



I7 Sexual Offending and IQ: What Is the Relationship?

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The goals of this presentation are to: (1) inform those involved in assessments of persons who have sexually offended of considerations of intellectual functioning as it relates to etiology and, in turn, risk of reoffending; and, (2) provide treatment providers with data on the potential impact of intellectual functioning for treatment planning use.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by improving the ability of evaluators of sexual offending behavior to determine etiology. This presentation will also impact attendees by helping risk and treatment providers to develop treatment plans with likelihoods of successful outcomes.

The current proposed presentation will focus on the range of intelligence estimates in a sample of adult men convicted of sexual offenses. Specifically, this presentation will include the data of approximately 1,040 individuals who were serving time for a sexual offense conviction and being assessed for potential civil commitment under the South Carolina Sexually Violent Predator (SVP) Act. A previous meta-analysis of 25,146 adult male sex offenders reported that sexual offenders obtain lower Intelligence Quotient (IQ) scores than non-sexual offenders, but that this difference is likely accounted for by the large proportion of individuals with sex offenses against children in those studies.¹ Additionally, a relationship between IQ score and the presence of pedophilic disorder was noted.¹ Based on previous research, it was hypothesized that as the offenders' intellectual functioning (i.e., IQ score) decreased, so did the age of the victims.^{2,3} This study hypothesized that offenders with below-average IQ would have younger (i.e., at least pre-adolescent age range) victims than those with average or above-average IQ scores. It was also hypothesized that as IQ score decreased, the report of childhood sexual abuse victimization of the offender would increase. This study hypothesized that the offenders with above-average IQs would be more likely to have no other criminal history beyond the sexual offense(s). Finally, it was predicted that the presence of a pedophilic disorder would be associated with lower IQ scores than of those offenders not meeting diagnostic criteria for pedophilic disorder. Preliminary analyses indicate that IQ scores in this sample ranged from 43 to 164, with a mean IQ score of 91.88 (*Standard Deviation (SD)*=16.00). Approximately 35% of the sample (*n*=364) had been diagnosed with at least one mental illness, to include paraphilic disorders (*n*=25). The sample had an average of 2.17 (*SD*=2.57) victims and the number of victims ranged in age from 1 to 45 years. This presentation will also address the challenges of providing effective sex offender treatment to offenders with intellectual impairments.

Reference(s):

1. Canter J.M., Blanchard J., Robichaud L.K., Christensen, B.K. Quantitative reanalysis of aggregate data on IQ in sex offenders. *Psychological Bulletin*. 2005; 131(4): 555-568.
2. Kruger T.H.C., Schiffer B. Neurocognitive and personality factors in homo- and heterosexual pedophiles and controls. *The Journal of Sexual Medicine*. 2011; 8(6): 1650-1659.
3. Lindsay W.R. Research and literature on sex offenders with intellectual and developmental disabilities. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*. 2002; 46(1): 74-85.

Sexual Offenders, Intellectual Functioning, Sexually Violent Predators