

Comparison of PPG and AASI In Assessing Offenders

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Treatment resources are limited and costly, and inaccurate assessments can have a horrific impact upon the community. Evaluators and treatment providers must use the best methods available to elicit case specific information. Some information can be derived from the individual' s records, personal disclosures, and clinical questionnaires, although confidence in self-report measures is limited.

Clarification of sexual interest and arousal to specific categories of sexual preferences may be measured objectively utilizing penile plethysmography (PPG) and/or Abel Assessment *for sexual interest* (AASI). The present study examined PPG and AASI measurement of sexual response multiple categories. The current results presented below focus specifically on the relationship between boy molesters and sexual deviance, and interest or arousal in sexual coercion and/or sadomasochism as measured by PPG and AASI.

Methodology

The subjects were referred for evaluation and outpatient treatment by probation and parole. Subject sample was from Southern California. One hundred seventeen (117) subjects signed an authorization to voluntarily participate in the research project (Subjects ages ranged from 15 to 77-years-old with average age approximately 39-years-old; the study was primarily). Sixty two percent (62%) of the subjects had a history of child molestation of a girl, boy, or both. The remaining 39% of the subjects were referred for other categories of sexual misconduct (exhibitionism, lewd conduct in a public bathroom, sexual assault of an adult, unlawful sex with an adolescent, etc.). All subjects were administered both the PPG and AASI using the accepted instrument specific protocols.

Results

There was a significant association between subjects with any history of child molestation and sexual deviance to children on the PPG or the AASI.

$$\text{Phi} = .31 \quad p \leq .01$$

There was a significant correlation between Offense History and PPG Pedophilia Index:

$$\text{Pearson correlations} = .28 \quad p \leq .05$$

There was no significant correlation not found between Offense History and the AASI VRT Pedophilia Index.

There was a significant association between Offense History of boy molesters and (1) child deviance compared to girl molesters, and (2) non-molester sex offenders measured on the PPG:

$$\begin{aligned} (1) \text{ Phi} &= .50 & p &\leq .01 \\ (2) \text{ Phi} &= .47 & p &\leq .01 \end{aligned}$$

There was a significant association between Offense History of boy molesters (1) and child deviance compared to girl molesters and (2) non-molester sex offenders measured on the AASI:

$$\begin{aligned} (1) \text{ Phi} &= .41 & p &\leq .01 \\ (2) \text{ Phi} &= .43 & p &\leq .01 \end{aligned}$$

There was a significant correlation between sexual coercion/sexual violence involving children measured on the PPG and the sadomasochism scale on the AASI:

$$\text{Pearson correlations} = .30 \quad p \leq .05$$

Discussion

The present findings show that when comparing molesters of boys to other categories of sex offenders, the PPG and AASI measures produced significant results. The PPG and AASI outcomes were also significantly correlated on measures of sexual violence. The results suggest that both measures are valuable tools for evaluators and treatment providers when developing case-specific treatment plans.

There are a number of limitations to this study. One limitation is that there was no attempt to differentiate between incest perpetrators and extra familial offenders. It has been reported repeatedly in the literature that incest offenders generally have a lower rate of sexual recidivism than offenders who target unrelated victims. Another limitation in the same vane was that this study used comparison groups of different categories of sex offenders. It has been long established that many offenders who have been detected in engaging in one type of paraphilic behavior frequently engage in other deviant behaviors. Consequently, sharp distinction between familial and non-familial offenders and those who have molested boys or girls, or other paraphilic categories become blurred. Future research is needed to measure the association between offender categories and normals

(individuals with no known history of sexual deviance) to further clarify the value of objective measures such as the PPG and the AASI. (For references, see www.ccoso.net/newsletter.)