

POTENTIAL APPLICATIONS OF AN EXISTING OFFENDER TYPLOGY TO
CHILD MOLESTING BEHAVIORS

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to begin exploring the idea of differential treatment of child molesters. This is important given that child molesters represent a diverse group of offenders that likely differ in their treatment needs. While some research portrays child molesters as a rather homogeneous group, there are sufficient data to refute this idea. The clearest example of this is that attempts to isolate one specific type of child molester have failed. Given that previous research has shown diversity among child molesters, this study examines the within-group differences among child molesters. The specific focus of the study is on differences among child molesters according to personality type as measured by the Jesness Inventory.

Utilizing a correlational design with a sample of 85 child molesters, this study does find some significant differences among child molesters based on personality type. First, Neurotic child molesters score the highest on both emotional and intellectual empathy, yet they score the lowest on self-esteem. Second, the Dependent child molesters score the highest on denial of blame. Third, the Situational child molesters score the lowest on emotional empathy. Factor Analysis results also show that personality may not be the most important factor in distinguishing among child molesters and that more personality types may be needed to adequately categorize these offenders. The study concludes with preliminary treatment suggestions for each of the personality types identified in the study.

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CHAPTER ONE

Year after year, hundreds of thousands of children are sexually molested in the United States. Public child protective agencies substantiated 126,095 cases of child sexual abuse in 1995; this translates into approximately 2 child victims per 1,000 children (American Humane Association, 1999). This figure does not include those cases that lacked sufficient evidence to substantiate the allegation, however. To illustrate, a 1995 Gallup Organization telephone survey found that 19 per 1,000 children had been sexually victimized (American Humane Association, 1999). Clearly, a larger number go undetected. For example, the ratio of self-reported sexual offenses to arrests for sexual offenses is approximately 25:1 (Elliott, Huizinga, and Morse, 1985). Of those who are caught, only a small proportion are convicted and sent to prison. The remaining molesters are typically mandated to attend treatment and remain in our communities, often with little supervision.

Increased awareness of child molestation and discomfort with the presence of child molesters in the community has prompted practitioners and researchers to seek out more effective methods of assessing and treating child molesters. This is especially relevant in light of research indicating that there is no single type of child molester or a single identifiable child molester personality (Knight, Rosenberg, and Schneider, 1985). The ability to assess important differences among various types of child molesters, therefore, puts researchers and practitioners in a better position from which to begin determining the role these differences play in the prognosis for treatment (Knight et al., 1985).

A review of the sex offender assessment literature finds two types of assessment strategies currently in use: a) those assessing the offender's probability of reoffending; and b) those examining the offender's personality traits. The Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) is the instrument that is most often used to assess the personality traits of child molesters.

Some criticize the use of this instrument for this purpose, however. For example, Butcher and Tellegen (1978) point out that the MMPI was originally designed to be a measure of psychopathology rather than a measure of general personality. Levin and Stava (1987) also highlight the limited potential of the MMPI as a measure of child molester personality traits. More specifically, research shows that there is so much diversity in child molester MMPI profiles that the MMPI is limited in its ability to help practitioners make practical, meaningful distinctions among child molesters (e.g., Erickson, Luxenberg, Walbek, and Seely, 1987; McAnulty, Adams, and Wright, 1994; Vaupel and Goeke, 1994). Because previous attempts to use the MMPI to illuminate distinctions among child molesters have not succeeded (Erickson et al., 1987; Levin and Stava, 1987; McAnulty et al., 1994; Vaupel and Goeke, 1994), practitioners are left without assessment tools needed to understand important personality differences among child molesters.

The absence of child molester assessment instruments is critical, since assessment instruments serve to separate heterogeneous groups of offenders into relatively homogeneous subgroups. This division of offender populations both highlights offender differences and improves our understanding of those differences. Acknowledgement of these differences subsequently puts us in a position to identify those factors relevant to

treatment planning. With adequate assessment and classification, correctional practitioners would be able to address the responsivity principle – delivering treatment in a manner that is compatible with each offender’s ability and style of learning and with each offender’s treatment needs (Andrews and Bonta, 1994).

Factors associated with responsivity have been documented in the correctional treatment literature and include such things as interpersonal sensitivity, anxiety, personality, verbal intelligence, and cognitive maturity (Andrews and Bonta, 1998). Research has also convincingly illustrated that correctional treatment programs that match offenders to treatment modalities based on these characteristics are more successful than those that treat offenders as if they are all alike (e.g., Andrews, Zinger, Hoge, Bonta, Gendreau, and Cullen, 1990; Jesness, 1975; Palmer, 1974; Van Voorhis, 1997; Warren, 1971). In other words, the research shows that a specific correctional intervention can have varying levels of success with offenders who have differing personalities, interpersonal styles, and developmental levels (Palmer, 1995).

This research also suggests that when we match offenders to treatments based on their individual characteristics, they perform better (Andrews et al., 1990; Jesness, 1975; Palmer, 1974; Van Voorhis, 1997; Warren, 1971). Consequently, many researchers and practitioners have been utilizing classification instruments to better categorize offenders in order to provide differential treatment. One instrument that is currently used to classify general offender populations is the Jesness Inventory (Jesness, 1996), an instrument derived from Warren’s work on I-Levels (Warren, 1966).

The Jesness Inventory is a paper-and-pencil test taken by the offender that requires approximately 30 minutes to complete. The test is written in simple language

and is completely objective (Jesness, 1988, 1996). This instrument assesses a number of personality characteristics, including an offender's Interpersonal Maturity Level and personality subtype (Jesness, 1996).

There is sufficient research to support the use of the Jesness Inventory with the general offender population. For example, this instrument is both reliable and valid for adult males (Jesness, 1996, 1988; Van Voorhis, 1994). The Jesness Inventory, however, has not yet been validated on specific subgroups of offenders, such as child molesters. Therefore, it is currently unknown whether the Jesness Inventory is able to make important distinctions among child molesters.

Even if we assume that the Jesness Inventory can make meaningful distinctions among child molesters, much remains unknown. For example, we know that an offender's personality type can affect whether he or she succeeds or fails in a specific type of treatment setting – outpatient versus residential, for example (e.g., Palmer, 1974). We do not know, however, how a child molester's personality type, as indicated by the Jesness Inventory, is related to his treatment prognosis or to the dynamics of his offending behavior.

The treatment implications for different types of child molesters are also unclear. Although previous research has suggested differing therapeutic approaches based on differing personality types, this research has focused on general offender populations (e.g., Jesness and Wedge, 1983; Warren et al., 1966; Van Voorhis and Sperber, 1999). We do not know whether the suggestions that have been made by previous researchers are applicable to child molesters. However, this is clearly an important issue for those working with child molesters. In fact, there is currently a debate among those working

with sex offenders as to what style of treatment is most appropriate – motivational or confrontational (Kear-Colwell and Pollock, 1997). However, perhaps a more appropriate debate should focus on which personality types would benefit most from motivational therapy and which personality types would benefit most from confrontational therapy.

In conclusion, given the consistent findings that general offenders respond differentially to correctional strategies, it is imperative that we continue to search for more effective ways of matching offenders to treatment programs so as to enhance our success. This is especially true with the hard-to-treat subgroups of offenders, such as child molesters. Psychological classification systems, such as the Jesness Inventory, provide a vehicle for exploring the differential treatment of child molesters. This is clearly an area needing additional research; however, if we can find a way to improve our success with the treatment of child molesters, we not only reduce the amount of harm experienced by victims each year, we reduce the costs to society as well.

Research Questions

This study attempts to fill in some of the gaps in the child molester literature by determining whether an existing offender typology – the Jesness Inventory – can be applied to child molesters. Assuming that the Jesness Inventory identifies a suitable range of I-levels and personality subtypes, this study will attempt to describe the resulting personality types as they pertain to child molesters. This study also seeks to highlight the relevance of these child molester subtypes for treatment planning. The overriding goal is to dispel the notion that child molesters are all alike and should be treated alike. Identifying relevant differences among child molesters will allow for the greater application of differential (i.e., more successful) and responsive treatment.

Given the goal of determining whether the Jesness Inventory is an effective classification tool for guiding the differential treatment of child molesters, a number of research questions present themselves. These questions are as follows:

1. Do the Jesness Inventory I-levels and personality subtypes differentiate among child molesters according to such important child molester characteristics as denial, empathy, cognitive distortions, and self-esteem? In other words, do the types correlate with these measures of child molester characteristics? For example, we may find that denial is higher among certain personality subtypes than others. Similarly, low self-esteem may be correlated to specific subtypes (most likely the neurotics). Furthermore, we may find that certain personality subtypes demonstrate distinct preferences for the age and gender of their victims. Finally, the presence of sexual victimization as a child and level of empathy may represent important identifying characteristics for particular personality subtypes.
2. How should the Jesness Inventory types be configured for their maximum usefulness? For example, do the Jesness Inventory types correspond to types formed by a factor analysis of key child molester attributes? More specifically, we need to decide if the utilization of all nine Jesness personality types will provide more useful distinctions than collapsing the types into a smaller grouping. This is an important consideration in light of recent research that tested the construct validity of five psychological classifications systems, including the Jesness

Inventory. In this study of adult male federal inmates, Van Voorhis (1994) found that the personality types across the five systems converged into five main types. Utilization of fewer types has the potential to simplify the process of differentiating among child molesters.

3. Do the Jesness Inventory types differentiate among child molesters according to their likelihood of reoffending or to their prognosis? In other words, do they correlate with child molesters' risk scores as measured by the Static-99 (Hanson, 2000)?
4. What are the treatment implications for each type as we consider their associated traits and prognosis?

Conclusion

Recent research convincingly illustrates that child molesters are a diverse group of offenders. The recognition of child molesters as a group of offenders who possess different characteristics and who experience treatment in different ways provides the impetus for pursuing a valid, effective method for classifying these individuals so that we may more effectively treat them. Ignoring the diversity of this group, however, and continuing to disregard responsivity considerations will only continue to feed the assumption that all sex offenders are alike. With this in mind, the present proposal outlines a project for examining whether the Jesness Inventory types can point to different types of child molesters. Following a review of the relevant literature in

Chapter 2, we present the proposed methodology for the study in Chapter 3. Results are then presented in Chapter 4 and discussed in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER TWO

Introduction

One branch of research on child molesters suggests that child molesters represent a distinct, homogeneous subgroup of offenders. Consequently, the first part of this chapter examines those characteristics said to be distinctive of child molesters. The chapter proceeds to review another branch of research, which suggests that there is more heterogeneity among child molesters than once thought. Acknowledging this diversity, some researchers have attempted to classify child molesters into more homogeneous subgroups. These subgroups are discussed in the following pages. A final section discusses the viability of using the Jesness Inventory to classify child molesters.

Prior to examining the literature on child molesters, however, it is important to note that many researchers distinguish between individuals who molest children within their families and individuals who molest children from outside of their families. Researchers refer to the former as incestuous molesters and to the latter as extrafamilial molesters. Some researchers have also suggested that the dynamics of offending are different for these two groups of child molesters. For example, Quinsey (1977) proposed that incestuous offenders are primarily situational offenders whose offenses are primarily due to family dynamics and opportunity rather than to a true sexual preference for children.

More recent research in this area, however, questions the notion that incestuous offenders do not experience sexual arousal to children and that they only molest within the family unit. For example, Abel, Becker, Murphy, and Flanagan (1981) found that 50% of the incestuous molesters they studied also molested children from outside of their

families. Based on their research, they also claim that most child molesters demonstrate some level of sexual arousal to children (Abel et al., 1981). Because of such findings, we will be treating the empirical literature on both incestuous and extrafamilial molesters as applicable to all child molesters.

Factors Associated With Child Molestering Behavior

In an attempt to guide treatment and prevention efforts, many researchers have sought to identify the key characteristics of child molesters. This research typically focuses on comparing child molesters to other groups of sex offenders or to groups of nonoffenders. This type of research reveals a number of characteristics common to child molesters as a group. These characteristics include denial of the abuse (French, 1988; Hayashino, Wurtele, and Klebe, 1995; Hunter and Santos, 1991; Lanyon, Dannenbaum, and Brown, 1991; Lanyon and Lutz, 1984), presence of cognitive distortions that assist the offender in minimizing or rationalizing the behavior (Becker, Kaplan, and Kavoussi, 1988; French, 1988; Hayashino et al., 1995; Hunter and Santos, 1991), low self-esteem (Groth and Birnbaum, 1978; Loss and Glancy, 1983; Simkins, 1993), the inability to empathize with their victims (Gilgun, 1988; Gilgun and Connor, 1989; Hayashino et al., 1995; Hunter and Santos, 1991; Williams and Finkelhor, 1990), and the presence of sexual victimization as a child (Finkelhor, 1984; Hunter et al., 1991; Hunter and Santos, 1991; Longo, 1982). In the following sections, we will discuss each of these characteristics in further detail.

Denial

Clearly, denial of the offense or denial of the extent of harm to the victim serves as a potential barrier to treatment effectiveness. Due to the importance of this issue,

researchers have sought to discover the degree to which child molesters are prone to denial. This has often taken the form of comparing child molesters to other types of offenders. For example, Nugent and Kroner (1996) compared child molesters to rapists and found that while the child molesters in the sample admitted to their offenses more often than did the rapists in the sample, the child molesters were significantly more likely to deny the extent of the offense. In contrast, the rapists were more likely to deny the extent of force used during the rape. Interestingly, Nugent and Kroner (1996) did not find the use of denial among child molesters to be related to socially desirable responding. Consequently, they hypothesized that denial may be an ingrained defense mechanism that the molester is unaware of possessing and that may lead to resistance to treatment.

Another approach taken by researchers is to compare molesters who admit to their offenses to those who deny their offenses. Lanyon and Lutz (1984) took this approach when they evaluated the ability of the MMPI to assess denial among men indicted or convicted of a sex-related felony. Their sample consisted of 90 males, 80% of whom had been charged with child molestation. They found that the MMPI was, in fact, able to discriminate between admitters and deniers and that there were characteristics distinctive of the two groups. For example, they found that those who admitted to the offense commonly utilized elaborate rationalizations to portray their behavior as not being immoral. Deniers, on the other hand, commonly claimed to possess a variety of psychological problems while insisting that sexual deviance was not among them. These findings are consistent with the results of a study by Scully (1996) in which she compared the characteristics of admitting rapists to denying rapists. Of course, the

findings by Lanyon and Lutz (1984) question the notion of homogeneity among child molesters.

Cognitive Distortions

Another characteristic common to child molesters that may interfere with treatment effectiveness is the presence of distortions in thinking that help the offender minimize or rationalize his behavior. These distortions include such thoughts as: (a) children can give informed consent to sex with adults; (b) children do not experience harm as a result of having sex with an adult; (c) children desire sexual contact with adults; and (d) the criminalization of sex between children and adults represents a capricious response by society (Mohr, Turner, and Jerry, 1964; Plummer, 1980, 1981; Righton, 1981). One potential problem with these characterizations of molesters' thinking styles, however, is that they are primarily anecdotal (Stermac and Segal, 1989). In other words, these descriptions rely on the perceptions of clinicians and social workers working in the field with child molesters.

While many reports of cognitive distortions among child molesters are anecdotal, there are some empirical studies that examine the extent to which child molesters possess these distortions in thinking. For example, several researchers have compared child molesters to control groups and have found that child molesters were significantly more likely than controls to believe that children desire to have sex with adults and to view sex with children as socially acceptable (Gore, 1988; Hayashino et al., 1995; Stermac and Segal, 1989). Similarly, Hanson, Gizzarelli, and Scott (1994) compared the attitudes of incest perpetrators to those of male batterers and to those of nonoffenders. They found

that the incest offenders reported more deviant attitudes; specifically, the incest offenders were more likely to endorse attitudes approving of male sexual entitlement.

Self-Esteem

A third characteristic common to child molesters is low self-esteem. Both practitioners and researchers have noted the lack of self-esteem among child molesters. For example, in their comparison of child molesters and rapists, Nugent and Kroner (1996) found that the child molesters were more concerned with what others thought about them than were the rapists. Similarly, upon comparing extrafamilial child molesters with rapists and nonsex offenders, Overholser and Beck (1986) found that the child molesters possessed a significantly higher fear of negative evaluation by others. Likewise, in a more recent study, Hayashino et al. (1995) also found the child molesters in their sample to have a greater fear of negative evaluation than the control groups. This study is more comprehensive than the Overholser and Beck (1986) study in that it included more comparison groups (i.e., rapists, nonsex offenders, and laypersons) and included both incestuous and extrafamilial molesters.

Empathy

A fourth characteristic common to child molesters is a lack of empathy. The role of empathy in child molestation is of much interest to researchers, however, much of the information regarding empathy among molesters has come from interviews with molesters rather than from standardized assessments (Hayashino et al., 1995). For example, Gilgun and Connor (1989) conducted life history interviews with molesters and concluded that the molesters viewed their victims as objects rather than as people. They

also suggested that the molesters were unable to empathize with the child's experience because of their focus on their own pleasure and feelings.

A lack of involvement in bonding activities with their children has also been suggested as evidence for a lack of empathy among incestuous fathers. For example, Williams and Finkelhor (1990) cite a study by Parker and Parker (1986) as evidence for a molesters' inability to empathize in which they found that incestuous fathers were more likely to avoid nurturing activities during the first three years of their children's lives than were controls.

Hayashino et al. (1995) took a different approach to this matter when they attempted to assess levels of empathy among child molesters by using a standardized assessment instrument. They hypothesized that the child molesters in the sample would score lower on the empathy scale than the control groups – rapists, nonsexual offenders, and laypersons. Interestingly, they found no significant differences among the groups on scores of empathy. They suggested that future research test whether molesters are simply deficient in empathy for children, specifically for child victims of molestation. In other words, molesters may not exhibit lower levels of general empathy but lower levels of empathy specific to their victims (Hayashino et al., 1995).

Prior Sexual Victimization

A final characteristic thought to be common to child molesters is the presence of sexual abuse as a child. For example, the amount of childhood victimization in child molester samples has ranged from 20% to 50% (Araji and Finkelhor, 1986). The exact role of childhood sexual abuse in later sexual deviance as an adult has been of great interest to researchers for some time and is a point of some debate. While many

researchers have pointed to childhood victimization as a possible correlate of adult sexual deviance (e.g., Becker, 1987; Groth, Hobson, and Gary, 1982; Howells, 1981; Ryan, Lane, Davis, and Isaac, 1987; Steele and Pollack, 1968; Storr, 1965), Lanyon (1986) points out that little empirical investigation has actually been conducted on this variable.

One such attempt to empirically examine the role of childhood victimization produced some interesting results. In their study, Spaccarelli, Bowden, Coatsworth, and Kim (1997) compared four groups of juvenile delinquents. These groups consisted of arrested sex offenders, self-reported sex offenders, nonsexual violent offenders, and low-violence controls. Upon comparing these four groups, they found that the “sexually aggressive” delinquents (i.e., the arrested sex offenders and self-reported sex offenders combined) were not significantly more likely to have been sexually victimized as a child than the low violence controls; however, they were significantly more likely to have experienced serious physical abuse as a child. They were also significantly more likely as a child to have been a witness to domestic violence involving weapons.

While some criticize the empirical evidence of an association between childhood sexual victimization and adult child molestation (Spaccarelli et al., 1997), a recent controlled study did find evidence of greater exposure to sexual victimization as a child among juvenile child molesters (Ford and Linney, 1995). Upon comparing a group of juvenile rapists, a group of nonsexual violent juvenile offenders, and a group of juvenile child molesters, Ford and Linney (1995) found that approximately 50% of the child molesters had been sexually victimized as children, while only 17% of the control groups had been victimized. One must keep in mind, however, that this study utilized small sample sizes (14 rapists, 21 nonsexual violent offenders, and 21 child molesters) and did

not utilize nonoffenders in the control groups. While this study provides some evidence for a correlation between childhood sexual victimization and adult molestation, it is clear that we still do not know the exact relationship between these two variables.

Child Molester Heterogeneity

Although much research has highlighted characteristics “common” to child molesters, more recent research convincingly shows that a distinct child molester personality does not exist. Consequently, some researchers are now attempting to seek out differences within groups of child molesters in an attempt to sort out various sources of heterogeneity among this group of offenders. Stermac, Davidson, and Sheridan (1995) took this approach in their study of nonsexual violence among incest offenders. They found that a large percentage of both the incest group and the comparison group engaged in physical, nonsexual violence directed at both their children and spouses. This contradicts previous research – research focusing on homogeneity – that has described molesters as passive, withdrawn, and nonviolent (Stermac et al., 1995).

Horley and Quinsey (1994) also confirmed that molesters are a heterogeneous group in their study of molesters’ cognitions. Using the Semantic Differential with 57 incarcerated child molesters, they found that molesters who had killed their victims were significantly more likely to describe males as seductive and deceitful than were the molesters who had utilized less violence.

Findings from studies attempting to utilize MMPI scores in the classification of child molesters also highlight the heterogeneity of child molesters as a group. For example, Hunter et al. (1991) studied 90 males who had admitted to molesting one or more children. They found that the molesters who reported being sexually abused as

children exhibited significantly greater pathology on the MMPI than those who did not report prior victimization as a child. They found the men who had been victimized as children to be suffering from more affectual distress, characterological disturbances, and identity conflicts.

Similarly, Vaupel and Goeke (1994) examined the MMPI profiles of incest offenders who admitted to the offense and incest offenders who denied the offense. They found that the incest perpetrator profiles differed significantly based on offense admission status. They note that this finding provides evidence for heterogeneity within the population of incest perpetrators. Also, due to the complex heterogeneity in MMPI profiles (i.e., too many distinctions) among the incest perpetrators, the authors concluded that the MMPI was not an appropriate tool for determining a unique profile for male incest offenders (Vaupel and Goeke, 1994).

Likewise, Erickson, Luxenberg, Walbek, and Seely (1987) compared the two-point MMPI codes of 403 convicted sex offenders and found no evidence to support any MMPI profile as typical of any sort of sex offender. For example, although they found “typical” codes within each of the various sex offender groups – rapists, child molesters, incest offenders, first offenders, and recidivists – these “typical” profiles made up no more than 21% of any given group. Furthermore, these profiles were commonly seen among the other groups. They also went on to note that none of the characteristics descriptive of the sex offenders in their sample were specific to sex offenders. In other words, the characteristics found to be common among the sex offenders were also common among nonoffenders as well.

In 1994, McAnulty, Adams, and Wright examined the relationship between the MMPI and penile plethysmograph in a sample of 90 males accused of molesting a prepubertal child and reached conclusions similar to those of Erickson et al. (1987). For example, they found that the MMPI did distinguish men who exhibited arousal to children from men who did not exhibit such arousal. However, the MMPI code types were equally distributed across groups. Furthermore, the MMPI incorrectly classified one third of the sample. Consequently, the researchers concluded that among child molesters, “[extreme] MMPI profile heterogeneity is the rule rather than the exception (p. 184).”

To sum, several researchers have attempted to use the MMPI to identify a unique child molester personality and have failed due to the heterogeneous nature of this population. However, researchers who have attempted to utilize the MMPI to make distinctions *among* child molesters have also failed. For example, Hall, Maiuro, Vitaliano, and Proctor (1986) attempted to use the MMPI to differentiate 406 men who had molested children based on a number of characteristics. These characteristics included gender of the victim, age of the victim, relationship to the victim, use of physical coercion, and rape. The MMPI was unable to differentiate among the child molesters based on these characteristics. Hall (1989) later confirmed these findings in an extension of the 1986 study.

While some studies have found certain distinct code-type clusters among child molesters (e.g., Duthie and McIvor, 1990), these profiles have not been consistently replicated (McAnulty et al., 1994). Furthermore, Shealy, Kalichman, Henderson, Szymanowski, and McKee (1991) point out that the MMPI was not created as a measure

of psychosexual functioning; therefore, it is not surprising that the MMPI would fail to yield useful distinctions among sex offenders.

Typologies

Another research approach that recognizes the heterogeneity within the child molester population is the development of typologies. By developing typologies, researchers are able to classify heterogeneous child molesters into homogeneous subgroups. A number of researchers have sought to create meaningful classifications of child molesters. A review of these typologies reveals that certain child molester “types” are common throughout the various classification schemes.

Two specific types of child molesters can be found in almost every child molester typology. The first is one who exhibits a long-standing preference for children as sexual partners (see Cohen, Boucher, Seghorn, and Mehegan, 1979; Fitch, 1962; Gebhard, 1965; Groth, 1978; Kopp, 1962; McCaghy, 1967; Swanson, 1971). The second is one whose molestation of children results from some type of stress or frustration. This type of molester typically prefers adult women but turns to a child during periods of extreme stress (see Cohen et al., 1979; Fitch 1962; Gebhard, 1965; Groth, 1978; Kopp, 1962; McCaghy, 1967; Swanson, 1971). A third type of molester who appears often in typologies is one whose molestation is marked by aggression or simply represents an extension of an antisocial personality (see Cohen et al., 1979; Fitch, 1962; Gebhard, 1965; Groth, 1978; Swanson, 1971). And finally, some typologies also allow for the inclusion of a molester whose behavior results from some type of mental defect or psychosis (see Fitch, 1962; Gebhard, 1965; Swanson, 1971).

Perhaps the most recognized and accepted categorization of child molesters is that seen in the work of Nicholas Groth and colleagues; this typology differentiates fixated from regressed child molesters. Fixated child molesters are attracted to children due to the arrestment of their sociosexual maturation (Groth, 1978). They are more likely to target both male victims (Simon, Sales, Kaszniak, and Kahn, 1992) and younger victims (McIvor and Duthie, 1986) and are seen as being very difficult to treat (Hunter, Childers, Gerald, and Esmaili, 1991). On the other hand, regressed child molesters are primarily attracted to adults. Their involvement with children represents a temporary departure from their otherwise “normal” sex lives. These molesters are more likely to be attracted to females (Simon et al., 1992) and to older victims (McIvor and Duthie, 1986) and are viewed as having a more favorable treatment prognosis (Hunter et al., 1991).

Although this typology has been widely accepted, an emerging body of research is beginning to question the efficiency of this typology since it forces a dichotomous label onto molesters who may not fit precisely into either category (Simon et al., 1992). In support of this criticism, Simon et al. (1992) found that the application of criteria defining fixated versus regressed status produced a continuous distribution of child molesters rather than a bimodal distribution. Gibbens, Soothill, and Way (1980) have also suggested that this typology fails to take into account that much reoffending may be sporadic and situational with reconviction occurring many years after the original offense.

Due to the criticisms and apparent shortcomings of current child molester typologies, some researchers are now seeking out new ways to classify child molesters. One possible approach is to take an existing classification system for general offenders

and to apply it to child molesters to see if it can produce meaningful distinctions among child molesters. Since there is research to support the reliability and validity of many of these systems with general offender populations, it makes sense to test their applicability to specific subgroups of offenders, such as child molesters.

Correctional Classification

There are a number of offender classification systems that attempt to differentiate among heterogeneous offender populations. These systems tend to be of two types – those that group offenders together based on actuarial risk scores and those which group offenders together based on shared personality, behavioral, or developmental attributes (Van Voorhis, 1994). The former type of classification system tends to be used to assign offenders to various supervision levels or living units within correctional settings based on security issues, while the latter type of classification system tends to be used to match offenders to appropriate treatment modalities based on psychological, developmental, or personality characteristics.

The focus of this paper will be on psychological classification systems, since these systems are most often associated with treatment planning. In this discussion, these psychological classification systems will be divided into two categories: (1) typologies that have been derived from empirical observations and (2) typologies that have been deduced from an underlying theoretical framework. Examples of the former include Quay's AIMS typology and Megargee's MMPI-based taxonomy (Van Voorhis, 1994).

In both Quay's Adult Internal Management System (AIMS) and Megargee's MMPI-based taxonomy, offender types have emerged empirically. For example, offender types found in the Quay's AIMS developed as a result of factor or cluster

analysis (Quay, 1984), while the offender types contained in the Megargee system come from research identifying the profile configurations most common among offenders (Megargee and Bohn, 1979). Both systems require the completion of paper-and-pencil instruments; however, staff completes the AIMS forms, while the inmates complete the MMPI.

Under Quay's AIMS, scores are generated on personality and behavioral dimensions. The offenders' scores result from the completion of two objective instruments. One instrument is completed by a staff member who knows the inmate and his/her behavior, while the other is completed by a staff member using the inmate's background reports. The resultant scores are then used to sort offenders into one of five types. These five types are the Asocial Aggressive, Immature Dependent, Manipulative, Neurotic Anxious, and Situational (Quay, 1983, 1984).

The Megargee MMPI-based typology, on the other hand, yields ten different offender types. The type assigned to an individual depends on his/her scores on such traits as depression, hysteria, masculinity-femininity, paranoia, and psychopathic deviate (Van Voorhis, 1994). These scores are then sorted into one of ten types based on the various profile configurations. The ten types are: Item, Easy, Baker, Able, George, Delta, Jupiter, Foxtrot, Charlie, and How. Megargee purposely chose nondescript labels so that the behavioral characteristics of each type could be empirically identified; in other words, he did not want the labels to bias the descriptions of the types.

Theoretical typologies differ from such empirical systems as the Quay's AIMS and Megargee MMPI in both their analytic procedures and underlying assumptions (Van Voorhis, 1994). Examples of such theoretical models include the Conceptual Level and

the Interpersonal Maturity Level (I-Level). Both the Conceptual Level and the Interpersonal Maturity Level are based in cognitive developmental theory. Both systems focus on *how* people think rather than on what they think, and both systems place the cognitive types on developmental continuums that range from the least complex to the most complex thinking styles.

Developmental systems such as these share a number of assumptions (see Harvey, Hunt, and Schroder, 1961; Kohlberg, 1958; Loevinger, 1966; Sullivan, Grant, and Grant, 1957). These assumptions, as outlined by Van Voorhis (1994), are as follows: (a) although an individual's choices may differ across situations, the underlying logic utilized to make those choices appears to be consistent; (b) the stages contained within the systems follow a set, uniform order; (c) stages cannot be skipped during the progression of development; (d) stages become increasingly complex as one progresses through the developmental; and (e) each stage is based on the previous one and is necessary for progression to the subsequent stage.

Unlike Interpersonal Maturity Level, the Conceptual Level was not originally designed for use with offenders; this system was originally proposed as a general theory of personality development and was intended for use in educational settings. This system utilizes individuals' responses to the Paragraph Completion Method (PCM) (Hunt, Butler, Noy, and Rosser, 1978) to obtain a score of 0, 1, 2, or 3. These scores reflect where individuals fall on a continuum of conceptual complexity, social maturity, self-responsibility, and independence (Van Voorhis, 1994). Scores for the responses to the PCM are averaged to come up with one of four types.

Like other classification systems discussed here, I-Level is also a classification approach that recognizes that offender populations are heterogeneous (Palmer, 1974; Reitsma-Street and Zager, 1986; Warren, 1966, 1971). This assessment procedure is designed to measure interpersonal maturity; in other words, it measures how one understands what is happening between others as well as what is happening between others and oneself (Warren, 1966).

There are seven stages of interpersonal maturity development, ranging from the interpersonal reactions of an infant to the ideal level of interpersonal maturity, which is rarely achieved (Warren, 1966). Research has shown that most offenders fall between stages 2 (I2) and 5 (I5), with the bulk of offenders residing at stages 3 (I3) and 4 (I4). While the I-Levels are theoretically based, the personality subtypes contained within each level are empirically based (Warren, 1966). These personality subtypes include the Asocial Aggressive, Asocial Passive, Immature Conformist, Cultural Conformist, Manipulator, Neurotic Acting-Out, Neurotic Anxious, Cultural Identifier, and Situational-Emotional Reaction (Harris, 1988; Reitsma-Street and Zager, 1986; Van Voorhis, 1994; Warren, 1966).

I-Level and the Jesness Inventory

I-Level diagnosis originally required a one- to two-hour semi-structured interview of the offender by a trained clinician; the goal of the interview was to determine how the respondent perceived his or her environment (Reitsma-Street and Zager, 1986). I-Level can now be more easily obtained, however, through the use of the Jesness Inventory, a self-administered paper-and-pencil test.

While the Jesness classification system was derived from the earlier work on I-Levels, it does not yield identical results. For example, the Jesness Inventory does not incorporate the I5 type. Also, the Jesness personality type descriptions, while similar, are not identical. For example, under the Jesness system, Cultural Identifiers are not viewed as possessing a criminal orientation. Under the interview method, however, Cultural Identifiers are diagnosed as possessing an antisocial value system assumed to have been learned in a delinquent subculture (Van Voorhis, 1994).

Jesness Personality Subtypes

According to the descriptions provided by Jesness (1988), there are two personality subtypes contained within I-Level 2. At this level, individuals perceive the world from a thoroughly egocentric viewpoint in which others are either “givers” or “withholders” (Warren, 1966). The two types found at this level are the Asocial Aggressive and the Asocial Passive. Both of these personality types come from deprived backgrounds and exhibit negative attitudes toward family and school. They both also engage in nonconforming, inappropriate behavior. The main difference between the two personality types is that the Asocial Aggressive exhibits more aggressive and intrusive behavior, possesses a delinquent orientation, and has high self-reported criminal behavior. The Asocial Passive, on the other hand, tends to have poor peer relations and a negative self-concept (Jesness, 1988). It would be unusual to find any I2 offenders in an adult offender population (as opposed to juvenile populations).

At I-Level 3, there are three personality subtypes. At this level, individuals see the world in terms of black and white, are unable to empathize with others, and have yet to develop an internalized value system (Warren, 1966). The three personality subtypes

at this level are the Immature Conformist, the Cultural Conformist, and the Manipulator. The Immature Conformist and the Manipulator are similar in that they both have generally positive attitudes toward school and possess a positive self-concept. They differ, however, in that the Immature Conformist often exhibits conforming behavior and low self-reported criminal behavior. This offender is typically referred to as a “follower” (Jesness, 1988). The Manipulator, however, often engages in manipulative, obtrusive behavior and presents an inconsistency between self-reported criminal behavior and official reports of crime. The Cultural Conformist tends to come from a deprived background and possesses negative attitudes toward school, adults, and authority. This offender tends to be alienated, distrustful, and hostile (Jesness, 1988). This offender also is immersed in a delinquent environment; he or he typically possesses a delinquent orientation, associates with other criminals, and has high self-reported criminal behavior (Jesness, 1988).

At I-Level 4, there are four personality subtypes. At this level, individuals have internalized a set of values, have begun to develop some level of empathy for others, and can differentiate themselves from the stereotyped standard (Warren, 1966). The four personality types at this level are the Neurotic Acting-Out, the Neurotic Anxious, the Situational, and the Cultural Identifier. Of these four personalities, three of them share many similarities. These are the Neurotic Anxious, the Situational, and the Cultural Identifier. These three personality types share positive attitudes toward school, generally conforming behavior, and low rates of crime. Both the Situational and the Cultural Identifier also tend to possess a positive self-concept, tend to be confident, and tend to have good interpersonal relationships, while the Neurotic Anxious tends to be

perturbable, anxious, and insecure with family and interpersonal conflicts (Jesness, 1988).

The Neurotic Acting-Out subtype differs the most from the other personalities found within I-Level 4. This offender exhibits negative attitudes toward school and authority. Although this offender typically possesses an above average verbal aptitude and presents himself or herself as adequate and independent, this offender often is provocative, nonconforming, highly anxious, and involved in a high amount of criminal behavior. This offender is also commonly cynical and disenchanting (Jesness, 1988).

The Jesness Inventory and Adult Offenders

All of the classification systems identified in this paper were tested in Van Voorhis's (1994) Prison Classification Study. This study took place in two federal prisons in Indiana and involved 369 federal adult male inmates. Upon conclusion of the study, Van Voorhis (1994) reported the least amount of difficulty in administering the Jesness Inventory. She also reported that the Jesness Inventory was able to make meaningful distinctions among the inmates.

In testing the construct validity of the five classification systems, Van Voorhis (1994) found that the 32 personality types that resulted across the systems converged into five main personality types. These five personality types were the Committed Criminal, the Neurotic Acting-Out, the Neurotic Anxious, the Dependent, and the Situational (Van Voorhis, 1994).

The first personality type, the Committed Criminal, fits the stereotype of the "typical" criminal; this offender is oriented toward crime, has many criminal peers, and often has a lengthy prior record (Van Voorhis and Sperber, 1999). The Neurotic Acting-

Out offender, on the other hand, is highly anxious and his anxiety is clearly linked to his criminality. This particular offender has a strong need for others to see him as in control, whereas the Neurotic Anxious offender is more likely to handle anxiety through self-control and contemplation (Van Voorhis and Sperber, 1999). When examining the fourth type of offender – the Dependent – one does not see a clear picture. However, Van Voorhis and Sperber (1999) describe this offender as one requiring a highly structured environment with clear rules and expectations. Finally, the Situational offender can be described as one who is prosocial, is not comfortable with his criminal behavior and typically has a minimal or no prior record. This offender typically engages in crime as a result of some adversity (Van Voorhis and Sperber, 1999). As a result of this convergence of types, Van Voorhis (1994) subsequently recommended that practitioners consider utilizing these five types in order to simplify the classification process.

I-Level and Responsivity

Psychological factors have long been a focus of offender treatment planning. The psychological systems discussed here are all examples of psychologically-based classification systems that share a common purpose – they all serve the function of separating offender populations into relatively homogeneous subgroups based on personality, behavioral, or developmental attributes (Van Voorhis, 1994).

Psychologically based classification systems are important because they identify responsivity factors. As stated earlier, responsivity refers to matching treatment methods and settings to an offender's abilities and learning style. Consequently, responsivity factors are those characteristics that can either interfere with or facilitate learning.

According to Kennedy (1999), responsivity factors can be either internal or external. Internal factors refer to characteristics of individuals. These include such characteristics as motivation, personality, anxiety, self-esteem, concrete-oriented thinking, inadequate problem-solving skills, age, gender, and race/ethnicity (Kennedy, 1999). External factors, on the other hand, refer to the characteristics of treatment settings and treatment providers (Kennedy, 1999).

Psychologically based classification systems, such as the Jesness Inventory, assess internal responsivity factors. For example, the Jesness Inventory allows us to assess the differing personality types of offenders. Within this assessment, we are also able to distinguish among offenders based on their differing levels of anxiety, self-esteem, and cognitive ability. This assessment is crucial, because it allows us to identify the factors that might mediate the effectiveness of subsequent treatment (Kennedy, 1999). These same factors may also impact external responsivity by interacting with the treatment setting or providers (Kennedy, 1999). For example, highly anxious offenders may perform better in certain treatment settings, or certain staff members may be better able to work with highly anxious clients than other staff members.

Consequently, by identifying pertinent responsivity factors, the Jesness Inventory has the potential to guide the treatment of offenders. More specifically, by distinguishing the responsivity characteristics specific to child molesters, the Jesness Inventory has the potential to begin to guide practitioners in their efforts to individualize the treatment of child molesters so that child molesters are appropriately matched to treatment setting, style, and staff. This, in turn, should lead to the more effective treatment of this subgroup of offenders.

Conclusion

In summary, this chapter has identified key aspects of personality integral to any discussion of child molester personality types. These aspects of personality are self-esteem, empathy, denial, and cognitive distortions. The empirical relationships between these variables and personality types as measured by the Jesness Inventory will be examined in the remaining chapters.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodological Strategy

Introduction

Chapter One identified four research questions to be addressed by a correlational study between Jesness Inventory personality types and key dependent variables measuring child molester characteristics and their likelihood of reoffending. The study assessed a sample of 85 child molesters (currently in treatment) on the Jesness Inventory and other relevant variables. This chapter discusses the research sample, measures and assessments, and data analysis strategies.

Research Setting

Participants for this study were selected from three correctional treatment programs in Ohio. The first program was Southeast, Incorporated. At the time of this study, Southeast, Incorporated was a large sex offender treatment program providing outpatient treatment to adult male sex offenders currently under correctional supervision in Columbus, Ohio; all treatment recipients were either on probation or parole at the time of treatment. The program served approximately 400 sex offenders each year; at least 50% had committed offenses against children. The average length of stay in the program was two years.

During their time at Southeast, Incorporated, clients spent the majority of time in group therapy with staff who utilized a cognitive-behavioral approach. Individual therapy was used occasionally with clients who refused to admit to their offenses. Individuals who refused to admit to their offenses engaged in six individual sessions

dealing with issues of denial. If the individual still failed to admit to the offense(s) upon completion of these six sessions, program staff referred him back to the court system.

The second program was Volunteers of America (VOA) in Mansfield, Ohio. At the time of this study, the Mansfield VOA program was operating a 71-bed residential program for male sex offenders. Referrals were received from the Ohio Adult Parole Authority, County Adult Probation Departments, and Common Pleas Courts. The program offered two tracks for sex offenders, one for low risk offenders and one for medium to high risk offenders. The medium to high risk treatment track lasted for a minimum of one year.

The third program was the Volunteers of America (VOA) in Cincinnati, Ohio. At the time of this study, the Cincinnati VOA was operating a 25-bed residential program for male sex offenders. Like the other two programs, referrals came from probation and parole departments as well as from Common Pleas Court. The primary treatment modality was cognitive –behavioral treatment.

Sample

A sample of 85 child molesters was accessed through the three treatment programs. This took place between October of 2001 and November of 2002. Every child molester currently in treatment at the time of the study had the potential of being included in the sample. This cohort is intended to represent clients typically received into these programs.

Given that participants were not randomly selected for inclusion in the study, it is not possible to estimate whether the sample is representative of all child molesters. Indeed, most child molesters do not come through the criminal justice system (Elliott et

al., 1985). However, the sample should reflect the types of individuals that practitioners typically encounter in treatment settings. In doing so, this study hopes to have practical value for the field.

Clients of the participating programs were approached by their therapists about participating in the study. The purpose of the study was then explained to them. They were told that participation involved completing 5 self-report scales and that there would be no monetary compensation for their involvement if they chose to participate. They were also told that some information from their case files would be collected. The researcher then set up a time to meet with interested clients.

Prior to participating in the study, the researcher met with potential participants to verbally describe the requirements of participation. The researcher also explained the following to the potential participants: (a) that their participation was voluntary; (b) that they were free to withdraw at any time during the study with no consequences; (c) that agreeing or declining to participate would not affect the course or length of their treatment; and (d) that agreeing or declining to participate would not affect the length of time they spent under correctional supervision. Once participants indicated that they understood the requirements of participation and agreed to participate, they signed an Informed Consent Form.¹

Due to the nature in which clients entered treatment at the three programs, the study participants were in various stages of treatment. For example, some men were recent admissions to the program, while others were farther along in the program. Since it was possible that treatment dosage might impact the results of the analyses, length of

¹ These procedures were approved by the University of Cincinnati Human Subjects Committee on 5/16/01.

time in treatment was included in the analyses to determine if it was related to other key research variables.

Measures

Upon signing the Informed Consent Form, each respondent completed a series of assessments. These surveys included the Jesness Inventory (Jesness, 1996), Abel and Becker's Cognitions Scale (Abel, Becker, and Cunningham-Rathner, 1984), Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), the Sex Offence Information Questionnaire-Revised (Hogue, 1998), and Davis's Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1983). These surveys measured the primary variables of interest – personality type, cognitive distortions, self-esteem, denial, and empathy. All of these scales were self-administered and took no more than 1.5 hours to complete. Study participants completed the surveys at the treatment agency. In addition, the researcher collected data from each participant's case file; these data included demographics on both the offender and his victim(s) as well as the participant's Static-99 results.

Independent Measure

Jesness Inventory. The Jesness Inventory is a self-report instrument designed to assess the respondent's Interpersonal Maturity Level (I-Level) and personality type. While the Jesness Inventory was originally developed for use with male delinquents, empirical data also support its use with male adults (Jesness, 1988, 1996; Van Voorhis, 1994). This instrument has eleven clinical scales² and nine scales identifying personality subtypes. As noted earlier, the nine personality subtypes were the focus of this study. They are as follows: Asocial Aggressive, Asocial Passive, Immature Conformist, Cultural

² . These eleven scales are: Social Maladjustment, Value Orientation, Immaturity, Autism, Alienation, Manifest Aggression, Withdrawal-Depression, Social Anxiety, Repression, Denial, and the Asocial Index.

Conformist, Manipulator, Neurotic Acting-Out, Neurotic Anxious, Cultural Identifier, and Situational-Emotional Reaction. These nine types were then collapsed into four types – Aggressive, Situational, Neurotic, and Dependent.

Research shows the Jesness Inventory to be both a reliable and valid instrument. For example, test-retest reliability was demonstrated when the Jesness Inventory was administered to a sample of seventh grade students in the spring of 1977 and then again in the spring of 1978. At the second administration, 48% of the sample received the same primary personality subtype and 65% received the same I-Level, yielding a test-retest correlation of .65 (Jesness, 1988).

Evidence of validity of the Jesness Inventory is available from both delinquent and nondelinquent samples as well as from adult male inmates. For example, Jesness and Wedge (1984) examined a sample of 1,131 male delinquents in California. They examined the following variables in relation to the Jesness personality subtypes - attitudes toward family and friends, attitudes toward school, attitudes toward neighborhood, staff ratings on the Jesness Behavior Checklist, self-reported delinquency, and number of post-release offenses. Analyses revealed that the personality subtypes differed significantly in expected ways (Jesness and Wedge, 1984). Other studies demonstrating evidence of the validity of the Jesness Inventory include two studies showing the scale's ability to discriminate between delinquents and nondelinquents (Martin, 1981; Punjab, 1983) as well as a study examining the cross-validity of the Jesness Inventory and the Rorschach (Pinkerman, 1995).

While most of the validation studies of the Jesness Inventory have been conducted with juvenile samples, Van Voorhis (1994) chose to assess the validity of the instrument

with adult male inmates. In this study, Van Voorhis examined the validity of the Jesness Inventory along with four other psychological classification systems – Megargee’s MMPI-Based Typology (Megargee and Bohn, 1979), Quay’s Adult Internal Management System (Quay, 1983, 1984), Interpersonal Maturity Level (interview method) (Sullivan, Grant, and Grant, 1957; Warren and Staff of the Community Treatment Project, 1966), and Conceptual Level (Hunt, Butler, Noy, and Rosser, 1978). In support of the construct validity of the instrument, the Jesness personality subtypes correlated with the personality subtypes of the other four instruments in theoretically meaningful ways. In other words, similar personality subtypes often correlated with one another, while dissimilar personality subtypes often did not (Van Voorhis, 1994). This study also supported the predictive validity of the instrument. For example, the results of the study showed that the personality types were often significantly correlated with measures of official infractions, self-reported disciplinary problems, and staff ratings of disciplinary problems (Van Voorhis, 1994).

Dependent Measures

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale is one of the most frequently used measures of global self-esteem (Crandall, 1973; Gray-Little, Williams, and Hancock, 1997; Shevlin, Bunting, and Lewis, 1995). The scale was originally developed for use with adolescents and was first tested on a large sample of New York high school students (Rosenberg, 1965). It is a self-report measure comprised of 10 items and requires a fifth grade reading level to complete. Originally developed for use with adolescents, the scale has been the subject of numerous studies with both adolescent and adult populations.

A number of researchers have examined the reliability and validity of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and have found the instrument to be psychometrically sound. For example, in a test of the scale's internal validity, Ward (1977) found a coefficient alpha of .72, while Fleming and Courtney (1984) found a coefficient alpha of .88. These studies involved both college undergraduates and older adult men. In addition, research has shown the scale to have adequate test-retest reliability with coefficients ranging from a low of .50 (McCarthy and Hoge, 1984) to a high of .82 (Fleming and Courtney, 1984). As expected, lower coefficients were found in the studies using longer intervals between administrations (e.g. one year versus one week).

The scale also possesses obvious face validity (Gray-Little, Williams, and Hancock, 1997) as well as concurrent and construct validity. For example, Francis and Wilcox (1995) found that scores on the Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale correlated moderately with scores on the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Scale. In addition, Francis and James (1996) found that high self-esteem, as measured by the Rosenberg scale, was correlated with high extraversion and low neuroticism. Given these findings, we would expect to find higher self-esteem among the Committed Criminal types, such as the Cultural Conformist and the Manipulator, and lower self-esteem among the Neurotic types (i.e., Neurotic Anxious and Neurotic Acting-Out).

The Interpersonal Reactivity Index. Researchers have commonly recognized two broad types of empathy. The first type is intellectual empathy. This is the component that allows one to understand another's perspective (Davis, 1983). The second type is emotional empathy. This is the component that results in an emotional reaction to another; this emotional reaction is often manifested as some sort of helping behavior

(Davis, 1983). Because of this dichotomous view of empathy, most research has focused exclusively on one type of empathy to the exclusion of the other. The Interpersonal Reactivity Index, however, is a measure that purports to encompass both views of empathy. This is important as we may find that child molesters are likely to be deficient in one type of empathy but not the other.

The Interpersonal Reactivity Index is a 28-item self-report measure comprised of 4 subscales. These subscales are the Perspective Taking scale, the Fantasy scale, the Empathic Concern scale, and the Personal Distress scale. The Perspective Taking scale and the Fantasy scale both represent the cognitive aspect of empathy. More specifically, the Perspective Taking scale represents one's ability to naturally embrace the psychological point of view of another, while the Fantasy scale represents one's ability to imaginatively experience the feelings and actions of fictitious characters, such as characters in a book or movie (Davis, 1983).

The Empathic Concern scale and the Personal Distress scale, on the other hand, represent the emotional component of empathy. For example, the Empathic Concern scale measures feelings of concern directed at others, while the Personal Distress scale measures the amount of personal anxiety or discomfort experienced by oneself when faced with another's distress (Davis, 1983). While we believe that certain Jesness personality types will score lower on overall empathy (e.g., Cultural Conformists and Manipulators), we are especially interested in the Personal Distress scale and how it relates to the Jesness personality types in light of the hypothesis that child molesters may be deficient only in empathy toward their victims and not deficient in empathy in general (Hayashino et al., 1995).

To illustrate the Interpersonal Reactivity Index's concurrent validity, Davis (1983) tested the relationship between his scale and two other measures of empathy – the Mehrabian and Epstein Emotional Empathy Scale (1972) and the Hogan Empathy Scale (1969). While the Mehrabian and Epstein scale measures the emotional component of empathy, the Hogan scale measure the cognitive aspect of empathy. As expected, Davis (1983) found that the Mehrabian and Epstein Emotional Empathy Scale was positively correlated with the Fantasy scale and the Empathic Concern scale of the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI). In addition, he found that the Hogan scale was positively correlated with the Perspective Taking scale but negatively correlated with the Personal Distress scale.

Davis (1983) also went on to test the relationships between the four IRI subscales and 5 related constructs. These constructs were social competence/interpersonal functioning, self-esteem, emotionality, sensitivity to others, and intelligence. The results of these tests supported the construct validity of the IRI. For example, Davis (1983) found Perspective Taking to correlate with less social dysfunction and more social competence. Also as expected, Perspective Taking was related to higher self-esteem. This would suggest that the Neurotic types may score lower on this subscale. The Fantasy scale, on the other hand, was related to verbal intelligence and emotionality and was unrelated to self-esteem or social functioning. Empathic Concern was related to emotionality and a selfless concern for others. Finally, high scores on Personal Distress were correlated with higher levels of social dysfunction, low self-esteem, uncertainty, and fearfulness. Given these findings, we would expect to find that the Neurotic types score higher on this subscale than some of the other Jesness personality subtypes.

Sex Offence Information Questionnaire Revised (SOIQ-r). The SOIQ-r is a self-report measure of denial among sex offenders (Hogue, 2001). This 43-item scale yields an overall score of denial as well as scores on four subscales. These subscales consist of Denial of Victim Harm, Denial of Sexual Motivation, Denial of Responsibility, and Denial of Treatment Need.

The subscales of the SOIQ-r assess the extent to which the sex offender: (a) blames his victim for the offense, (b) minimizes harm to his victim(s), (c) endorses or denies that there is a sexual motivation for his offending behavior, (d) attributes the cause of his offending behaviors to external factors, and (e) acknowledges or fails to acknowledge a need for treatment . For all of the subscales, as well as for the overall score, higher scores indicate greater denial (Hogue, 2001). Coefficient alphas (internal validity) for the subscales range from .73 to .91 (Hogue, 1998).

This scale also has adequate validity as demonstrated by Hogue in his 1998 validity study. For this study, Hogue examined 247 sex offenders who had committed offenses against children. Of the 247 offenders in the sample, 73% had victimized a child under the age of 14 during the most recent offense, and 79% had victimized female children (Hogue, 1998).

Hogue's (1998) analyses showed that the scale and its subscales were related to other measures of attitude/personality in meaningful ways. For example, denial of harm to the victim was positively correlated with endorsement of rape myths, endorsement of adult sex with children (i.e., endorsement of cognitive distortions), and Machiavellianism. Denial of a sexual motive, on the other hand, was positively correlated with defensiveness but negatively related to endorsement of rape myths and

endorsement of adult sex with children. Further analyses also revealed that denial of responsibility for the offense was positively correlated with neuroticism and child fixations but negatively correlated with self-esteem. This suggests that denial of responsibility would be higher among the Neurotic personality types. Finally, analyses revealed that denial of a need for treatment was positively correlated with aggression and Machiavellianism and negatively correlated with extroversion and social confidence (Hogue, 1998).

Hogue's (1998) analyses also demonstrated that the subscales of the SOIQ-r were related to several dimensions of deviant arousal as well as to dimensions of the offending behavior. For example, he found that the subscales correlated with the following dimensions of deviant arousal: (a) arousal to rape, (b) arousal based on age and gender of the victim, and (c) arousal to the use of aggression during the offense. He also found that the scale was related to previous criminal history variables as well as to the relationship between the offender and his victim. For example, offenders who knew their victims were more likely to deny harm to the victim and were more likely to deny a sexual motive; they were slightly less likely, however, to deny responsibility for the offense (Hogue, 1998).

While other measures of denial exist (most notably the Denial subscale of the MMPI), this measure was chosen for several reasons. The first reason is that this scale is specifically designed to measure denial associated with sexual offending; it is not a measure of global denial. The second reason is that the instrument is self-report. This reduces the amount of time required for administration. The third reason is that the

instrument requires no special training for administration or scoring. Overall, this measure of denial best meets the needs of this project.

Static-99. The ideal test of the predictive validity of the Jesness Inventory would entail a follow-up, recidivism study of these offenders upon their release from supervision. Unfortunately, time and cost precluded such a study. As a somewhat compromised alternative, the present study assessed relationships between the Jesness Inventory and the offender's assessed risk of completing future offenses as measured by the Static 99.

The Static-99 is a standardized risk assessment instrument used to predict the probability that an offender will commit a sexual offense in the future (Hanson, 2000). The scale, which is comprised of ten items, is based on two earlier risk assessments – the Rapid Risk Assessment for Sex Offence Recidivism (RRASOR) and Thornton's Structured Anchored Clinical Judgement (SACJ). The scale assesses the following areas: history of previous sex offenses, history of previous sentencing, history of convictions for nonsexual offenses, index nonsexual violence, previous nonsexual violence, whether the victim was a relative, whether the victim was a stranger, gender of the victim(s), age of the offender, and marital status of the offender. Higher scores on the scale indicate a greater probability that the offender will commit a sexual offense in the future (Phenix, Hanson, and Thornton, 2000).

In 2000, Hanson and Thornton compared the predictive validity of the RRASOR, the SACJ, and the Static-99 across four different samples of adult males from Canada and the United Kingdom. The samples were drawn from the following populations: (a) sex offenders from a maximum security psychiatric hospital that received treatment between

1978 and 1993; (b) child molesters from a maximum security correctional institution that were released between 1958 and 1974; (c) sex offenders from a maximum security mental health program who were assessed and/or received treatment between 1972 and 1993; and (d) 563 sex offenders from Her Majesty's Prison Service who were released in 1979. Across all four of the samples, the Static-99 demonstrated greater predictive accuracy than either the RRASOR or the SACJ. This was true for the prediction of sexual recidivism as well as for the prediction of violent recidivism. The instrument was also able to predict recidivism equally well for both rapists and child molesters (Hanson and Thornton, 2000). Given that the Committed Criminal types are more likely to have an extensive prior record, these personality types should have higher Static-99 scores than other personality types (e.g., the Situational type) since 4 of the 9 items on the Static-99 yield higher scores for previous offenses.

Abel and Becker Cognitions Scale. The Abel and Becker Cognitions Scale was developed in 1984 to assess the distorted thoughts and attitudes held by sex offenders. The goal of the scale is to assess the extent to which an offender rationalizes or justifies his sexual offense against a child. The scale is comprised of 29 items. The number of cognitions endorsed is then recorded for each participant.

Data Analysis

The first phase of the data analysis involved generating descriptive statistics for each of the relevant variables. The next step employed measures of association, where appropriate, to determine whether any significant relationships existed between each of the relevant variables – denial, cognitions, self-esteem, and empathy – and the Jesness personality subtypes. In some cases (e.g., with a collapse of the personality types),

analysis of variance was used to assess the relationship between the personality types and the test data to examine significant differences between the groups of child molesters.

Analysis of variance was also used to examine the relationship between personality and risk of future offending (based on Static-99 results). In instances where it was necessary to control for other participant attributes and length of stay, that were also related to the dependent variable of interest, analysis of covariance was used.

The next step in the analysis was to determine whether personality type contributed to explaining differences among child molesters beyond other offense related variables known to differentiate child molesters. To this end, logistic regression was used to test the relationship between personality type and factors pertaining to the respondents' current and prior record when the dependent variable was nominal. Multiple regression was used in those instances where the dependent variable was interval. Again, demographic factors and length of stay in treatment were entered in as control variables when they were found to be related to the dependent variable in question. The final step of the study utilized factor analytic techniques to determine the ideal number of types needed to adequately differentiate among child molesters. The goal of this analysis was to examine whether personality type could meaningfully contribute to a typology of child molesters.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study proposed to examine personality differences among child molesters. The first step involved using the Jesness Inventory to assess the personality types of the child molesters in the study. The second step involved testing the relationships between the various personality types and known child molester

characteristics to see if it was possible to identify meaningful subgroups among child molesters.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Findings

Introduction

Chapters One and Two identified a number of gaps in the existing child molester literature. While much is known about the differences between child molesters and other types of sex offenders as well as non-offenders, much is still unknown about important differences *among* child molesters. This chapter presents the findings from the univariate and multivariate analyses conducted in order to answer the four research questions posed in Chapter One³.

Demographic Characteristics

As illustrated in Table 1, the child molesters in this sample differ from general offender samples in several ways (e.g., Durose and Langan, 2003). For example, the overwhelming majority were Caucasian (78.6%). Many of them had graduated from high school (64.4%), with about a quarter of the sample possessing at least some college education (25.3%). In addition, two thirds of the sample were employed at the time of their arrest (66.7%). They were also older than typical non-sex offender samples with a mean age of 37. One characteristic that they did share with general offender samples was that the majority of them were single and had never been married (60.7%).

Criminal Risk Characteristics

Tables 2 and 3 contain the criminal risk and offense characteristics. As can be seen in Table 2, Static-99 results revealed that just over half of the respondents (53.1%)

³ Some missing data were replaced using mean replacement (e.g., one case was missing the client's age) or by predicting the missing value with a regression equation (e.g., one case was missing length of stay).

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Child Molesters (N=88)

	n	%
Race (N=83)		
Caucasian	65	78.3
African American	15	18.1
Hispanic, White	1	1.2
Bi-Racial	1	1.2
Age		
18-20	7	8.2
21-30	25	29.4
31-40	22	25.9
41-50	17	20.0
51-60	8	9.4
61 and over	6	7.1
Marital Status (N=83)		
Single	51	60.0
Married	21	24.7
Divorced	13	15.3
Educational Status (N=84)		
Less Than 7 th Grade	1	1.2
8 th Grade	6	6.8
9 th Grade	6	6.8
10 th Grade	7	8.3
11 th Grade	10	11.9
Graduated High School/GED	33	39.3
Some College	14	16.7
Associates Degree	3	3.6
Bachelors Degree	4	4.8
Employed at Arrest (N=69)		
Yes	46	66.7
No	23	33.3

Table 2: Criminal Record Characteristics (Static-99) (N = 85)

Characteristic	n	%
Static-99 Results (N=81)		
Low Risk	18	22.2
Medium/Low Risk	43	53.1
Medium/High Risk	16	19.8
High Risk	4	4.9
Was Instant Offense First Conviction? (N=81)		
Yes	40	49.4
No	41	50.6
Was First Conviction for a Sex Offense? (N=81)		
Yes	49	60.5
No	32	39.5
Official Record of Prior Sex Offenses (N=84)		
None	63	75.0
1-2 Charges and/or 1 Conviction	15	17.9
3-5 Charges and/or 2-3 Convictions	6	7.1
Number of Prior Sentencing Dates (N=83)		
3 or Less	60	72.3
4 or More	23	27.7
Any Convictions for Non-Contact Sex Offenses (N=83)		
Yes	8	9.6
No	75	90.4
Prior Non-Sexual Violence (N=82)		
Yes	18	22.0
No	64	78.0
Any Unrelated Victims (N=83)		
Yes	62	74.7
No	21	25.3
Any Stranger Victims (N=82)		
Yes	13	15.9
No	69	84.1

(Table 2 continues)

Table 2 continued
Criminal Record Characteristics of Participants (N = 85)

Characteristic	n	%
Any Male Victims (N=83)		
Yes	18	21.7
No	65	78.3

were assessed as medium low risk for committing a future sex offense. Another 24.7 percent of the respondents were assessed as being medium high to high risk of committing a future sexual offense. Only 22.2 percent of the sample were assessed as being low risk for future sexual offending. Not shown in Table 2 is that incest offenders scored significantly lower on the Static-99 than did the extrafamilial offenders. This finding will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Five.

Other data contained in Table 2 highlight the current and prior offense characteristics of these offenders. These were the risk factors combined on the Static-99. Almost 50 percent of the sample had at least one previous criminal conviction. In addition, more than a quarter of the sample (27.7%) had at least four prior sentencing dates. Of particular interest is the number of individuals who received their first conviction for a non-sexual offense. A common belief about child molesters is that they are different from general offender populations in that the only type of offenses they commit are sexual offenses involving children (i.e., that they are specialists). While the results of this study support the notion that the majority of the participants were indeed specialists, a substantial proportion of the sample was comprised of individuals who had committed other types of offenses as well (39.5%).

Table 3 presents characteristics of the current offense. As can be seen, 54.2 percent of the sample had been convicted of gross sexual imposition or rape, while only 8.4 percent had been convicted of a non-contact sex offense. In addition, very few respondents had used non-sexual violence during the commission of the offense (7.4%). A higher proportion of the sample, however, had used non-sexual violence during the

Table 3: Current Offense Characteristics (N = 85)

Characteristic	n	%
Current Offense ⁴ (N=83)		
Gross Sexual Imposition	30	36.1
Rape	15	18.1
Child Molestation	2	2.4
Corruption of a Minor	13	15.7
Sexual Assault	9	10.8
Statutory Rape	1	1.2
Unlawful Sexual Conduct	5	6.0
Pandering Obscenity	5	6.0
Public Indecency	2	2.4
Voluntary Admission Without Conviction	1	1.2
Index Offense Non-Sexual Violence (N=81)		
Yes	6	7.4
No	75	92.6
Number of Victims During Instant Offense (N=82)		
1	68	82.9
2	10	12.2
3	4	4.9
Gender of Victim(s) (N=83)		
Female	66	79.5
Male	17	20.5
Incest Offense (N=82)		
Yes	26	31.7
No	56	68.3

⁴ All categories include convictions for attempted offenses as well.

commission of prior criminal acts (22%). Examples of non-sexual violence include kidnapping, use of weapons, and/or threats of physical harm. Furthermore, most of the offenses involved female victims (79.5%), and most of the offenses were extrafamilial (68.3%); just under one third of the cases involved incest offenses. Finally, three fourths of the sample had no official record of a prior sex offense.

Personality Characteristics

Table 4 contains the personality characteristics of the child molesters in the sample. As expected, the majority of the sample had a primary I-level diagnosis of I4 (65.4%). Almost a third of the sample had a primary I-level diagnosis of I3 (32.1%), and a very small number of respondents had a primary I-level diagnosis of I2 (2.5%). Of particular interest is that eight of the nine personality types identified by the Jesness Inventory were present in this sample. The largest category was comprised of the Situationals (23.5%), while the smallest category was comprised of the Asocial Aggressives (2.5%). An additional 34.5 percent of the sample was categorized as one of the two neurotic subtypes – Neurotic Anxious and Neurotic Acting Out.

In an effort to give more meaning to the data on personality, the eight types identified in this sample were collapsed into fewer personality types. This was done for two reasons. The first reason was that there were too few offenders represented in some of the categories due to the small sample size. The second reason was that prior research on adult males has already demonstrated that these types can be collapsed into four categories (see Van Voorhis, 1994). Utilizing the four types identified by Van Voorhis (1994), 30.9 percent of the current sample were identified as Situationals, and 34.6 percent were identified as Neurotics. An additional 18.5 percent were identified as

Table 4: Personality Characteristics of Participants (Jesness Inventory)

Characteristic	n	%
I-Level (N=81)		
I2	2	2.5
I3	26	32.1
I4	53	65.4
Jesness Personality Type (N=81)		
Asocial Aggressive	2	2.5
Immature Conformist	13	16.0
Cultural Conformist	3	3.7
Manipulator	10	12.3
Neurotic Acting-Out	13	16.0
Neurotic Anxious	15	18.5
Situational	19	23.5
Cultural Identifier	6	7.4
Collapsed Jesness Personality Types (N=81)		
Situational	25	30.9
Neurotic	28	34.6
Aggressive	15	18.5
Dependent	13	16.0

Aggressives, while 16 percent were identified as Dependents. These findings differ from studies of general male offender populations (e.g., Van Voorhis, 1994; Van Voorhis, Spruance, Johnson-Listwan, Ritchey, Pealer, and Seabrook, 2001) in that this study found a much higher number of Situationals and Neurotics. This sample was also comprised of substantially fewer Aggressives.

Other Psychological Characteristics

Table 5 contains the remaining psychological characteristics of the respondents. These findings are of particular interest in light of some of the literature presented in Chapter Two. For example, this sample did not appear to be low in self-esteem as would have been expected. To illustrate, only 3.6 percent of the sample scored below the mid-point on this scale. In addition, 42 percent scored in the top quartile of the scale (i.e., 31-40 points). It should be noted, however, that there are no cut-off scores for this scale. For example, there are no data that dictate which scores represent low self-esteem and which scores represent high self-esteem.

The findings on denial are also of interest. As a group, these child molesters scored below the mid-point of the scale for overall denial. This pattern was further replicated on three of the four denial subscales – Denial of Blame, Denial of Victim Harm, and Denial of Treatment Need. The only subscale for which the group scored slightly above the mid-point was Denial of Sexual Motivation.

The findings regarding empathy are somewhat more consistent with the literature discussed in Chapter Two, but even here there are some interesting divergences. For example, while the sample did score slightly above the mid-point on overall empathy,

Table 5: Description of Psychological Variables⁵

Variable	Range	Mean	S.D.
Self-Esteem	1 – 40	30.69	5.56
Overall Denial	0 – 172	62.88	16.24
Denial of Blame	0 – 32	11.80	6.42
Denial of Victim Harm	0 - 72	17.64	11.38
Denial of Sexual Motivation	0 – 44	26.00	7.62
Denial of Treatment Need	0 - 24	6.32	4.00
Overall Empathy	0 – 112	62.35	11.30
Empathic Concern	0 – 28	20.00	5.10
Personal Distress	0 – 28	10.72	5.22
Fantasy	0 – 28	14.16	5.53
Perspective Taking	0 – 28	17.47	5.32
Cognitive Distortions	0 - 28	1.67	3.80

⁵ Higher scores indicate higher levels of the attribute measured.

they clearly do not score high on this scale. This would be consistent with the notion that child molesters lack empathy. However, the subscale data highlight an interesting pattern. The data show that the respondents scored highest on Empathic Concern – a measure of one's feelings of concern directed at others. This would appear to conflict with some of the findings that child molesters lack empathy. However, they also scored lowest on Personal Distress – a measure of anxiety or discomfort felt when faced with another person's distress. The opposite direction of these findings is interesting given that these are both measures of the emotional component of empathy. It is likely, however, that Empathic Concern is a measure of general empathy or concern for others, while Personal Distress is a measure of specific empathy directed toward a specific individual's distress. If this is the case, this study's findings offer support for the hypothesis proposed by Hayashino et al. (1995) that child molesters do not lack general empathy but instead lack empathy specific to their victims. Finally, Table 5 reveals that the sample endorsed very few cognitive distortions. The average number endorsed was only 1.67. In addition, 43.4 percent of the sample did not endorse any of the 28 items listed on the scale. This is most likely a reflection of the respondents' status as clients of a correctional treatment program.

Analysis of Variance

While the descriptive statistics create an interesting picture of child molesters, the findings discussed so far do not tell us whether there were significant differences between the four personality types. Consequently, one way analysis of variance was utilized in order to examine whether the four personality types differed significantly in terms of their psychological attributes and in terms of their probability of re-offending. In cases

where it was necessary to control for other respondent characteristics that were also related to the dependent variable of interest, analysis of covariance was employed. Variables that were used as control variables were age, race, marital status, and length of stay in treatment. Table 6 presents mean scores for each of the four personality types. Analysis of variance revealed that there were several significant between group differences on the psychological attributes.

Given the recent questions about whether child molesters do in fact lack empathy, examining this attribute by personality type produced some interesting findings. While each of the four personality types scored just above the mid-point on the overall scale suggesting that they were not high on empathy as a group, they did differ significantly on two of the subscales - Personal Distress ($p \leq .05$) and Fantasy ($p \leq .05$). Personal Distress represents an emotional component of empathy, while Fantasy represents an intellectual component of empathy. Post hoc comparisons using Duncan's multiple range test revealed that the Aggressives and Dependents achieved nearly identical scores on the Personal Distress scale, and their scores were significantly different from both the Neurotics and the Situationals. The Neurotics had the highest scores, while the Situationals had the lowest scores. For Fantasy, the post hoc tests showed that the Aggressives, Situationals, and Dependents scored nearly identical on this measure. Their scores were significantly different from the Neurotics. The Neurotics scored highest on this measure. This means that the Neurotics scored the highest on both the intellectual component of empathy that allows them to identify with fictional characters (i.e., Fantasy) and the emotional component of empathy that produces anxiety when confronted with another person's suffering (i.e., Personal Distress). Situationals, on

Table 6: Effects of Personality on Child Molester Attributes

Variable/Source	<u>Aggressive</u>		<u>Neurotic</u>		<u>Dependent</u>		<u>Situational</u>		F ^a	Post hoc ^b
	Mean	n	Mean	n	Mean	n	Mean	n		
Overall Empathy	60.29	14	65.12	26	60.08	13	61.50	24	.926	
Empathic Concern	18.50	14	19.35	26	19.85	13	21.38	24	.775 ^c	
Personal Distress	9.36	14	13.00	26	12.38	13	8.75	24	3.899**	<u>N</u> <u>AD</u> <u>S</u>
Perspective Taking	17.79	14	16.69	26	16.77	13	17.75	24	.247	
Fantasy	14.64	14	16.08	26	11.08	13	13.63	24	2.901**	<u>N</u> <u>ASD</u>
Self Esteem	32.17	15	26.73	26	32.27	12	33.35	25	10.35 ^d ***	<u>SAD</u> <u>N</u>
Overall Denial	67.80	15	58.75	27	67.77	13	59.04	25	.782 ^e	
Denial of Blame	12.33	15	13.00	28	15.62	13	8.84	25	3.976**	<u>D</u> <u>NAS</u>
Denial of Sexual Motivation	27.63	15	23.70	27	24.66	13	27.96	25	.904 ^f	
Denial of Harm	21.60	15	14.93	28	22.31	13	15.92	25	2.147	
Denial of Treatment Need	6.40	15	6.96	28	5.23	13	6.24	25	.240 ^g	
Cognitive Distortions	3.57	14	1.44	27	2.46	13	.56	25	2.080	
Static-99	2.47	15	2.81	26	3.08	13	2.87	23	.446 ^h	

**p ≤ .05
***p ≤ .01

^aAnalysis of variance was used when no other demographic variables are noted to be significantly related to the dependent variable. Otherwise analysis of covariance was used.

^bPost hoc tests employed Duncan's multiple range test.

^cANCOVA entered age as a covariate.

^dANCOVA entered race as a covariate.

^eANCOVA entered marital status as a covariate.

^fANCOVA entered marital status as a covariate.

^gANCOVA entered age as a covariate.

^hANCOVA entered length of stay as a covariate.

the other hand, scored the lowest on feeling anxiety when faced with another person's distress.

The analysis of variance also revealed that the personality types differed significantly on self-esteem ($p \leq .01$). The post hoc comparisons demonstrated that the Situationals, Aggressives, and Dependents also achieved nearly identical scores on this scale and that their scores were again significantly different from the scores achieved by the Neurotics. The Neurotics scored the lowest on this measure, which is not surprising given that they are often highly anxious and insecure individuals.

Significant results also appeared for the relationship between personality type and denial. While the personality types did not differ on overall denial, they did differ on one of the denial subscales – Denial of Blame ($p \leq .05$). This represents the extent to which one denies his responsibility for the offense. The post hoc comparisons revealed that the Neurotics, Aggressives, and Situationals scored nearly identical scores on this measure. Their scores were significantly different from the scores achieved by the Dependents. The Dependents scored the highest on this measure.

Finally, the analysis of variance showed personality type to have no effect on the number of cognitive distortions endorsed. This is probably due to the small number of respondents endorsing the distortions. Furthermore, the four personality types did not differ significantly on the risk of re-offending as measured by Static-99 scores.

Logistic Regression

Logistic regression was used to test the relationship between personality type and factors pertaining to the respondents' current and prior record when the dependent variable was nominal. This was done to assess whether personality contributed to

Table 7: Logistic Regression Predicting Offense Characteristics

Independent Variables	<u>1st Conv. For Sex Offense</u> (1=yes)		<u>1st Conv.</u> (1=yes)		<u>Conviction for Incest</u> (1=yes)		<u>Gender Preference</u> (1=female)		<u>Any Noncontact Offenses</u> (1=yes)		<u>Index Offense Violence</u> (1=yes)		<u>Previous Violence</u> (1=yes)		<u>Any Unrelated Victims</u> (1=yes)		<u>Any Stranger Victims</u> (1=yes)		<u>Any Male Victims</u> (1=yes)		<u>Prior Abuse of Offender</u> (1=yes)	
	Beta	Exp(b)	Beta	Exp(b)	Beta	Exp(b)	Beta	Exp(b)	Beta	Exp(b)	Beta	Exp(b)	Beta	Exp(b)	Beta	Exp(b)	Beta	Exp(b)	Beta	Exp(b)	Beta	Exp(b)
Situational (constant)	-		-		-		-		-		-		-		-		-		-		-	
Aggressive	.58	1.79	.78	2.18	.11	1.11	-.64	.53	-7.64	.00	-1.21	.30	-.11	.90	-.64	.53	-7.49	.00	-.27	.76	-.98	.38
Neurotic	-.37	.69	-.44	.64	-.21	.81	.36	1.44	.26	1.30	-9.06	.00	.42	1.52	.07	1.07	.33	1.39	-.59	.56	.56	1.75
Dependent	.71	2.02	.24	1.27	.10	1.11	-.43	.65	.55	1.73	-8.33	.00	-1.20	.30	.36	1.44	-.28	.76	1.03	2.81	.45	1.58
Age	-		-		-		-.05*	.95	-		-		-		-		-		-		-	
Race (1=white)	-		-		-		-2.43*	.09	-		-2.29*	.10	-		-		-		1.56	4.71	-	
Education (1=high school or above)	1.36***	3.90	-		-		-1.65*	.19	-		-		-		-		-		1.46*	4.29	-	
Marital status (1=married)	-		-		1.26**	3.52	-		1.55*	4.73	-		-		-1.87***	.15	-	4.17	-		-	
Length of stay	-		-		-		-.00**	1.00	-		-		-		-		-		-		-	
Employment (1=employed)	-		-		-		-		-		-		-		-		-		-		-	
Intercept	-.54	.59	-.09	.92	-.99**	.37	7.23***	1378.38	-2.91***	.05	-.58	.56	-1.28**	.28	1.61***	4.99	-2.02***	.13	-3.69***	.03	-1.66***	
Model chi square	9.09*		3.60		5.26		16.01**		7.04		10.45**		2.83		10.53**		10.39**		10.25*		2.76	
-2 log likelihood	93.67		104.48		94.03		59.93		40.07		20.90		78.96		80.96		56.58		68.45		74.87	

*p< .10
 **p< .05
 ***p< .01
 ****p< .001

differentiating among child molesters beyond the offense-related variables already known to distinguish among child molesters. Demographic variables and length of stay in treatment were entered in as control variables when they were found to be related to the dependent variable in question. As illustrated in Table 7, personality type was not significantly related to any of the offense characteristics.

A number of the control variables did exhibit significant relationships with the offense characteristics, however. For example, education was positively correlated with first conviction for a sex offense. This means that offenders with higher levels of education were more likely to be first time offenders. In addition, marital status was positively correlated with conviction for an incest offense. This means that offenders who were married were more likely to have been involved in incest. This makes sense as this is how most incest offenders gain access to their victims (i.e., through marriage and access to their own children or to step-children).

A number of control variables were also significantly related to gender preference. This variable measured whether the offender exhibited a pattern for offending against one gender over the other. Logistic regression revealed that offenders who were older, white, and more highly educated were more likely to prefer male victims. Furthermore, individuals who preferred males had been in treatment for a longer period of time.

Race, education, and marital status were also significantly correlated with several other offense characteristics. For example, Caucasians were less likely to have used violence during the instant offense. Married offenders were less likely to have unrelated victims. This is not surprising, as they were more likely to be incest offenders. What is

surprising, however, is that married offenders were also more likely to have stranger victims. Finally, offenders with higher education were more likely to have molested males.

Multiple Regression

Multiple regression was used to test the relationship between personality type and factors pertaining to the respondents' current and prior record when the dependent variable was interval. Again, demographic variables and length of stay in treatment were entered in as control variables when they were found to be related to the dependent variable in question. As illustrated in Table 8, personality type was not significantly related to any of the offense characteristics. Again, a number of the control variables did exhibit significant relationships with the offense characteristics. For example, white offenders were more likely to molest younger children. Also, married offenders were more likely to have fewer victims involved in the instant offense. Finally, the older offenders in the sample were more likely to have been older at first conviction.

Factor Analysis

The final stage of data analysis sought to determine whether the Jesness Inventory types corresponded to types formed by a factor analysis of key child molester attributes. To this end, this study utilized Principal Component Analysis with no rotation. This procedure yielded a total of ten factors. Only seven of these factors were meaningful, however. These seven factors explained a total of 63.3 percent of the total variance.

As seen in Table 9, factor analysis revealed one type of Situational child molester and one type of Dependent child molester. The analysis revealed two types of Aggressives and two types of Neurotics, however. Each of these types had a higher risk

Table 8: Multiple Regression Predicting Offense Characteristics

Independent Variables	Victim Age		Number of Victims		Age at First Conviction	
	Mean	B	Mean	B	Mean	B
Situational (constant)	--		--		--	
Aggressive	11.67	-.008	1.00	-.177	24.60	2.357
Neurotic	10.93	-.331	1.30	.161	27.42	1.270
Dependent	11.75	.578	1.38	.195	30.33	-1.993
Race (1=white)		-1.96**	--		--	
Marital (1=married)	--			-.354**		-.062
Current Age	--		--			.783***
Length of Stay	--			.0002**	--	
Intercept		12.93***		1.152***		-1.957
R ²	.068		.177		.647	

**p ≤ .05

***p ≤ .01

and a lower risk counterpart. Of particular interest is that the strongest factor was not differentiated by personality type. A description of each of the types follows.

The first factor identified a Predatory Undifferentiated child molester. As mentioned, this type was not differentiated by personality type. These child molesters appeared to be the most dangerous and predatory of the seven types identified in the factor analysis, however. For example, this offender was more likely to score high on the Static-99, to have a prior record consisting of both sex offenses and non-sex offenses, to be younger at first conviction, and to have molested children that were strangers to him. He was also more likely to exhibit low empathy, low self-esteem, and high denial. Finally, he was more likely to endorse a large number of cognitive distortions.

One possible explanation for the failure of personality type to distinguish this type of molester might be found in the fact that this was the only type that was more likely to have a prior record of non-sex offenses. This means that this offender was not a specialist and that molesting children was likely just one of a number of antisocial behaviors he engaged in. In this respect, he would look more like the general offender population and, therefore, would not be expected to correlate with just one personality type.

The second factor identified a Situational child molester. This offender was also more likely to have a prior record of sex offenses and to be young at first conviction. He was more likely to have been sexually abused as a child and to score as high risk on the Static-99. In addition, he had a record of prior non-sexual violence. He possessed some intellectual empathy as well as general emotional empathy but was specifically deficient

Table 9: Factor Analysis Results

Factor Name and Items	Factor Loadings
Predatory Undifferentiated Child Molester	
Was instant offense first conviction of any kind? (1=yes)	-.391
Was first conviction for a sex offense? (1=yes)	-.307
Age at first conviction	-.309
Incest offender	-.375
Overall score on the Static-99	.596
Offender has official record of prior sex offenses (1=yes)	.463
Any stranger victims (1=yes)	.420
Perspective Taking score	-.518
Fantasy score	-.457
Empathic Concern scale	-.544
Overall empathy score	-.585
Self-esteem score	-.346
Denial of victim harm	.510
Denial of blame	.416
Denial of treatment need	.561
Overall denial score	.495
Number of cognitive distortions endorsed	.366
	Eigenvalue 3.95
	Explained variance 13.16%
Situational Child Molester	
Situational personality	.462
Was instant offense first conviction of any kind? (1=yes)	-.582
Was first conviction for a sex offense? (1=yes)	-.450
Age at first conviction	-.385
Was offender sexually abused as a child? (1=yes)	.397
Overall score on the Static-99	.473
Offender has official record of prior sex offenses (1=yes)	.322
Prior non-sexual violence (1=yes)	.546
Perspective Taking score	.408
Empathic Concern score	.460
Personal Distress score	-.418
Self-esteem score	.653
Denial of sexual motivation	.430
Denial of blame	-.392
Marital status (1=married)	-.315
	Eigenvalue 3.54
	Explained variance 11.78%

(Table 9 continues)

Table 9 Continued
 Factor Analysis Results

Factor Name and Items	Factor Loadings
Higher Risk Neurotic Child Molester	
Neurotic personality	.507
Number of victims during instant offense	.475
Gender preference (1=female)	-.447
Overall score on the Static -99	.414
Offender has official record of prior sex offenses (1=yes)	.624
Any stranger victims (1=yes)	.581
Fantasy score	.319
Overall empathy score	.386
Denial of victim harm	-.461
Denial of sexual motivation	-.554
Overall denial	-.573
Education (1=high school or above)	.337
	Eigenvalue 3.37
	Explained variance 11.23%
Higher Risk Aggressive Child Molester	
Aggressive personality	.332
Was instant offense first conviction of any kind? (1=yes)	.514
Was first conviction for a sex offense? (1=yes)	.629
Gender preference (1=female)	-.486
Prior non-sexual violence (1=yes)	-.445
Personal Distress score	-.366
Number of cognitive distortions endorsed	.377
Marital status (1=married)	-.315
	Eigenvalue 2.68
	Explained variance 8.92%
Dependent Child Molester	
Dependent personality	.706
Number of victims during instant offense	.377
Incest Offender	.302
Offender was sexually abused as a child (1=yes)	.302
Empathic Concern score	.349
Denial of victim harm	.317
Denial of blame	.302
Overall denial	.383
Race (1=white)	.382
	Eigenvalue 2.00
	Explained variance 6.66%

(Table 9 continues)

Table 9 Continued
 Factor Analysis Results

Factor Name and Items	Factor Loadings
Lower Risk Neurotic Child Molester	
Neurotic personality	.411
Dependent personality	-.374
Was instant offense first conviction of any kind? (1=yes)	-.328
Perspective Taking score	.306
Fantasy score	.614
Overall empathy score	.505
Denial of treatment need	.313
Overall denial score	.362
	Eigenvalue 1.93
	Explained variance 6.42%
Lower Risk Aggressive Child Molester	
Aggressive personality	.389
Age at first conviction	.306
Any stranger victims (1=yes)	.350
Race (1=white)	-.565
Education (1=high school or above)	.348
Marital status (1=married)	.432
	Eigenvalue 1.54
	Explained variance 5.12%

in feeling discomfort when confronted with another's distress. He also exhibited high denial of a sexual motivation for his offenses. He did, however, exhibit lower levels of denial of blame and possessed higher self-esteem. Finally, he was more likely to be single.

The third factor identified a Higher Risk Neurotic child molester. Similar to the Predatory Undifferentiated molester and the Situational molester, this personality type was also more likely to score high risk on the Static-99 and to have a prior record of sex offenses. He, too, had stranger victims; however, he was different than the first two types in that he had a preference for male victims and was more likely to have molested more than one child per offense. He also looked different from the first two types in that he was more likely to possess empathy and to exhibit low levels of denial. Finally, he had at least a high school education.

The fourth factor identified a child molester tentatively labeled as a Higher Risk Aggressive child molester. Unlike the first three types discussed, this offender was not likely to have a prior record of any kind. He was also less likely to have a history of nonsexual violence. However, he was more likely to prefer male victims. He was also more likely to possess little emotional empathy and to endorse a greater number of cognitive distortions. Finally, he was more likely to be single. While the risk level of this offender is not as clear as some of the other types identified by the factor analysis, his preference for male victims, his lack of empathy, his endorsement of cognitive distortions, and his marital status all serve to place this offender at higher risk of re-offending.

The fifth factor identified a Dependent child molester. This offender was likely to be older at first conviction and was more likely to be Caucasian. He was also more likely to exhibit high levels of emotional empathy and to deny that he had harmed his victim or that he was to blame for the offense. Of particular interest is that this is the only type that loaded as an incest offender. Recall from Chapter Four that incest offenders were found to score significantly lower on the Static-99 than extrafamilial offenders. This suggests that the Dependent child molester may be a low risk offender.

The sixth factor identified a Lower Risk Neurotic child molester. The only distinguishing attributes for this offender were high levels of intellectual empathy and high levels of overall denial. In addition, they were more likely to deny that they needed treatment.

The final factor identified a child molester tentatively labeled as a Lower Risk Aggressive child molester. This offender tended to be older at first conviction, to be married, and to possess a higher education. He was also more likely to be non-white and had molested children that were strangers to him. While perpetrating against strangers is a risk factor for this offender, this is balanced by other factors that are associated with lower risk. These are age, marital status, and education.

Conclusion

This study revealed a number of significant findings. Most notable is that the Neurotics looked significantly different than the other personality types in several ways. When examining empathy, they scored highest on both the emotional component of Personal Distress and the intellectual component of Fantasy. In addition, the Neurotics scored significantly lower on self-esteem than the other types.

Likewise, there were also significant findings involving the Situationals and Dependents that were of interest. For example, the Situationals scored significantly lower on Personal Distress, while the Dependents scored significantly higher on Denial of Blame. Furthermore, the regression analyses revealed that variables other than personality differentiated among the respondents. For example, such demographic variables as marital status, education, age, and race were related to choice of victims. Finally, factor analysis yielded seven potential types of child molesters based on a combination of personality type, psychological attributes, and offense histories and characteristics.

The findings cited above will be discussed in Chapter Five in light of their implications for treatment planning. There will be a special focus on the Neurotic child molesters, since they are potentially presenting with significantly different treatment targets than some of the other personality types as evidenced by differences in self-esteem and empathy. The findings from this study clearly have implications for beginning to address the responsivity needs of child molesters in correctional treatment programs.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to begin exploring the idea of differential treatment of child molesters. This is important given that child molesters represent a diverse group of offenders that likely differ in their treatment needs. While some research portrays child molesters as a rather homogeneous group, there are sufficient data to refute this idea. The clearest example of this is that the attempts to isolate one specific type of child molester have failed. Given that previous research has shown diversity among child molesters, this study chose to examine the within-group differences among child molesters. The specific focus of the study was on differences among child molesters according to personality type.

Much of the earlier work done on the personality types of child molesters has relied on use of the MMPI. In Chapter Two, we discussed the limitations of the use of this instrument for identifying meaningful subgroups among child molesters. Given that the MMPI is a measure of psychopathology, and not a measure of general personality, it seems that an instrument designed to assess personality types of offenders might be more suitable for classification efforts with child molesters. For this reason, we chose to examine the use of the Jesness Inventory with child molesters.

As described in previous chapters, the Jesness Inventory is a self-report instrument that assesses an offender's interpersonal maturity level and personality type. While research shows the instrument to be valid for use with adult male offenders, these studies have only looked at general offenders. They have not examined the utility of the

instrument with particular subgroups of offenders that have historically been viewed as somehow different from the general offender population. Child molesters represent such a subgroup.

Drawing on the literature that shows that general offender populations respond differentially to various correctional treatment strategies and that personality type can affect treatment outcome, this study attempted to seek out the personality-based characteristics of child molesters that could help guide classification efforts of practitioners. This is an important endeavor since improved categorization of child molesters could allow practitioners to isolate individual attributes that contribute to the offender's responsivity to treatment. Addressing the internal responsivity characteristics of child molesters can subsequently increase the effectiveness of correctional programming by allowing practitioners to better individualize treatment and, therefore, better meet the needs of this population.

The current study attempted to fill in some of the gaps in the existing literature on child molester assessment by examining the utility of the Jesness Inventory with this population of offenders. The current study utilized a correlational design with a sample of 85 child molesters. All of the participants in the study were clients of correctional treatment programs at the time of their participation. Each respondent completed five self-report instruments designed to capture the psychological data of interest for this study. In addition, demographic and offense data were collected from each participant's program file.

The first step of the study involved using the Jesness Inventory to assess the personality types of the child molesters who participated. The second step involved

testing the relationships between the various personality types and known child molester characteristics to see if it was possible to identify meaningful subgroups among child molesters. The third step involved testing the relationships between personality type and factors pertaining to the offense characteristics, both past and present, including the risk to re-offend. The analyses yielded a number of significant findings. These findings will be discussed in the following pages in the context of each of the research questions posed in Chapter One. First, however, limitations of the study need to be addressed.

Study Limitations

The current study had several limitations. The first was sample size. Power analysis originally showed that the ideal sample size for this study was 240. Given the unique nature of the offender population under review in this study and the difficulty accessing sex offender treatment programs, a sample size of 240 was not feasible. Despite the small sample size, however, there was enough power in the sample to yield several significant findings. While future studies with larger samples will be required to more fully test the ideas put forth in this dissertation, the findings from this study will still have practical implications for the field of sex offender treatment.

The second limitation of the study was a lack of random assignment to the study sample. As described previously, participation in the study was voluntary and all clients in the treatment programs had the chance to be included in the sample. Only about 70 percent of the clients participated, however. In addition, participants were only recruited from three treatment programs, all located in Ohio. This means that there is no guarantee that the clients included in this sample are representative of child molesters in general.

The third possible limitation is that the offenders in this study looked different from past studies on child molesters. For example, the molesters in this sample did not appear to score substantially low on self-esteem, did not appear to score substantially high on denial, did not endorse many cognitive distortions, and did appear to possess some empathy. While these results may appear to represent some sort of anomalous findings, possible explanations for these patterns may lie in three areas.

First, none of the assessment instruments used for this study had cut-off scores to indicate when a person scored high or low on the instrument. Consequently, this study was forced to merely rely on where individuals scored in relation to the mid-point of the scale or in relation to the top or bottom quartiles of the scale. This may simply represent a measurement issue rather than a true difference in the sample.

Second, this study used some different assessment instruments from past studies. For example, this study utilized a measure of empathy that tapped into both the intellectual and emotional components of empathy. In general, what this study found was that the participants possessed intellectual empathy but lacked emotional empathy. This then may represent a unique finding based on use of a different assessment tool rather than a true difference in this sample.

Third, it is possible that these findings simply point to the need this study was seeking to address – the need for differentiation among child molesters. These “anomalies” may simply reflect that there is no single child molester sample or type. While this study did find some personality types consistent with existing literature, the results clearly show that practitioners and researchers should not stereotype child molesters. In other words, what is perceived as a limitation may simply be preliminary

proof of the overarching theme of this study – that there are important within-group differences among child molesters that have been overlooked in previous research due to a focus on between-group differences.

Do the Jesness Inventory Personality Types Differentiate Among Child Molesters According to Empathy, Self-Esteem, Denial, and Cognitive Distortions?

The analyses revealed that the Jesness Inventory personality types were able to make some distinctions among the child molesters based on empathy, self-esteem and denial. For example, the personality types did differ significantly on two of the empathy subscales – Personal Distress ($p \leq .05$) and Fantasy ($p \leq .05$). The analyses also revealed that the Neurotic personality types scored the highest on both of these measures. This means that they were the personality type most likely to feel emotional distress in the face of another person's adversity. They were also most likely to identify with fictional characters in books and movies. Both of these findings are consistent with what we know from previous research about Neurotic offenders that describes them as introverted and highly anxious individuals.

While the Neurotics scored significantly higher than the other personality types on Personal Distress, the Situationals scored the lowest, meaning that they had also scored significantly different from the other personality types. This means that they felt the least amount of emotional distress in the face of another's adversity. At first glance, this finding does not appear to make sense, especially in light of research describing these individuals as largely prosocial people who possess some level of empathy and exhibit generally conforming behavior. However, Davis (1983) found a negative correlation between self-esteem and Personal Distress, meaning that individuals with higher self-

esteem had lower scores on Personal Distress. Given that Situationals tend to have a positive self-concept, we should expect to see a similar finding for them. It should be noted that this study also found a significant negative relationship between self-esteem and Personal Distress ($p \leq .01$). Furthermore, although not statistically significant, the Situationals scored the highest on self-esteem in this study.

When reviewing the findings on self-esteem, we once again see significant differences with the Neurotic child molesters. They scored significantly lower on self-esteem than the other three personality types. Again, this makes sense in light of previous descriptions of neurotic offenders as highly anxious and insecure individuals. This is also consistent with Davis' (1983) work described above that found a significant inverse relationship between self-esteem and Personal Distress. To illustrate, the Neurotics in this study scored both the lowest on self-esteem and the highest on Personal Distress.

Significant results also appeared for the relationship between personality type and denial. The personality types did not differ significantly on overall denial, but they did differ on one of the denial subscales – Denial of Blame ($p \leq .05$). Specifically, the Dependents scored the highest on this measure; their scores were significantly different from the other three personality types. This means that they were the least likely to accept responsibility for their sexual offenses. This may be linked to lower levels of self-esteem among the Dependents. While the Dependents did not score the lowest on self-esteem, they did have the second lowest scores for this measure. Both Hogue (2000) and this study found a significant negative relationship between self-esteem and denial of one's responsibility for the crime, meaning that individuals with lower self-esteem exhibit higher levels of denial of responsibility.

Given the hypothesis that lower self-esteem may lead to higher denial of one's responsibility for the crime, one would expect the Neurotics to score significantly higher on Denial of Blame given that they scored significantly lower than the other three personality types on self-esteem. This was not the case, however. One possible explanation is that denial may look different in High Risk Neurotics than in Low Risk Neurotics. Although the factor analysis results did not produce a loading for Denial of Blame specifically for the High Risk Neurotics, this group was characterized by higher levels of denial than their Low Risk counterparts.

Finally, the analyses showed personality type to have no effect on the number of cognitive distortions endorsed. However, few respondents endorsed any of the distortions. This is most likely due to the respondents' status as participants in treatment programs. When a respondent did endorse a distortion, he was most likely to agree with the statement that children who refuse to have sex with adults will still know that the adult loves them.

How Should the Jesness Inventory Types Be Configured for Their Maximum Usefulness?

While analysis of variance revealed several significant findings using the four collapsed personality types identified by Van Voorhis (1994), factor analysis results raised the possibility that more types may be needed to adequately categorize child molesters. Sample size constraints prohibited this study from examining differences based on all nine of the Jesness personality types, however, the factor analysis results from this study revealed seven potential types of child molesters. While six of the seven types identified could be differentiated by personality type, the strongest factor (and the

most dangerous type of child molester) was not differentiated by personality type. This finding, combined with the significant results of the logistic regression analyses, suggest that personality type may not be the only, nor even the primary, variable for distinguishing among child molesters. It appears that a combination of factors should be considered in efforts to categorize this group of offenders. These factors include personality type, psychological attributes, criminal risk factors, criminal offense characteristics, and demographics.

Do the Jesness Inventory Types Differentiate Among Child Molesters According to Their Risk to Reoffend?

While the analyses did not reveal a significant relationship between personality type and likelihood of reoffending in this study, there was a significant difference in Static-99 risk scores based on whether the offense involved incest. More specifically, incest offenders scored significantly lower on the Static-99 than did the extrafamilial offenders ($p \leq .01$). In fact, the average Static-99 score of the extrafamilial offenders was more than twice as high as the average score of the incest offenders (3.32 compared to 1.56). Examination of the individual risk criteria of the Static-99 showed that a greater percentage of extrafamilial offenders were young, single, had stranger victims, and had prior sex offenses than the incest offenders.

What Are the Treatment Implications for Each Personality Type?

Child molesters have often been discussed as a rather distinct, homogeneous group of offenders. They have often been characterized as low in empathy, low in self-esteem, high in denial, high in endorsement of cognitive distortions, and high for risk of re-offending. Consequently, many sex offender treatment programs have been designed

based on the assumption that all child molesters need improvements in these areas, or that all child molesters require the same treatment.

This study, building on the work of previous research, has illustrated that there are some significant differences among the child molester population. This suggests that different types of child molesters may benefit from different treatment approaches, or at the very least, different treatment targets. Classification of child molesters by personality type may be one way that practitioners can begin to vary the treatment targets for child molesters in a way that better addresses their responsiveness to treatment interventions.

The Neurotic Child Molester. Just over one third (34.6 percent) of the sample was comprised of Neurotic child molesters. In general, these individuals exhibited low self-esteem, high levels of Personal Distress when confronted with others' suffering, and high ability to identify with fictional characters. The ability to identify with fictional characters may be reflective of their introverted and self-reflective nature. Because of this, they may be amenable to insight-oriented treatment, an approach that is not typically successful with other types of offenders (Van Voorhis and Sperber, 1999). Improving self-esteem may also be helpful with this group of molesters as their low self-esteem may be linked to the high levels of anxiety often seen in Neurotic offenders. Targeting empathy for improvement with this offender, however, may not be a productive exercise since they do not appear to lack emotional empathy.

Given the anxiety-ridden and insecure nature of these offenders, an examination of the group approach to treatment is also warranted. Due to a lack of resources and the continual challenge to deliver treatment services effectively and efficiently, most correctional treatment is delivered in group settings. Many programs, similar to the ones

accessed in this study, also utilize cognitive behavioral treatment approaches that require a certain level of confrontation. Winn (1996) notes that not all sex offenders respond well to confrontation, however. This is especially true of those who rely heavily on their defense mechanisms, such as Neurotic offenders.

Finally, an examination of the factor analysis results suggests that there may be two different types of Neurotic child molesters, one that represents higher risk and one that represents lower risk. If this is the case, their treatment should vary in intensity and duration, with higher risk clients receiving more intensive services and supervision (Andrews and Bonta, 1998). The factor analysis results also suggest that the primary focus of treatment for the lower risk Neurotics might be on breaking through their denial.

The Situational Child Molester. Situational child molesters comprised almost one third of the overall sample (30.9 percent). Analysis of variance characterized these child molesters as possessing significantly lower levels of Personal Distress, while the factor analysis characterized them as possessing low levels of Denial of Blame and high levels of self-esteem. These high levels of self-esteem are of particular interest given that these offenders have often been sexually abused as children. These offenders clearly require different treatment targets than their Neurotic counterparts. For example, they would not appear to benefit from self-esteem treatment as they are not deficient in this attribute. Furthermore, inflated self-esteem has been shown to be a risk factor for re-offending for many offenders in the general offender population. If this is true of Situational child molesters as well, attempts to increase their self-esteem might serve to simply increase their risk of re-offending.

Contrary to the Neurotic child molesters, treatment aimed at increasing empathy might be a viable treatment target with this subgroup given their low levels of Personal Distress. This would require focusing on increasing an emotional response to their victims (as opposed to simply teaching them to recognize when they have harmed another). Other treatment options include teaching problem-solving and coping skills, primary treatment targets for cognitive-behavioral programming. The goal of these efforts would be to assist the offender in dealing with his past sexual victimization as well as general stressors. This is especially important as Situational offenders often offend only during periods of stress, even though this is counter to their prosocial beliefs. In this respect, Situational child molesters may resemble Groth's "regressed" child molester, who also tends to sexually offend during times of distress.

It is important to note here that the factor analysis results from this study showed this offender to be fairly dangerous and antisocial. For example, this offender was more likely to have a prior record of sex offenses and was more likely to have used violence during the commission of a sex offense. This description is contrary to some descriptions of Situationals in the general offender population; however, other studies have found similar anomalous findings with adult males.

For example, Van Voorhis (1994) found that the Situationals in her sample had high rates of nonaggressive disciplinary infractions. Analyzing recidivism for the same sample, Johnson-Listwan (2001) found that the Situationals performed similarly to the Aggressives in the areas of rearrest, multiple rearrests, and rearrests for violent offenses and drug offenses. She hypothesized that this might be because "the older, more entrenched criminals that are classified as situationals perform differently (p. 116)." She

also hypothesized that they may have been affected differently by their prison experience. While these hypotheses have yet to be tested, they are still relevant to this study in that this sample was comprised of older males (mean age was 37), many of whom had been in prison prior to entering treatment.

The Dependent Child Molester. The Dependent child molesters comprised 16 percent of the sample. They were the smallest group of offenders represented in this sample. Analysis of variance only revealed one significant relationship involving the Dependent molesters. This finding was that they scored the highest on Denial of Blame. The factor analysis, however, showed that they were more likely to be incest offenders. It is important to note that they were the only type of child molester identified as an incest offender in the factor analysis results.

There is perhaps the least amount of guidance for treatment planning for this personality type. Previous descriptions of Dependent offenders in the general offender population tend to be limited. These descriptions often attribute a high level of immaturity to this offender (Van Voorhis and Sperber, 1999). In addition, they often have little insight into their offenses.

Given this description of Dependents, the finding of incest is not surprising. For example, previous research on incest offenders has described these men as submissive, immature individuals who turn to children for gratification of their sexual needs. They have also been described as having a hard time differentiating between sex and general fondness or friendship (Hanson et al., 1994).

Dependent offenders also tend to be followers and often require a great deal of structure in their treatment environments. This need for structure makes them good

candidates for cognitive-behavioral approaches as some of the cornerstones of cognitive behavioral treatment models are consistency and the appropriate use of reinforcements. Cognitive behavioral approaches are also well-suited for challenging faulty belief systems. Given that the Dependent child molesters were found to be high in Denial of Blame, consistently challenging their thinking may help reduce the likelihood of re-offending.

The Aggressive Child Molester. The Aggressive child molesters comprised 18.5 percent of the sample. While they were not a large group within the sample, they may represent different treatment needs than some of the other types (most notably the Neurotics). For example, previous work has described Aggressive offenders as endorsing antisocial value systems. They are often self-centered with inflated self-esteem and tend to lie and exploit others (Van Voorhis and Sperber, 1999). While this study did not uncover any statistically significant findings with the Aggressive child molesters, there were some trends in the data that would suggest that they also possessed some of these characteristics. They scored second highest on self-esteem, endorsed the most cognitive distortions on average, scored highest on overall denial and lowest on overall empathy.

These characteristics might make them good candidates for cognitive behavioral programming that is designed to challenge their thinking errors and their denial. They might benefit from victim awareness exercises designed to increase an emotional response to their victims' harm as well. What they may not benefit from is therapy designed to improve self-esteem as they already score high on this attribute.

Recall also that the factor analysis results suggested a Higher Risk Aggressive and a Lower Risk Aggressive. If this is the case, the suggestions given for the Neurotics also

apply here – treatment intensity and duration should be based on the level of risk with higher risk clients receiving more intensive services. Obviously, any treatment suggestions for this subgroup of child molesters are tentative at this time given the small number present in the sample and the lack of significant findings. This is a subgroup of child molesters that clearly warrants further examination.

General Treatment Implications

Aside from the treatment implications discussed for each personality type, the findings from this study point to other considerations for the treatment of child molesters in general. One issue that needs to be considered is treatment modality. As mentioned in the first chapter, there is a debate among practitioners about the use of confrontational strategies versus motivational strategies with sex offenders. The answer may not lie in choosing one approach over the other, however. It is more likely that a confrontational approach would work better with some sex offenders, while a motivational approach would work better with others. For example, Aggressive child molesters may be more amenable to confrontational approaches, which are designed to keep responsibility for the offending behavior on the offender. Neurotic offenders, on the other hand, are probably better suited for the motivational approach given their fear of negative evaluation and high anxiety. This is because this approach is designed to foster mutual trust between the therapist and the offender along with empathy and acceptance (Kear-Colwell and Pollock, 1997).

Another issue that needs to be considered is the use of the group format for most treatment endeavors. Given that most correctional treatment occurs in a group format, practitioners need to examine the composition of these groups. Practitioners should begin

asking questions about mixing certain personality types together in group settings. For example, mixing Neurotic child molesters in with Aggressive child molesters may not represent the optimal group arrangement. Due to their exploitive nature, the Aggressive child molesters might exploit or take advantage of the more vulnerable Neurotic offenders. This would serve to further reinforce the antisocial nature of the Aggressives while heightening the anxiety levels of the “neurotics.” This could consequently increase the Neurotic offenders’ risk of re-offending since there is a link between their anxiety and their criminality.

As mentioned previously, Neurotic child molesters may not function well in group treatment settings regardless of the composition. Being forced to confront their defense mechanisms in front of others may heighten their fear of negative evaluation by others and, again, increase their anxiety. Even if this does not directly increase their risk to re-offend, it can adversely impact their responsivity to treatment.

Having discussed the possible disadvantages of sole reliance on group treatment, one must acknowledge the financial constraints placed on community corrections treatment programs. While some offenders may not respond well to group treatment strategies (e.g., Neurotic offenders), the reality is that most community-based correctional treatment takes place in non-profit agencies that are funded by public dollars. Even during strong economic times, practitioners are often required to perform treatment for many offenders with less than optimal funding. When the economy takes a downturn, even fewer resources are allocated to these treatment programs. Given the emphasis on efficiency then, many programs will not be able to separate offenders into different groups or to give some offenders only individual counseling. Possession of

comprehensive assessment data, however, can at least allow practitioners to better manage the group dynamics to minimize any potential negative impact.

A final issue for consideration is the role of victim awareness or empathy building exercises within the treatment protocol. Empathy building exercises are very popular in cognitive behavioral programs, especially for those programs serving sex offenders. The focus of these exercises, however, is often on teaching the offender to recognize the harm he has inflicted on his victim(s). This represents the intellectual component of empathy. In this study, however, all of the personality types scored higher on Perspective Taking (an intellectual component of empathy) than they did on Personal Distress (an emotional component of empathy). This might indicate that a better use of empathy building exercises would be to focus on increasing the offender's emotional response to the harm he has inflicted. The resulting psychological or emotional distress caused by another's suffering might be a more powerful agent for deterring their offending behaviors.

Conclusions

Each year, hundreds of thousands of children are sexually molested (American Humane Association, 1999). Perpetrators of these offenses are often mandated to attend community-based correctional treatment programs with the hope that they can be rehabilitated. Before treatment can begin, however, practitioners must assess the treatment needs of each offender.

One assessment tool commonly employed by sex offender programs is the MMPI. Attempts to use the MMPI to illuminate distinctions among child molesters have not succeeded, however (Erickson et al., 1987; Levin and Stava, 1987; McAnulty et al., 1994; Vaupel and Goeke, 1994).). This means that practitioners may be left without

assessment tools needed to understand important personality differences among child molesters. This is especially relevant in light of research indicating that there is no single type of child molester or a single identifiable child molester personality (Knight, Rosenberg, and Schneider, 1985).

In order to better understand and meet the treatment needs of child molesters and other sex offenders, some researchers and practitioners have been seeking out alternative methods of assessing child molesters. This is important because identifying and understanding differences among child molesters assists practitioners in the treatment planning process. Through adequate assessment and classification, correctional practitioners can begin to address the responsivity principle. This is important because research has shown that programs that address treatment responsivity have better outcomes for their clients (e.g., Andrews, Zinger, Hoge, Bonta, Gendreau, and Cullen, 1990; Jesness, 1975; Palmer, 1974; Van Voorhis, 1997; Warren, 1971). Consequently, many researchers and practitioners have been using classification instruments to better categorize offenders in order to provide differential treatment. One instrument that is currently used to classify general offender populations is the Jesness Inventory (Jesness, 1996).

This study was an exploration into the potential use of the Jesness Inventory as a classification tool for guiding the treatment of child molesters. While this study encountered some of the same difficulties that others have had in differentiating child molesters, the results demonstrated that the instrument was able to identify some meaningful differences among child molesters. This is important as the Jesness Inventory

may represent a more useful, more cost-effective strategy for identifying personality-based differences among child molesters than the MMPI.

The results of this study also have implications for future research endeavors. A larger sample might provide answers to some of the questions left unanswered in this study. For example, a larger sample might allow for a clearer picture of the Aggressive child molester to emerge. Also, while some suggestions for the differential treatment of child molesters were suggested based on the results of this study, these suggestions still need to be tested with larger samples. This is clearly an area of research that deserves further attention. The bottom line is that improved assessment yields improved treatment outcomes. Improved treatment outcomes for child molesters means fewer children victimized each year.

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