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T-18

Long-Term Follow-Up of Sexual Offenders on Community Supervision

Symposium Chair: Kelly M. Babchishin, PhD
Public Safety Canada

To reduce the likelihood of reoffending, professionals working with individuals convicted of sexual offences need to focus their intervention efforts on the factors most strongly related to the persistence of sexual offending. No single risk factor provides the sufficient or necessary condition for the persistence of sexual offending. As such, evaluators typically consider a range of risk factors using structured risk assessment tools. There is considerable research support that these tools, such as the Static-99R and Static-2002R, can predict sexual reoffending amongst individuals convicted of sexual offending, but this research tends to be limited to shorter follow-up periods (e.g., less than 10 years). The current symposium will examine the long-term recidivism rates and predictive accuracy of a large number of risk assessment tools using an updated follow-up (average 15 years, but up to 35 years) from the Dynamic Predictors project (Hanson & Harris, 2001).

The first presenter (Andrew Harris) will summarize the recidivism rates at different time intervals and the influence of being crime free in the community on recidivism rates (i.e., time free effects). The second presenter (Seung Lee) will evaluate the discrimination and calibration of various risk tools for different follow-up periods (5 to over 20 years). The final presenter (Andrew Brankley) will summarize taxometric analysis of pedophilia in the sample and examines the observed taxon's predictive accuracy at different follow-up periods (5 to over 20 years). Each presentation will conclude by summarizing practical implications in terms of risk assessment and management of sexual offenders.

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Dynamic Predictors Project: Genesis and Static Follow-Up

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Seung C. Lee, MA
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Since 1954 (Meehl), we have been aware of the benefits of actuarial/mechanical prediction. This presentation will extend recidivism follow-up data from the work of Hanson & Harris (2001) to an average of 15 years, with some cases extending over 35 years. The sample, mainly white Canadian males ($N = 409$), were followed up using criminal history charges and convictions. The sample includes a matched sample of sexual offenders on community supervision with one group ($n = 227$) who were successful in the community (non-recidivists) in the 2001 study and one group ($n = 180$) who reoffended while on community supervision in the 2001 study. The current sample were higher risk sexual offenders, with most individual falling in Category III, IVa, and IVb of the Static-99R and 2002R. After an average of 15 years follow-up, the overall sexual recidivism rate was 36% (135/372), with sexual recidivism rates increasing steadily with each fixed follow-up period: 12% at 5 years, 22% at 10-years, 27% at 15-years, and 26% at 20-years. We also found evidence of time-free effects. For example, the 10 year sexual recidivism rate was halved (12%) if we restricted the analyses to offenders who were offence free the first 5 years following release. If the offenders were offence free for the first 10 years, then the 15-year sexual recidivism rate dropped to 6%, and if the offenders were offence free for 15 years, the 20-year sexual recidivism rate dropped to 3%.

These findings are useful in terms of guidance for those managing or supervising a high-risk caseload in the community. Despite concerted and consistent efforts to provide our field with objective and transparent risk assessment technology, naysayers attempt to return us the age of guildism, promoting unaccountable, unfettered clinical judgment. This presentation will conclude by briefly outlining current concerns and threats to the validity of sex offender risk assessment.

References

Hanson, R. K., & Harris, A. J. (2001). A structured approach to evaluating change among sexual offenders. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*, 13, 105-122.

Learning Goals:

- Describe the development of the basic research on dynamic risk variables for sexual offenders
- Compare risk of recidivistic and non-recidivistic sexual offenders over a

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protracted term

- Discuss ongoing challenges to the use of actuarial and mechanical prediction

Predictive Accuracy of Static Risk Assessment Tools over 20 Years

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Static risk assessment tools have significant roles in the criminal justice system for decision-making process (e.g., presentencing, release from incarceration). Considerable research has examined the predictive accuracy of the risk assessment tools with mostly about 5-year follow-up time. Given the long-term influence of the risk assessment tools (e.g., civil commitment/Dangerous offender designation), however, their predictive accuracy for a longer time period (e.g., more than 5 years) should be examined. The current study uses updated data from Dynamic Predictors project (Hanson & Harris, 2001) described in the previous presentation to examine the long-term predictive accuracy of the most commonly used empirical actuarial risk assessment tools. Specifically, the ability of the following risk assessment tools to discriminate between recidivists and non-recidivists were examined at 5, 10, 15, and 20 years of follow-up: Static-99R (Hanson & Thornton, 2000; Helmus et al., 2012), Static-2002R (Hanson & Thornton, 2003; Helmus et al., 2012), BARR-2002R (Babchishin et al., 2016), and VRAG-R (Rice et al., 2013). The PCL-R (Hare, 2003) was also considered as it is often used as a risk tool.

Three types of recidivism were considered: 1) sexual (contact and non-contact sexual crimes), 2) violent (non-sexual violent and contact sexual crimes), and 3) any recidivism (all crimes including breaches). Overall recidivism rates were 32% for sexual recidivism (119/372), 44% for violent recidivism (165/372), and 55% for any recidivism (206/372) after an average 15-year follow-up. In the discriminative accuracy, Static-99R and Static-2002R showed the highest values (AUCs = .70 to .80 over 20 years) for sexual recidivism. The highest discrimination for violent and general recidivism was found for BARR-2002R and VRAG-R (AUCs = .75 to .80 over 20 years). Overall, the discriminative accuracy of the risk assessment tools did not diminish across 20 years of the follow-up period. Their overall sexual recidivism rates were lower than those expected with the norms for High Risk/High Need group of Static-99R and Static-2002R (E/O index = 1.33 to 1.96). For the community failure group, however, the results indicated good calibration of Static-99R and Static-2002R when compared to the 5- and 10-year norms for High Risk/High Need group (E/O index = .97 to 1.39). In contrast, for the community success group, their overall recidivism rates became lower (E/O index = 2.12 to 3.53). Implications for practice will be summarized.

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- Hanson, R. K., & Thornton, D. (2000). Improving risk assessments for sex offenders: A comparison of three actuarial scales. *Law and Human Behavior, 24*, 119-136.
doi:10.1023/A:1005482921333
- Hanson, R. K., & Thornton, D. (2003). Notes on the development of Static-2002. (Corrections Research User Rep. No. 2003-01). Ottawa, ON: Department of the Solicitor General of Canada.
- Hare, R. D. (2003). The Hare Psychopathy Checklist–Revised (2nd ed.). Toronto, Canada: Multi-Health Systems.
- Helmus, L., Thornton, D., Hanson, R. K., & Babchishin, K. M. (2012). Improving the predictive accuracy of Static-99 and Static-2002 with older sex offenders: Revised age weights. *Sexual Abuse: Journal of Research and Treatment, 24*, 64-101
doi:10.1177/1079063211409951.
- Rice, M. E., Harris, G. T., & Lang, C. (2013). Validation of and revision to the VRAG and SORAG: The Violence Risk Appraisal Guide-Revised (VRAG-R). *Psychological Assessment, 25*, 951–965. doi.org/ 10.1037/a0032878

Learning Goals:

- Understand the discriminative accuracy of widely used risk assessment tools over 20 years (Static-99R, Static-2002R, BARR-2002R, VRAG-R, and PCL-R).
- Understand the calibration accuracy of Static-99R and Static-2002R with High Risk/ High Need norms.
- Understand statistical concepts to evaluate the predictive accuracy (discrimination and calibration).

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Pedophilic Individuals on Community Supervision Represent a Distinct Category

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The latent structure of pedophilia is not well understood: are pedophilic individuals representative of an extreme in sexual age preference or are they, somehow, qualitatively different than other people? Researchers have completed four studies to answer this question, but two studies supported a dimensional structure, and two supported a categorical structure. It is unclear whether this divergence is due to differences in how each study measured pedophilia or in how they tested their hypotheses. A multi-method, multi-trait approach will likely provide the most reliable and valid indicators of pedophilia. These indicators should include measures of physiological arousal, attitudes, and previous behaviour.

The purpose of this presentation is to examine the latent structure of pedophilia using the same sample as the previous presentations (i.e., higher risk sample of adult males convicted of sexual offences on community supervision; $N=407$). Indicators included: (1) The revised Screening Scale for Pedophilic Interests (SSPI-2; Seto, Stephens, Lalumière, & Cantor, 2015), a five-item scale based on criminal history; (2) A composite indicator of fixation on pre-pubescent children that utilized a wide range of sources, such as phallometry, sexual fantasies, and clinical interviews; and, (3) A composite indicator of emotional congruence with children. Preliminary analyses suggest that pedophilia is a taxon in this sample.

The taxonometric analyses and the predictive accuracy of the taxon for different follow-up period (from 5 to 20 years) will be presented to test the long-term predictive accuracy of pedophilia. In addition, we will examine the extent to which pedophilia interacts with the PCL-R to predicting sexual recidivism. The current study will conclude by summarizing the etiological implications of these analyses. Implications for future practice delivering treatment and supervision will also be discussed.

Learning Goals:

- Explore the impact of pedophilia's latent structure on clinical practice
- Understand principles of the taxometric method
- Interpret the results of taxometric procedures
- Identify factors which influence latent structure of pedophilia
- Discuss and explore the impact of a distinct risk profile for individuals within the pedophilic taxon

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Kelly M. Babchishin, PhD is a Research Advisor for the Community Safety and Countering Crime Branch Research Division of Public Safety Canada. Her current research involves identifying causal candidates for the onset of sexual offending behavior. Other research interests include change in sexual offending behavior across the lifespan, risk assessment, pedophilia, and online sexual offenders.

Andrew J R. Harris, PhD, CPsych completed doctoral research on the intersection of Hare's (1991) conception of psychopathy and sexual deviancy in a community sex offender sample. Andrew has a private practice as a consulting clinical forensic psychologist having worked as a psychologist, a researcher, and a research director under the Solicitor General Canada and Public Safety Canada. Previously employed in both research and clinical capacities at the Oak Ridge (Maximum Security) Mental Health Centre, Ontario, Dr. Harris speaks extensively on pornography, the history of prison architecture, and the risk assessment of sexual and violent offenders.

Seung Chan Lee, MA is a doctoral student in the Department of Psychology at Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada, under the supervision of Drs. Karl Hanson and Adelle Forth. He is holding the Ontario Trillium Scholarship for his Ph.D. program. His primary research interest is evaluating the validity of risk assessment instruments of violent and sexual offenders (e.g., Static-99R and PCL-R) across ethnic minority groups (e.g., Hispanic, Black, Indigenous, and Asian) in North America. His further goal is to investigate risk-relevant characteristics unique to each ethnic group as well as to achieve the international generalizability of risk assessment tools relevant to violent and sexual offenders.

Andrew E. Brankley, MA, is a doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology program at Ryerson University, Toronto. His research focuses on the structural modeling of psychological constructs relevant to violent and sexual offending. Mr. Brankley won the prestigious Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship for his work improving our understanding of sexual offending through the integration of police investigation and risk assessment strategies. He continues his multi-method examination of risk-relevant constructs under the supervision of Drs. Alasdair Goodwill and Karl Hanson. Mr. Brankley's clinical interests include the evidence-based assessment and treatment of individuals in the criminal justice system; he has completed several clinical practicum placements, including Correctional Service Canada and Forensic Services, St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton. He is currently completing his clinical residency at the Royal Ottawa Mental Health Care Group with a focus on individuals convicted of sexual offences.

Financial Interest:

Andrew J R. Harris provides fee-for-service trainings on the Static family of risk assessment tools. The copyright for these tools is held by the Government of Canada by right of Her Majesty the Queen.