Adolescent Sexual Abusers – Who are They?

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Personality specific description of juvenile sex offenders: Standardisation of the Adolescent Sex Offender Assessment Pack (ASAP) by a school sample in Switzerland and a Scientific Comparison with a clinical sample of Adolescent Sex Offenders from Germany, Austria and Switzerland

An accurate diagnostic of juvenile sex offenders has to take both as personality traits (i.e. self-esteem, impulsivity or empathy) and the act (i.e. factual circumstances, attitude towards the factual or approval of violence) into account. The ASAP measures personality traits, that are seemed to be relevant by current knowledge as relevant for the development and maintenance of sexually abusive behaviour (Van Outsem, Beckett, Bullens, Vermeiren, Van Horn, & Doreleijers, 2006). To be able to interpret the ASAP-results of sex offenders, one must know which data is peculiar.

The Assessment Pack of the Adolescent Sexual Abuser Project (ASAP, Beckett et al.) is a set of questionnaires aiming at characteristics that are considered to be relevant for development and perpetuation of sexually abusive behaviour in juveniles. It is used in England, Ireland, Netherlands and Scandinavia.

The ASAP measures personality characteristics like self esteem, locus of control, emotional loneliness and others as well as offence specific characteristics like victim empathy and cognitive distortions. The use of the ASAP in Germany, Switzerland and Austria was in the beginning based British norms. In a sample of 464 young people between 13 and 18 years there is a first set of normative data for he personality measurements. The presentation gives an overview of the normative data, and also shows first results describing the German speaking sample of 180 adolescent child abusers.

Method: By using a grab sample ($N = 464$, $M = 15.21$, $SD = 1$, $Range = 13 – 18$ years) pupils in urban and rural schools are questioned.
Result: The aim of our study was to gain standardized results for the german speaking pupils of Switzerland. These tables are shown on our poster by T-value for both sexes ($Pillai-Spur = .08$, $F = 2.85$ (10), $p < .01$).

Conclusions: This is the first time the trait-specific part of the ASAP was standardized by a Swiss sample. The Results and the tables differentiate in almost all scales from the former available standard dates from England. In addition for the first time there were results about female pupils. The literature estimated the impact of sex difference on results of the ASAP, but couldn’t be proved until now.

Literature:
Hanson, K.R. (Unpublished). Empathy for Women Questionnaire. Department of Justice, Ontario.

Nowicki, S. (1976) Adult Nowicki-Strickland Internal-External Locus of Control Scale (Test Manual available from S. Nowicki, Jr., Department of Psychology, Emory University, Atlanta, GA 30322, USA).


