrated theory, because it combines aspects specific to various concepts, including biological, sociological and even to some extent psychological ones.

---

[26] See A. Campbell, S. Muncer, D. Bibel, *Women and crime: An evolutionary approach*, "Aggression and Violent Behavior" 2001, vol. 6(5), pp. 481–497.

[27] D.W. Denno, *op. cit.*, p. 15; D. Klein, *The etiology of female crime: A review of the literature*, [in:] *The Criminal Justice System and Women: Offenders, Victims and Workers*, eds. B. Price, N. Sokoloff, New York 1995, pp. 30–53.

[28] G.B. Vold, T.J. Bernard, B. Snipes, *Theoretical Criminology*, New York 1998, p. 87.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Iuridica Lublinensia **http://studiaiuridica.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 17:35:00

The concept indicated in the study aims to provide a comprehensive explanation of the causes of criminal female behaviour. The essence of this theory is integration, i.e. the combination of a multi-component research concept and the resulting coherent structure of findings. At this point, the question arises as to whether such an assumption is, in fact, fully implemented in the assumptions of the analyzed concept. It seems that, while drawing attention to the nature of the justification for the phenomenon of female crime, there is no single, permanent pattern explaining its origin and causes. Depending on the nature, type, manner of behaviour, external conditions, environmental factors, other aspects will appear to be leading in the search for a justification for undertaking activities which aim to exceed not only moral boundaries and norms, but first of all the set and binding legal standards. What is more, it seems that the individual elements, integrated within the framework of the concept indicated in the study (biological, sociological, or psychological) and conditioning the emergence of female criminal behaviours do not, as the authors of the concept would like to see them, take on a complementary character. Rather, depending on the circumstances of a particular case, one can have the impression that one of the indicated factors, which are integrated with the others, is constantly dominating. Thus, there seems to be no comprehensive and repetitive pattern of factors whose "imposition" on the analyzed cases of female crimes would give a satisfactory result, in the form of establishing the basic aetiology of their occurrence. Factors determining the exceeding of legal norms, which are in force in society, may result from the overlapping and presence of different determinants (biological, sociological or psychological), where the dominance of some, by nature, displaces or diminishes the presence of others, although it does not completely negate them (some shades of other factors, apart from the dominant factor, are able to function in the study of the causes of female crime).

The second aspect to be addressed in the context of research on integrated crime concepts is the question of their application. There is no doubt that the male and female sexes are very different from each other on many levels, from biological to sociological to psychological. These differences determine the characteristics and essence of a particular gender (including its predisposition to certain categories of behaviour, likes or dislikes, or activity), and also make it possible to distinguish between them. At the same time, it is indicated that the search for the properties and specificities of female behaviour requires specific analyses. They are comprehensive in the sense that they concern not only "positive" and characteristic properties, but also include negative and non-specific behaviour, which includes crime and the related realisation of the constituent elements of certain crimes. The search for an answer to the question of why women, like men, are inclined to perform behaviours that exceed legal norms has freed up a wide field of criminological research aimed at finding a solution to the identified problem. Over time, it has been noticed that the observations on female crime are only explained on the basis of one-factor

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Iuridica Lublinensia **http://studiaiuridica.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 17:35:00

theoretical concepts with different aetiologies – biological, psychological, or sociological. At the same time, even the most advanced single-factor theories were not able to fully explain the essence of the examined issue, which is a negative phenomenon. Thus, the possibility of combining individual elements of the theories and creating the so-called integrated concept, which was to explain the issue in a comprehensive way, began to be noticed in criminology. Meanwhile, it seems that such an approach did not fully satisfy the scientific hopes placed on it. First of all, it is difficult to recognise that the integrated concept is solely (exclusively) related to female crime, since its various aspects can be used as variables, the study of which will make it possible to explain the pathological conditions and deviant behaviour of men. Furthermore, the integration (fusion) mentioned by researchers and representatives of integrated concepts, especially A. Walsh and D.W. Denno, refers to a wide range of different factors which could not be taken into account jointly in case studies due to their too broad scope.

In the context of the considerations presented, it seems that the search for a justification for the phenomenon of female crime on the basis of integrated theories should be positively assessed, as it seeks a comprehensive explanation. However, criminologists cannot escape the attention to the fact that even integrated theories have specific deficits, and although they explain the causes of the phenomenon in question to a greater extent than single-factor theories, they unfortunately do not do so in an ideal or unambiguous way.

REFERENCES

Literature

Beaver K.M., Vaughn M.G., DeLisi M., Wright J.P., Wiebe R.P., Cleveland H.H., Walsh A., *The heritability of common risk and protective factors to crime and delinquency*, [in:] *Criminological Theory: A Life-Course Approach*, eds. M. DeLisi, K.M. Beaver, Burlington 2014.

Biel K., *Przestępczość dziewcząt. Rodzaje i uwarunkowania*, Kraków 2008.

Blum D., *Mózg i płeć. O biologicznych różnicach między kobietami a mężczyznami*, Warszawa 2000.

Błachut J., *Kobiety recydywistki w świetle badań kryminologicznych*, Wrocław 1981.

Budyn-Kulik M., *Zabójstwo tyrana domowego. Studium prawno-karne i wiktymologiczne*, Lublin 2005.

Butler S., *Sex Differences in Human Cerebral Function*, "Progress in Brain Research" 1984, vol. 61, **DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/S0079-6123(08)64453-2**.

Cabalski M., *Przemoc stosowana przez kobiety*, Kraków 2014.

Campbell A., Muncer S., Bibel D., *Women and crime: An evolutionary approach*, "Aggression and Violent Behavior" 2001, vol. 6(5), **DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/S1359-1789(00)00019-7**.

Dalton K., *Premenstrual Syndrome Goes to Court*, Ohio 1990, **DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-20209-6_17**.

Denno D.W., *Biology and Violence: From Birth to Adulthood*, New York 1990, **DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511752803**.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Iuridica Lublinensia **http://studiaiuridica.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 17:35:00

Driscoll H., Zinkivskay A., Evans K., Campbell A., *Gender differences in social representations of aggression: The phenomenological experience of differences in inhibitory control?*, "British Journal of Psychology" 2006, vol. 97(2), **DOI: https://doi.org/10.1348/000712605X63073**.

Górska T., Grabowska A., Zagrodzka J., *Mózg a zachowanie*, Warszawa 1997.

Grove W., *The effect of age and gender on deviant behaviour: A biopsychological perspective*, [in:] *Gender and the Life Course*, ed. A.S. Rossi, New York 1985.

Harshman R.A., Hampson E., Berenbaum S.A., *Individual differences in cognitive abilities and brain organization: I. Sex and handedness differences in ability*, "Canadian Journal of Psychology / Revue canadienne de psychologie" 1983, vol. 37(1), **DOI: https://doi.org/10.1037/h0080690**.

Heidensohn F., *Women and Crime*, New York 1996, **DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-24445-4**.

Klein D., *The etiology of female crime: A review of the literature*, [in:] *The Criminal Justice System and Women: Offenders, Victims and Workers*, eds. B. Price, N. Sokoloff, New York 1995.

Kuczma T.E., *Genetyczne ujęcie przestępstwa*, Poznań 1939.

Lafrance M., Henley N.M., [in:] *Kobiety, mężczyźni i płeć*, ed. M. Walsh, Warszawa 2003.

Lansdell H., *Laterality of Verbal Intelligence in the Brain*, "Science" 1962, vol. 135(3507).

Levy F., Hay D., Bennett K., McStephen M., *Gender differences in ADHD subtype comorbidity*, "Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry" 2005, vol. 44(4), **DOI: https://doi.org/10.1097/01.chi.0000153232.64968.c1**.

Majchrzyk Z., *Kiedy kobieta zabija. Motywy, osobowość, relacja sprawca–ofiara, strategie obronne*, Warszawa 2009.

Moir A., Jessel D., *Płeć mózgu. O prawdziwej różnicy między mężczyzną a kobietą*, Warszawa 2017.

Morris A., *Women, Crime and Criminal Justice*, Cambridge 1993.

Moyer K.E., *The biological basis for dominance and aggression*, [in:] *Dominance Aggression and War*, ed. D. McGuinness, New York 1987.

Naffine N., *Female Crime: The Construction of Women in Criminology*, New York 2016, **DOI: https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315646992**.

Neubauer A., Fink A., *Intelligence and neural efficiency*, "Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews" 2009, vol. 33(7), **DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neubiorev.2009.04.001**.

Ostrowska K., Wójcik D., *Teorie kryminologiczne*, Warszawa 1986.

Persky H., *Relation of psychologic measures of aggression and hostility to testosterone production in man*, "Psychosomatic Medicine" 1971, vol. 33(3), **DOI: https://doi.org/10.1097/00006842-197105000-00007**.

Pollak O., *The Criminality of Women*, New York 1950.

Rackdenwald A., Parker K., *The influence of gender inequality and marginalization on types of female offending*, "Homicide Studies" 2008, vol. 12(2), **DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1088767908314270**.

Siegel L.J., *Criminology: Theories, Patterns and Typologies*, St. Paul 1992.

Smart C., *Women, Crime and Criminology*, Boston 1977.

Steffensmeier D., Zong H., Ackerman J., Schwartz J., Agha S., *Gender gap trends for violent crimes, 1980 to 2003*, "Feminist Criminology" 2006, vol. 1(1), **DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1557085105283953**.

Thomas W.J., *Sex and Society: Studies in the Social Psychology of Sex*, Chicago 1907, **DOI: https://doi.org/10.2307/1412420**.

Vold G.B., Bernard T.J., Snipes B., *Theoretical Criminology*, New York 1998.

Walsh A., *Feminist Criminology Through a Biosocial Lens*, New York 2011.

Walsh A., *Review of Biosociology: An Emerging Paradigm*, New York 1995.

Walsh A., Beaver K., *The Promise of evolutionary psychology for criminology: The examples of gender and age*, [in:] *Evolutionary Forensic Psychology*, eds. J. Duntley, T. Shackleford, New York 2008, **DOI: https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195325188.003.0002**.

Pobrane z czasopisma Studia Iuridica Lublinensia **http://studiaiuridica.umcs.pl**
Data: 21/11/2026 17:35:00

Walsh A., Wu H.H., *Differentiating antisocial personality disorder, psychopathy, and sociopathy: Evolutionary, genetic, neurological, and sociological considerations*, "Criminal Justice Studies" 2008, vol. 21(2), **DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/14786010802159814**.

Waschbusch D., Pelham W., Jennings J., Greiner A., Tarter R., Moss H., *Reactive Aggression in Boys with Disruptive Behavior Disorders: Behavior, Physiology, and Affect*, "Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology" 2002, vol. 30, **DOI: https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1020867831811**.

Weis J.G., Sederstrom J., *The Prevention of Serious Delinquency: What to Do?*, Washington 1981.

Wiebe R., *Psychopathy*, [in:] *Biosocial Criminology: New Directions in Theory and Research*, eds. A. Walsh, K. Beaver, New York 2009.

Wilson J.Q., Herstein R., *Crime and Human Nature*, "Criminology" 1985, vol. 23(2).

Worrall A., *Offending Women: Female Lawbreakers and the Criminal Justice System*, London–New York 1990.

Wright J.P., Boisvert P., *What Biosocial Criminology Offers Criminology*, "Criminal Justice and Behavior" 2009, vol. 36(11), **DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854809343140**.

Wright J.P., Cullen F.T., *The Future of Biosocial Criminology Beyond Scholars' Professional Ideology*, "Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice" 2012, vol. 28(3), **DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1043986212450216**.

Online sources

Hacking I., *Genetics, biosocial groups & future of identity*, www.college-de-france.fr/media/ian-hacking/UPL9148763916900608100_Genetics.pdf [access: 15.08.2021].

Sitnik K., *Teorie biologiczne w procesie wyjaśniania etiologii przestępczości kobiet*, www.bibliotekacyfrowa.pl/Content/40774/12_Katarzyna_Sitnik.pdf [access: 10.08.2021].

ABSTRAKT

Celem niniejszego opracowania jest analiza wybranych teorii przestępczości o charakterze zintegrowanym (biospołecznych), funkcjonujących w kryminologii, z perspektywy wyjaśnienia uwarunkowań fenomenu przestępczości kobiet. Wskazano, że starsze od teorii zintegrowanych teorie jednoczynnikowe (antropologiczne, biologiczne, socjologiczne, psychologiczne), przyjmujące w swych założeniach tylko jedną kategorię zmiennych, występującą w analizie przebiegu kobiecych aktywności przestępczych, nie przyczyniły się w wystarczającym stopniu do eksplikacji badanego, negatywnego fenomenu, dając asumpt do poszukiwania oraz rozwoju odmiennej kategorii teorii. W artykule podjęto zatem próbę ustalenia, czy teorie zintegrowane (wieloczynnikowe), przedstawione na przykładzie rozważań dwojga kryminologów: A. Walsha oraz D.W. Denno, uwzględniające ustalenia dawniejszych koncepcji jednoczynnikowych, pozwalają na znalezienie kompleksowego rozstrzygnięcia wątpliwości koncentrujących się wokół zagadnienia uwarunkowań i specyfiki rozwoju zjawiska przestępczości kobiet, które od kilku dekad zajmują kryminologów w Polsce i na świecie.

Słowa kluczowe: teorie przestępczości; przestępczość kobiet; teorie jednoczynnikowe; teorie zintegrowane