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INTRODUCTION

Adult sexual perpetration against children and child abuse is a critical public concern and social problem (Bonnar-Kidd, 2010; Calkins, et al., 2014; Whitaker, Lutzker & Shelley, 2005). Child Protective Services (CPS) substantiated approximately 62,936 child sexual abuse cases in 2012 (U.S. Department of Health and Human Service [USDHHS], 2012) with the majority of the perpetrators against the children being adult offenders (82.2%). Community

at least one act of sexual aggression (Koss, 1987; Lisak & Miller, 2002). On a given day, according to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), there are approximately 265,000 sexual offenders supervised by corrections agencies, and more than 747,000 registered sex offenders in the United States. According to contemporary theories, there are various factors that can be related to the development of sexual offending (Knight & Sims-Knight, 2002). Those who sexually offend against children provides information that may help treatment providers understand the reasoning behind this disturbing behavior (Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2005).

Adult male sexual offenders are not easily differentiated from each other as they are a heterogeneous population representing all

(Silovsky, 2002; Herkov, Gynther, Thomas & Myers, 1996). Previous studies have attempted to determine differences in sexual offenders by personality characteristics (Davis & Archer, 2010; Glowacz & Born, 2013) and sexual interest (Banse, Schmidt, & Clarbour, 2010). Some research has found offenders to be a heterogeneous group as a whole, but a homogeneous group in regards to personality characteristics (Armentrout & Hauer, 1978; Panton, 1978; Reijnen, Bulten, & Nijman, 2009; Valliant & Blasutti, 1992). In addition, one

study found sexual offenders to be a homogeneous group related to risk factors (Barsetti, Earls, Lalumière, & Bélanger, 1998). Further research examining the homogeneity or heterogeneity of sex offenders in regard to these risk factors (sexual deviance, relationship to victims, etc), as well as other personality characteristics, is needed for more effective assessment and treatment (Helmus, Thornton, Hanson & Babchishin, 2012; Seto, 2008).

There have been many studies that have attempted to gain a better understanding of the sexual offender (Banse et al., 2010; Davis & Archer, 2010; Glowacz & Born, 2013). Because adult male sexual

types of sexual offenders (Woessner, 2010). Research regarding treatment for sexual offenders indicates the importance of the offender's willingness to openly confront factors that motivate and sustain sexual offending behavior (Kear-Colwell & Pollock, 1997; Marshall, 1997; Marshall & Anderson, 2000; Salter, 1988). Because group treatment is a common modality for sexual offender treatment (Hanson et al, 2002), there is a need to understand and to classify offenders based upon characteristics and types on,888 Tmy 21p trhending

sexual offenders and circumstances surrounding the perpetration of sexual abuse is necessary for the prevention of sexual abuse, provision of treatment, assessment of risk, and reduction of re-offense (Helmus et al., 2012; Kenny & Wurtele, 2012; Seto, Babchishin, & McPhail, 2013).

Distinctions between Sexual Offenders

Sexual offenses that may be considered criminal acts can be categorized in several ways including sexual acts with contact, noncontact sexual behavior, and incidents related to pornography (Terry, 2013). Contact sexual offenses can include sexual assault and rape (Terry, 2013). Sexual assault is “any type of sexual contact or behavior that occurs without the explicit consent of the recipient” (U. S. Department of Justice, 2012) and is differentiated from rape (Terry, 2013). Non-contact sexual offenses that are commonly considered to be criminal actions include pornography related incidents, acts of voyeurism, and exhibitionism (Terry, 2013).

Sexual offenders can be described by using the offenses that are committed including sexual assault, rape, child molestation, exhibitionism, and possession of child pornography (“Sexual Abuse”, 2007; Woessner, 2010). Within this broad range, there have been efforts to differentiate offenders into subgroups for effective treatment and reduction of recidivism (Woessner, 2010). Due to the heterogeneity and diversity of personality characteristics of the

differences. Future research could also explore differences across the types of sexual offenders regarding additional criminal activities, mental health diagnoses, and the presence of substance abuse disorders at the time of the offense. Also, it would be important to know more about environmental factors and behavioral history to have a more complete understanding of the risk of recidivism between the groups.

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