【研究論文】

Study on Classification of Male Child Sexual Offenders

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Introduction

Between 2008 and 2019, there was a concerning rise in the percentage of male child victims among child sexual abuse cases in our country, increasing from 15% to nearly 30%, as illustrated in Table 1. This worrisome trend highlights the gravity of the issue, especially considering the notably higher recidivism rates among individuals who have previously sexually abused male children. In a one-year follow-up study after therapy, Abel et al. (1987) found an average recidivism rate of 12.2% for child sexual offenders, while those who had victimized both male and female children had a staggering recidivism rate of 75%. Our own research corroborates these findings, revealing that among child sexual offenders, 98.1% exclusively victimized female children, with a recidivism rate of 10.8% over a seven-year follow-up period. Conversely, offenders who victimized both male and female children constituted 1.9%, with a significantly higher recidivism rate of 37.5%. This indicates a nearly fourfold increase in recidivism compared to those exclusively targeting female children (Lin Min-Chieh & Dong Zi-Yi, 2005).

Table 1

Number of reported cases of sexual abuse from 2008 to 2019 involving victims aged 12 and under, broken down by gender.

Year	Male child victim(%)	Girl child victim(%)	Total
2008	90(15%)	510(85%)	600
2009	114(17.7%)	528(82.3%)	642
2010	168(15.8%)	893(84.2%)	1061
2011	198(16.3%)	1013(83.7%)	1211
2012	232(18.7%)	1004(81.3%)	1240
2013	195(18.9%)	833(81.1%)	1028
2014	238(21.9%)	849(78.1%)	1087
2015	265(23.8%)	846(76.2%)	1111
2016	191(24.8%)	577(75.2%)	768
2017	229(27.0%)	635(73.0%)	846
2018	273(27.3%)	725(72.7%)	998
2019	206(29.4%)	495(70.6%)	701

Note. Statistics sourced from data released by the Executive Yuan's Gender Equality Committee and the Ministry of Health and Welfare from 2008 to 2019.

Research Questions

The author's objective is to examine potential classifications among male child sexual offenders, along with their respective proportions and unique characteristics. This investigation is essential for informing future evaluations and therapeutic interventions. By identifying distinct categories within this population, professionals can develop more

targeted and effective approaches to address the complex needs of male child sexual offenders, ultimately contributing to improved outcomes for both offenders and their victims.

Research Definitions

How does this study's definition of 'male child sexual offenders' as individuals who commit acts of sexual abuse against boys under the age of fourteen influence the scope and focus of the research findings and analyses?

Literature Review

Exploring through Taxonomy

Drawing from a psychoanalytic viewpoint, prison psychologist Groth (1977) developed a taxonomy for classifying child sexual offenders, which includes individuals involved in incestuous offenses. This classification is primarily based on their primary sexual preference, discerning between regressed and fixated types. It is important to emphasize that this classification hinges on whether the primary sexual preference is directed towards children; if not, the offender is categorized as regressed, whereas if it is, they are classified as fixated (adapted from Lin Min-Chieh, 1999).

Regressed Type

Individuals categorized in this group have previously engaged in age-appropriate sexual relationships with peers. However, various situational pressures, such as prolonged unemployment, physical disabilities, or experiences of rejection or belittlement by adult women, particularly in sexual contexts, lead them to experience a gradual erosion of confidence in their masculinity.

As a result, they redirect their sexual gratification towards underage children who are perceived as less threatening, as they are less likely to be cognizant of their own sexual capabilities. Groth estimated that this type constitutes approximately 51% of all child sexual offenders, while McGrath suggested a higher prevalence of around 85%.

Fixated Type

Individuals in this category harbor exclusive sexual attraction towards children, potentially male children, throughout their lives, and struggle to attain sexual-psychological maturity. Research indicates that this fixation may stem from experiences of childhood abuse or sexual assault, hindering the formation of trusting relationships with adults. Consequently, they form close bonds with children and may express affection through sexual means. Clinical observations suggest that victims of this type may fixate on male children of the same age, possibly due to their own sexual psychological development becoming arrested at the age they were first abused. This stagnation could lead them to seek relationships with children of similar developmental stages (Michigan prison psychologist Stan Bolt, personal communication, July 15, 1997). Groth estimated that this type constitutes approximately 49% of all child sexual offenders, while McGrath suggested a lower prevalence of around 15%.

Both classification methods are deemed appropriate, and the DSM-5 also aligns with this classification in diagnosing Pedophilic Disorder, distinguishing between non-exclusive type and exclusive type, while highlighting the importance of specifying the gender of the victims.

Possible Causes

From Groth's classification, it becomes apparent that fixated-type child sexual offenders have undergone sexual trauma during their childhood, leading to the development of intimate relationships with children. The relevant literature elucidating these phenomena is detailed below.

Early Childhood Sexual Abuse as a Contributor to Male Child Sexual Offending

Weeks & Widom (1998) conducted a retrospective study comparing male child sexual offenders with other male offenders. They found a higher rate of early sexual abuse among male child offenders (26.3%) compared to other male offenders (12.5%).

Glasser et al. (2001) observed that among 522 adults, only 56 (10.7%) reported childhood sexual abuse. In contrast, among 225 individuals in the sexual offender group, 79 (35.1%) had experienced childhood sexual abuse.

Craissati (2002) reported that the rate of childhood sexual abuse among male child sexual offenders was twice that of offenders victimizing female children. These findings suggest a potential cycle of perpetrating sexual abuse in adulthood following early childhood victimization.

Physical and Emotional Injury or Neglect as Contributors to Offending Behavior

Widom (2001) analyzed data spanning from 1988 to 1994, categorizing 1,575 youths into groups with a history of child abuse and neglect and those without such records. The group with a history of abuse and neglect exhibited significantly higher rates of arrest during adolescence (59%), adulthood (28%), and involvement in violent crime (30%) compared to the group without such records.

Craissati (2002) discovered that male perpetrators who had experienced childhood sexual abuse showed significant emotional and physical neglect, as well as experiences of physical abuse and extraneous sexual abuse. The influence of these victimization experiences was apparent in their criminal behaviors, including previous sexual offenses and victimization of male children.

Emotional Isolation

Fitch (1962) examined 139 child sexual offenders, observing a higher recidivism rate among those who offended against the same sex. These individuals displayed characteristics of immaturity, frustration, and pathological personality traits.

Gebhard et al. (1964) regarded such individuals as the most concerning among sexual offenders, often facing marriage termination, and experiencing a lack of sexual activity with their spouses.

Mohr (1964) suggested that this group faced loneliness, emotional and sexual isolation, as well as impotence.

Summary

The literature suggests that male child sexual offenders may have experienced childhood sexual abuse, suffered harm or neglect during childhood, or exhibited emotional isolation. The high recidivism rates underscore the significance of classification in assessing and treating these offenders. However, further research is needed to ascertain whether internal classifications exist and how they might vary.

Research Methodology

Sample and Instruments

The researcher initially engaged four male child sexual offender (from Chiayi County Health Bureau, Yunlin County Health Bureau, and Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital) as both pilot study participants and subjects for individual semi-structured in-depth interviews. Given the limited number of male child sexual offenders in Taiwan, the researcher leveraged the network of two advising professors to identify suitable subjects. Potential participants were then invited to take part in the individual semi-structured in-depth interviews.

Due to pandemic-related restrictions, the researcher contacted designated officers at seven correctional facilities for sexual offenders appointed by the Ministry of Justice. Using the network recommended by advising professors, the researcher directly liaised with the responsible personnel to manage the process. Permission from the correctional institution was obtained through formal correspondence between the academic department and the Ministry of Justice. Before conducting the survey, the researcher coordinated with the Classification and Investigation Division to screen participants based on pre-established criteria, excluding individuals deemed unsuitable by prison authorities (e.g.,

due to advanced age, health conditions, or unwillingness to cooperate). Participants who had already participated in the pilot study were excluded from the formal survey.

A reliable and valid questionnaire on the psychological mechanisms of male child sexual offenders (Leow Hooi-Teng, 2023). Part 1, Basic demographic information includes: gender, age, occupation, educational level, academic performance, family type, marital status, history of sexual experiences with others (including genital contact or penetration), age at first involvement in a sexual offense, history of engaging in sexually abusive behaviors towards others, and whether the individual has or has ever had any psychiatric diagnosis or received psychiatric treatment. Part 2 105 items, covering 17 dimensions including: "Disbelief that Sexual Interactions with Children are Harmful," "Rationalization of Sexual Interactions with Children," "Distortion of Romantic Relationships with Children," "Perception of Children's Active Sexual Needs," "Denial of Harm from Sexual Interactions with Children," "Cognitive Distortions," "Beliefs About Sexual Offenses," "Chinese Sexual Offense Myths," "Gender Preferences," "Sexual Orientation," "Gender Identity," "Sexual Interests," "Interaction Experiences," "Sexual Experiences with Males," "Self-Control," "Parenting Styles," and "Attachment Relationships" was developed as the primary tool for cluster analysis. This scale employs a four-point Likert scale, offering options for agreement ranging from 1 to 4.

Cluster Analysis

A method used to group similar samples together based on shared attributes, thereby forming clusters. Typically, distance serves as the basis for classification, with closer distances indicating higher similarity between samples. Following clustering, the objective is to minimize differences within clusters while maximizing differences between clusters

(Chang Shao-Hsun & Lin Hsiu-Chuan, 2018).

Research Results

Cluster Analysis

Utilizing hierarchical cluster analysis with the binary Euclidean squared distance on the Sexual Offender Sexual Orientation and Erotic Experiences Scale, a multi-level cluster analysis was performed. Clusters ranging from two to five were examined, and it was determined that a four-cluster solution was optimal. This conclusion was drawn based on the analysis of the dendrogram, which is provided in Appendix I.The hierarchical cluster analysis yielded four clusters, each with the following proportions: Exhibitionistic Type (33%), Homosexual Type (15%), Emotionally Withdrawn Type (39%), and Isolated Withdrawn Type (12%).

Exhibitionistic Type (33%)

Individuals in the "Exhibitionistic Type" unanimously selected a score of 4 (strongly agree) for the statement, "I have been attracted to boys, and I can't control my sexual desires." This response significantly differentiated them from the other three types (F=5.025, p=.003). Additionally, they had the highest average response of 3.36 for the statement, "I have had sexual relations with children under the age of 13, which has caused them emotional distress." These characteristics suggest that this type exhibits strong exhibitionistic tendencies and a pattern of sexual behavior that involves prepubescent children.

Homosexual Type (15%)

The "Homosexual Type" showed a distinctive pattern of responses. On the

statement, "I prefer the gender of an intimate partner to be boys over 16 years old," they had an average response of 3.6. This preference significantly distinguished them from the other groups (F=10.975, p=.000). Additionally, they scored an average of 3.6 for the statement, "I have a sexual interest in males," which also significantly set them apart from the other groups (F=24.007, p=.000). These responses suggest a clear preference for same-sex relationships and a strong sexual interest in males, indicating a homosexual orientation.

Emotionally Regressed Type (39%)

The "Emotionally Regressed Type" displayed several distinct characteristics:

They had the highest average score of 1.69 for the statement, "If children stare at my genitals, it means they really like looking at my genitals," significantly differentiating them from the other groups (F=10.02, p=.000).

They significantly differed from the other groups in the statement, "My parents were often too busy with their work, which constitutes a neglectful and aloof parenting style" (F=6.080, p=.001).

They had the highest average score of 1.46 for the statement, "I believe that engaging in sexual activities with children is also a way to educate them about sex," significantly distinguishing them from the other groups (F=22.055, p=.000).

They had the highest average score of 2.08 for the statement, "I can't distinguish which gender attracts me more," significantly differentiating them from the other groups (F=13.844, p=.000).

These responses collectively indicate that this type exhibits characteristics of emotional regression, childhood experiences, and thoughts, without having confirmed

their self-identity as homosexual, hence the term "Emotionally Regressed Type."

Isolated Regressed Type (12%)

This type has an average score of 1.25 in "I can express my ideas and am easy to get close to others." It is the lowest among the groups and is significantly different from other groups (F=7.600, p=.000). This type in "Because my peers don't like to have sex with me, I think it is reasonable and normal to have sex with children or stepchildren" has an average score of 1.25, which is the highest among the groups, and is significantly different from other groups (F=14.89, p= .000). This type has a solitary, poor, and withdrawn personality, so it is called the solitary, poor, and withdrawn type.

Table 2

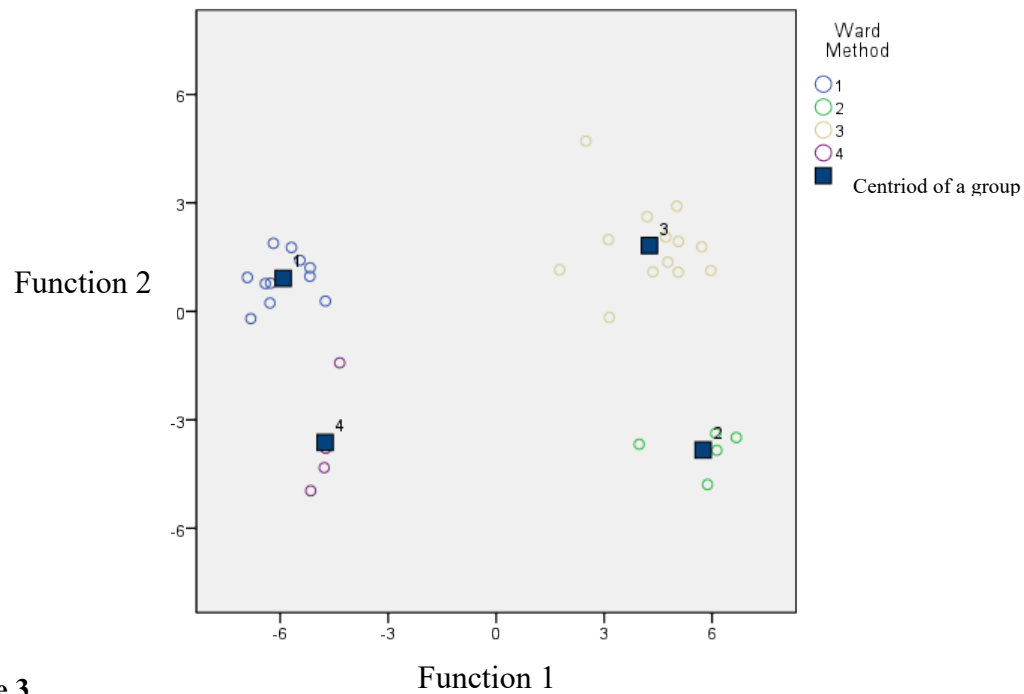*Differences in variables among four clusters of child molesters*

Representative Questions (Only the first question for each factor)	1 Exhibitionistic Type	2 Homosexual Type	3 Emotionally Regressed Type	4 Isolated Regressed Type	F	Significance
Items (1-4 points)	11 (33%)	5 (15%)	13 (39%)	4 (12%)		
Q1 I once had sexual intercourse with a child under the age of 13, which caused him emotional distress.	3.36	2.00	3.00	3.00	2.14	.101
Q5 Because my partner doesn't like having sex with me, I feel it's okay to have sex with children or stepchildren.	1.09	1.00	1.23	1.25	14.89	.000
Q11 I believe that children under the age of 13 can decide for themselves whether they want to have sex with an adult.	1.18	2.00	2.00	1.00	4.36	.007

Representative Questions (Only the first question for each factor)	1 Exhibitionistic Type	2 Homosexual Type	3 Emotionally Regressed Type	4 Isolated Regressed Type	F	Significance
Items (1-4 points)	11 (33%)	5 (15%)	13 (39%)	4 (12%)		
Q14 If a child stares at my genitals, it means they like looking at my genitals.	1.09	1.40	1.69	1.00	10.02	.000
Q19 I think adults know that having sex with children will have a negative impact on their future love lives.	3.36	2.60	3.31	3.00	.90	.477
Q21 I think having sex with children is also one of the ways to teach children about sex education.	1.18	1.00	1.46	1.25	6.14	.001
Q25 If a boy admits to being sexually abused by an adult, he may be gay.	1.00	1.00	1.54	1.00	22.055	.000
Q34 Sexual abusers of boys are all born into troubled families	1.73	1.40	2.46	1.00	3.362	.022
Q36 I am sexually interested in men.	1.00	3.60	2.46	1.00	24.007	.000
Q45 I find it challenging to determine which gender attracts me more	1.00	1.20	2.08	1.00	13.844	.000
Q65 I prefer not to let others know about my gender and my sexual orientation	1.73	2.20	2.92	2.50	2.156	.099
Q71 I believe I can influence the sexual interests of children	1.09	1.60	1.46	1.00	6.745	.001
Q73 I am attracted to intimate partner males who are 16 years old or older.	1.00	3.60	2.62	1.00	10.975	.000
Q82 I used to taking shower with boy and caress body by each other	1.00	3.20	3.23	1.00	34.635	.000

Representative Questions (Only the first question for each factor)	1 Exhibitionistic Type	2 Homosexual Type	3 Emotionally Regressed Type	4 Isolated Regressed Type	F	Significance
Items (1-4 points)	11 (33%)	5 (15%)	13 (39%)	4 (12%)		
Q88 I once had feelings for boy and couldn't control my sexual desire	4.00	2.80	3.23	3.75	5.025	.003
Q94 My parents are often busy with their work, adopting a neglectful and indifferent parenting style	1.36	1.40	2.92	1.75	6.080	.001
Q98 I can express my thoughts easily and connect with others effortlessly	3.55	3.40	3.15	1.25	7.600	.000

Discriminant Analysis

Based on discriminant analysis, the original observations along the upper left to lower right diagonal were correctly classified in terms of the predicted number and proportion for the four groups. The classification accuracy for the first group, the "Exhibitionistic Type," through to the third group, the "Emotionally Withdrawn Type," was 100%. However, the "Isolated Withdrawn Type" achieved a classification accuracy of 75% (Table 2). As illustrated in Figure 1, a total of 97.0% of the original grouped observational values were correctly classified across the four groups, as shown in Table 3.

Figure 1

Scatter plots for each group

Function 2

Function 1

Table 3

Results of Discriminant Analysis for Four Clusters

			Members of Each Predicted Group				total
		Ward Method	1 Exhibitionistic Type	2 Homosexual Type	3 Emotionally Regressed Type	4 Isolated Regressed Type	
Original	Number of People	1	11	0	0	0	11
		2	0	5	0	0	5
		3	0	0	13	0	13
		4	1	0	0	3	4
	%	1	100.0	.0	.0	.0	100.0
		2	.0	100.0	.0	.0	100.0
		3	.0	.0	100.0	.0	100.0
		4	25.0	.0	.0	75.0	100.0

a. 97.0% of the original grouped observational values have been correctly classified.

Discussion

Male child sexual offenders represent a marginalized group in society. Due to their unique characteristics, they face legal sanctions. Like homosexual individuals who may experience a lack of belonging and social withdrawal (McAndrew & Warne, 2010; Murdock & Bolch, 2005), these offenders often struggle with trust issues, even with friends and family. Like cases driven by revenge, they learn to "wear a mask" to survive adversity (Rivers, 2000; Tsai & Yang, 2010). The researcher emphasizes the importance of mutual love from close friends, family, and peers. Without a sense of belonging, these individuals may feel lost in the currents of society, leading to psychological deviations and contradictory mindsets that push them toward self-destructive behaviors such as committing offenses. For those whose childhood deficiencies were compounded by sexual abuse, encountering their "ideal type" of boy may trigger excitement. According to Freud (1902), this fixation stems from introjection, where suppressed sexual interactions with adult male's regress into fantasies involving boys, manifesting in outward behaviors such as sexual offenses against male children.

This study categorizes child molesters within the fixated type into exhibitionistic type (33%), homosexual type (15%), emotionally withdrawn type (39%), and isolated withdrawn type (12%). It's apparent that exhibitionistic types display more pronounced antisocial tendencies, particularly in knowingly inflicting psychological harm on the victim despite persisting in causing harm. Moving to homosexual offenders who demonstrate a predilection for both male children and adults, and then to emotionally withdrawn and isolated withdrawn types, which manifest more isolated traits. It is recommended that correctional and counseling personnel emphasize sexual education and promote lawful and

non-violent means of sexual expression. Such efforts could facilitate healthier sexual interactions and coping mechanisms for these individuals' post-incarceration.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Conclusion

Using hierarchical cluster analysis in cluster analysis, four groups were identified with the following proportions: exhibitionistic type (33%), homosexual type (15%), emotionally withdrawn type (39%), and isolated withdrawn type (12%).

The four groups attained a 97.0% correct classification of the original observational values through discriminant analysis.

Suggestion

Addressing male child molesters requires recognizing four key psychological patterns: withdrawal, low self-affirmation, compensatory fantasies, and reliance on masturbation for distraction or satisfaction. These behaviors are driven by emotions, learned habits, and cognitive patterns, rather than physical or nutritional deficiencies. Effective prevention should prioritize early sexual education (before age 13), continued education in schools, family parenting programs, and proactive measures.

Exhibitionistic types display more pronounced antisocial tendencies, persisting in causing harm despite being aware of the psychological impact on the victim. Homosexual types, emotionally withdrawn types, and isolated withdrawn types each exhibit distinct characteristics. Counseling should consider these traits, offer tailored attention and corrective therapy to address their specific needs.

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Appendix

Ward Hierarchical Agglomerative Clustering Method