



Abstracts in the order of presentations

Session 1: 10th October: 09.15 - 12.00

Ear-witness identification accuracy in children vs. adults.

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Earwitness performance has been studied before but not nearly to the extent that eyewitness performance has. This is particularly true for child witnesses. To gain a better understanding of earwitness performance we have designed a study in which children aged 7-8 and 11-12 and adults will serve as informants. A total of 240 participants, will be equally distributed between the three age groups, and exposed to an unfamiliar voice (the planning of a crime). After two weeks, the witnesses will be asked to identify the target-voice in a line-up (7 voices). Half of the witnesses will be exposed to a target-present line-up (TP), and the other half to a target-absent line-up (TA). We expect the number of false identifications to be higher for children, especially in the TA-line up. We will also analyze the relation between accuracy and confidence, and to what extent memory for content can predict identification accuracy.

East meets West: Accuracy and response latency in Estonian and British young adults' multi-ethnicity face recognition.

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Introduction

A large number of studies have been published on the recognition of different race faces which have largely found evidence for the 'cross-race' effect. Many of previously published cross-racial recognition studies have been conducted in parts of highly 'westernised' societies (the United States, United Kingdom, South Africa, Germany) which share a history of recent migration or segregated cultures. However, there are a few studies which have studied this issue in countries where the population is homogeneous, for example Eastern Europe.

Aim

Therefore, as in every-day life we might see (multi-ethnic) faces sequentially, it is important to examine the accuracy in multi-ethnicity face recognition in countries which have different level of dispose to multi-ethnic faces. In this study Estonian and British young adults' multi-ethnicity face recognition accuracy was examined. Also the effect of response latency on face recognition is examined as there is only a limited amount of research which emphasized the effect of multiple choices in a sequential presentation

Method

In this study Estonian and British young adults' multi-ethnicity face recognition accuracy and response latency was examined. Participants (Estonian N=110 and British N=145) were presented a stimulus face sheet of five different race faces followed by a sequential larger (target present/absent) multi-ethnic recognition set.

Results

There were no differences between British and Estonian young adults concerning correct and false identifications, and correct rejections. Both Estonians and British less falsely identified and more correctly rejected own-race than other-race faces. Regarding response latency, accurate decisions were slower than inaccurate decisions concerning false identifications and correct rejections of own-race faces.

Conclusions

The findings suggest that identifying culprits in multi-ethnicity crime can be problematic, especially concerning larger number of incorrect rejections of other-race faces.



Skulking around the dinosaur statue: Eliciting cues to children's deception via strategic disclosure of evidence

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Introduction and Aim

Previous research has shown that if suspects are interviewed in a strategic manner, with respect to the disclosure of evidence, deception detection can be increased. Specifically, strategic disclosure of evidence will create statement-evidence inconsistency, which has proven to be a diagnostic cue to deception. The present study examined if strategic disclosure of evidence is effective when the task is to discriminate between lying and truth-telling children.

Method

Experiment 1 analyzed to what extent liars' and truth-tellers' statements were affected by the type of interview conducted (i.e., early evidence disclosure vs. late evidence disclosure). 84 children (12–14 years) were interviewed about a mock crime they had (liars) or had not (truth-tellers) committed. In half of the interviews the evidence was disclosed early, in the other half late. All interviews were videotaped and coded in terms of statement-evidence inconsistency. In Experiment 2 168 adult observers watched the interviews and judged the veracity of the children (two observers per interview).

Results

Experiment 1 showed that the lying children's statements were significantly more inconsistent (vis-à-vis the evidence) than were the truth-telling children's statements. Experiment 2 showed an accuracy rate of 56% for the early disclosure condition, and 63.1% for the late disclosure condition (a nonsignificant difference). Furthermore, the observers were significantly better at detecting truthful statements (70.2%), than lies (48.8%).

Conclusions

In brief, our study shows that it is possible to elicit diagnostic cues to deception by disclosing the evidence in a strategic manner. However, our study also indicates that these cues are not easily picked up by observers assessing the veracity of the statements presented. The results will be discussed in the light of past and future deception detection research.



Child witnesses and social influence: The effects of source of misinformation

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Introduction and Aim

What a witness recalls and reports can be affected by information received from other people (social influence). The present study aimed to investigate whether children were differently affected by social influence when delivered by an adult or a peer. A further aim was to examine whether children could be influenced to report unseen details (commission errors) as well as to refrain from reporting seen details (omission errors).

Method

Children ($N = 176$, 11-12 years) individually participated in a staged event, and two weeks later they were interviewed about their memory of the event. Before the interview, two thirds of the children watched a video-recorded interview with another witness (either an adult or a child). The witness in the video presented one of two types of misinformation (social influence), suggesting either (a) that a detail present during the event was actually not present (possibly leading to omission errors), or (b) that a non-present detail was actually present during the event (possibly leading to commission errors). The remaining children did not watch a video (control group).

Results

The results showed that children who had watched the video gave more incorrect memory reports than children in the control group. We also found that the children were more sensitive to social influence when it was delivered by a peer, than when delivered by an adult. The two types of influence (omission and commission) were found to be similarly powerful.

Conclusions

The study shows that social influence can result in both commission errors and omission errors, and that children are sensitive to what a peer child reports. Both the theoretical and applied contributions will be discussed.

Content analysis of successive eyewitness statements using LSA (Latent semantic analysis)

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Introduction. Eye-witnesses tend to repeatedly discuss the witnessed event before testifying in court. These multiple retellings may alter the memory of the event in ways that can impact court testimony in many ways.

Aim. The aim of the present work is to trace semantic changes across multiple retellings of an event using a novel technique based on semantic spaces.

Method. Participants first viewed a short film depicting the kidnapping of a woman. They were then assigned to four conditions, of which two are relevant for the present work ($n = 44$): 1) lab-discussion, where participants were asked to discuss the film with a confederate at five set times and 2) rehearsal, where participants told the story about the film to the experimenter five times, but no discussion took place. The repetitions were spread across a 2 week period. The other two conditions were not included in this study since no recalls or discussions were recorded. The taped discussions and rehearsals were transcribed and then analyzed using Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA). This method allows for quantitative extraction, summary, and statistical analysis of semantic information across time, using data that traditionally has been limited to qualitative analysis.

Results and conclusions. For both conditions the semantic content shifted significantly between the first and the last three sessions. The rehearsal condition differed significantly in the content from the lab-discussion condition, and had a more formal and negatively valenced content. Furthermore, the negative valence of the semantic content decreased over the sessions in both conditions. The results suggest an emotional desensitization of the content especially in the lab-discussion condition. This is the first study applying statistical techniques for formal, data-driven measures of how semantic contents of eyewitness change over time.



The accuracy of children's identifications and the realism of their confidence judgments in sequential and elimination line-ups

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When the court is judging somebody for a crime, it often goes by the confidence of the witness, for example in his or her identification of the suspect. Two studies, one with sequential line-up (n=240) and one with elimination line-up (n=240) with children of 11-12 years old are planned. The outcome of these studies will be compared in order to see which line-up method will give the best accuracy in the identifications and the best realism (also sometimes called accuracy) in the confidence judgments for children. We will also use a comparison-group of adults (n=200) in the study with sequential line-up in order to see if there are any differences in age. To see if there are any differences in the personality of the children connected to the accuracy, we will use two scales, one scale for self-perception (in order to tap children's domain-specific judgments of their competence, as well as a global perception of their worth or esteem as a person) and one scale measuring degree of self-doubt.

Preliminary results from the study with elimination line-ups will be presented.

Losing a child to the Child Protective Services. Biological parents' memory of the removal and psychological problems in planned versus acute removals.

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Introduction

The removal of a child is a severe intervention in a child's and a family's life. Today, practical nothing is known about how the parents are doing after they have lost their children in regard to their memory of the potential traumatizing situation (e.g., the removal). An underlying assumption is that children's health and adaptation to the new care environment, is strongly supported when the biological parents are taken care of.

Aim

The aim of this present study is to investigate the parent's memory of the removal of their child and psychological problems before and after this stressful event. Based on general theory it is hypothesized that due to the high personal impact of the event, memory will in general be good. Further, arousal and emotional valence is assumed to have an affect on memory.

Method

The investigation is a prospective longitudinal study, with a cognitive developmental perspective. A mixed factorial design is used, 2 (removal condition) x 3 (age) x 3 (interview/observation), with the last factor as a repeated measure. Control over the experimental situation is obtained through the presence of a researcher during the removals. The follow-ups of the parents include memory interviews, checklists for general function of their children, and measure of attachment style.

Results

Preliminary analyses disclosed a positive correlation between arousal and memory in open-ended questions ($r = .72, p < .05$), and a negative correlation between arousal and memory in direct questions ($r = -.80, p < .01$). ANOVAs will be conducted according to the described design above as soon as we have included enough participants to fill out all the conditions.

Conclusion

The findings suggest that arousal had a positive effect on memory for central event information, but negative effect on peripheral event information. It is found specific associations between emotional valence and memory. Further findings will be presented and discussed in relation to clinical practice and cognitive theory.



Session 2: 13.00-17.00

Legal Decision Making

The strength of evidence

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Often it is assumed that research in the field of psychology and law is relevant for evaluating the strength of evidence in criminal cases. Sometimes that indeed is true; often it is not. In fact, much of the psychology and law research is ill adapted to the requirements of the legal arena. At the positive side of things is the fact that much of the technical forensic research neither is well adapted to what criminal cases require. In the speech these issues will be discussed.

The responsiveness of separated asylum seeking minors in interpreter mediated asylum hearings in Sweden

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Introduction

The actual project is funded by the Swedish Council For Working Life And Social Research. Ann-Christin Cederborg is in charge of the project.

The main goal of the project is to explore different aspects of interpreter-mediated communication in the asylum hearings with Russian-speaking asylum seeking minors and case workers of the Swedish Migration Board.

Aim

The aim of the study that will be presented on the 5th meeting of the NNPL is to explore the ways the asylum-seeking minors report task-related information.

Methods

A quantitative analysis was used to examine the minor's responses, the questions asked by the officials and the accuracy of the renditions provided by the interpreters

Results

Asylum-seeking minors appeared eager to disclose information despite being asked questions that may contaminate the responses given. Most of the children's responses were accurately translated but when the translations were inaccurate, the distortions affected the implications substantially.

Conclusions

When interviewers had no command of the Russian language, inaccurate renditions may pass undetected, and may have an impact on the fact finding process of asylum seeking reasons. The findings from this study as well as the findings from our previous study (Keselman et al., in press) show that the minors as well as authorities involved in asylum seeking process may have reasons to believe that the questions asked and the responses given may be influenced by the third party involved. This means that the reasons for asylum cannot solely be based on what the interviewers believe is facts given by the minors. Instead before information can be considered as facts it has to be closely scrutinized from the basis of type of question asked, and interpreters' rendition of the question in order to understand what question did the minor answer and how was it rendered by the interpreter.



Legal requirements for child protection work in Sweden

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Professor Lotta Vahlne Westerhäll, Professor Wiweka Warnling Nerep
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Introduction

Children have the legal right to be protected from crime and the utmost responsibility for child protection in Sweden lies on social services. Serious criticism has been levelled at this authority, saying that children do not get adequate protection. From a judicial point of view such criticism unavoidably raises the question whether or not legal conditions can cause the identified insufficiencies.

Aim

The objective of this on-going project is to clarify the social services' legal prerequisites to protect children from crime and to understand how child protection services are managed in practice.

Methods

The project is mainly of legal nature, but also has a multi-disciplinary input. The focus of the legal part is to investigate and examine applicable law using a traditional legal method in order to clarify the legal prerequisites, but also to put forward proposals on how the law could be interpreted, and perhaps ought to be redrafted. Complementary to the legal investigation two empirical studies are included, child protection investigations are analysed and social workers are interviewed. These studies illustrate how applicable law is managed in practice and how social workers understand and comprehend the legislation as well as their responsibility and possibility to protect children from crime.

Results and conclusions

Results from the legal part of the study show that child protection work is largely unregulated and when regulated vaguely formulated. This means that the legislation that was meant to provide flexibility instead causes a considerable risk of uncertainty. The qualitative analyses show that social workers perceive that they do not have the actual legal tools to protect children from crime. All in all this implies that children's right to protection may become symbolic.

Vulnerable children and their health- project ideas open for discussion

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Introduction

The National Swedish Board of Health and Welfare as well as previous international research about vulnerable children known by the Social Welfare services show that the knowledge about vulnerable children and their health is insufficient. To our knowledge, there is no research in Sweden, focusing on this issue.

Aim

This project is an attempt to increase the understanding of vulnerable children's health by shedding light on what knowledge the social services have about their health and what weight they give to these aspects when investigating their vulnerability. This project also investigates the health of children in foster homes and institutions. Except from studying their social welfare files and comparing them with files from pediatric hospitals we interview them about how they experience their health.

Methods

- 1) The first paper is descriptive. We retrospectively map the social welfare service's files made of alleged vulnerable children during one year in one Swedish community. The children of interest are aged (0-18 year).
- 2) The second paper involves questionnaires and interviews. In this part we want to find out how children in care self-rate and experience their health and identity. Then these children's social- and medical files are going to be studied in order to illuminate and compare the different data.
- 3) The third and fourth papers are not specifically planned yet. During the conference we hope to obtain ideas of what questions could be investigated in these papers.

Results

This project has just started so at this stage no results are possible to present.

Conclusions

A further understanding of vulnerable children's health can develop an integrated approach to theory, practice and policy. We hope that this project provides an opportunity to increase knowledge about vulnerable children and their health and that this knowledge can influence the perception of appropriate practices.



In-Court versus Out-of-Court Testimonies: Children's Experiences and Adults' Assessments

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Introduction

Videotaped and closed circuit testimonies are often used in legal procedures, but little is known about the psychological effects of these courtroom technologies. Thus, the aim of the present study was to investigate the effects of different presentation modes on child witnesses' experiences and adults' perception and veracity assessment of the same witnesses.

Method

One hundred and eight children participated in an experiment where half the sample experienced a real event (an interaction with a stranger), and the other half imagined the same event. Three weeks later, all the children testified about the event as having experienced it. Adult mock jurors ($N = 240$) watched the children's testimonies live, via two-way closed-circuit television (CCTV), or via pre-recorded video. The mock jurors rated their perception of the children's statement and appearance, and assessed the children's veracity. After the interview, the children were asked if they had experienced discomfort during the interview.

Results

The live observers perceived the children in more positive terms than did the two-way CCTV observers, who in turn perceived the children in more positive terms than did the video observers. In brief, it seems as the more proximal the presentation mode, the more positive the observers' perception. The observers' overall deception detection accuracy was mediocre (58.3%). Finally, and somewhat in contrast to the above result, a significantly smaller proportion of the children who testified on video stated that they were nervous, compared to the children who testified live or via two-way CCTV.

Conclusions

The results suggest that presentation mode is an important factor for policy makers to consider when reforming standards for courtroom procedures. Also, the study emphasizes the importance of balancing the positive effects of legal representatives' proximity to the child (i.e., increased credibility) and the negative effects on the child's wellbeing (i.e., increased stress).

The challenge of assessing credibility when children with intellectual disabilities are alleged victims of abuse

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Introduction: Assessing credibility of a child witness is of importance when deciding the outcome of a case. Such an assessment can be specifically challenging when the witness is a child with intellectual disabilities. Cederborg and Lamb (2006) found that written or verbal testimony from experts was seldom available or adequate when cases involving children with intellectual disabilities were taken to court. This is problematic because legal professionals may form inaccurate notions about what can be understood as credible reports (Granhag & Strömwall, 2003).

Aim: We wanted to find out how Swedish legal professionals perceive reliability and attribute credibility when intellectually disabled children are alleged crime witnesses.

Method: We openly interviewed 32 lawyers, prosecutors and police officers about their individual thoughts and beliefs.

Results: When assessing cases involving children with intellectual disabilities especially judges and prosecutors try to relate to the legal norm of credibility stipulated by the Supreme Court in Sweden. Judges and prosecutors interpret the reliability of the report through their individual perceptions and experiences without having knowledge of how to understand intellectually disabled children's capacities. They believed that they did not have to distinguish between what could be expected from adults and children who may have problems reaching an acceptable standard of a report. The participants believed that higher courts questioned psychological experts and therefore they did not consider asking for their help. The legal logic of reliability and credibility may imply that intellectually disabled children may have problems reaching an acceptable standard of a report.

Conclusions: If knowledge about intellectual competence and functional level of an individual child witness was perceived as a necessary representation when assessing credibility this may increase the chance that children with intellectual disabilities may be effectively and fairly assessed.



Attitudes among legal professionals in Sweden towards children's memory and meta-memory performance as eyewitnesses

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The present study explores absolute and comparative judgments among professionals (police officers, prosecutors, defence attorneys, and lay-judges) within the Swedish legal system of different aspects of 7 to 11 year old children's testimonies and adults'. The aspects covered include answering episodic memory questions and the realism (accuracy) in the witness' confidence judgments of their memory reports. For the absolute judgments, the respondents answered questions about a child's witness reports (or an adult's, in the control condition) after reading one of two different short stories describing a criminal event and the witness reporting the event to a police officer. For the comparative judgments, the respondents answered questions whether different aspects of memory and meta-memory witness-performance differed between 7 to 11 year old children and adults. The general trend of the results suggests that these professionals hold fairly similar opinions about children and adults as witnesses. The results will be discussed in relation to previous research and with respect to their forensic implications

A survey of police officers' and prosecutors' beliefs about crime victim behaviors

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Introduction and Aim: Due to the negative psychological impact of criminal victimization, an appropriate treatment of crime victims by professionals in the legal system is crucial for victims' well-being and long-term recovery. A prerequisite for appropriate treatment is that professionals are equipped with accurate beliefs about crime victims. The present study sought to assess the existing beliefs.

Method: A survey addressing beliefs about the behaviors and reactions of victims of violent crimes was conducted via web-based and mail questionnaires. In total, 211 police officers and 190 prosecutors in Sweden responded to the survey.

Results: There were considerable differences in the expected behavioral display of different types of crime victims, with rape and domestic assault victims seen as particularly prone to expressive self-presentation and self-blame. Despite empirical evidence showing otherwise, most respondents thought that crime victims' nonverbal and emotional expression is related to the truthfulness of their accounts. However, educational efforts appeared to have a corrective influence on such beliefs. The perceived prevalence of false reports differed across crime types, with rape and mugging receiving particularly high estimates. Police officers believed false reports to be more common than did prosecutors. Time constraints were seen, especially by prosecutors, as an impediment to appropriate treatment of crime victims.

Conclusions: Although some reported beliefs were at odds with established research, respondents rightly acknowledged the fact that different types of crime victims may behave differently. Furthermore, educational efforts appear to be effective in tackling inaccurate beliefs. Potential explanations for occupational differences and limitations associated with the survey methodology are discussed.



Saturday 11th October 2008

Session 3: 09:00-12:00

Psychopathy as an Important Psychological Construct: Towards a Comprehensive Model

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Psychopathy has long been the concern of forensic practitioners. It is linked to violence risk, responsiveness to treatment and many other important forensic concerns. I will review the history of the concept and consider important forensic issues, including the utility of measures of psychopathy in predicting future offending of individuals. I will emphasise the role of formulation when considering the legal relevance of psychopathy to the risk management of potentially violent offenders. I will conclude my talk by describing a new comprehensive model of Psychopathic personality - CAPP.

THE UTILIZATION OF THE DANISH VERSION OF THE HCR-20 VIOLENCE RISK ASSESSMENT SCHEME IN A FORENSIC HOSPITAL SETTING

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Assessment of risk of future violence is an important task for mental health professionals. International research suggests that using formalized risk assessment methods may improve the predictive validity of professionals' predictions of risk of future violence. The overall aim of this study was to determine the utilization of the Danish version of the HCR-20 (Pedersen & Hougaard, 2005; Webster, Douglas, Eaves, & Hart, 1997). The HCR-20 is a structured professional judgement model for assessing risk of future violence. It comprises 20 risk factors, categorised into three scales; historical, clinical and risk management. The results from a retrospective study including all patients discharged from a forensic ward at the Sct. Hans Psychiatric Centre in Denmark during 2001 and 2002 (n=148) will be presented. All patients were retrospectively assessed for risk of future violence. Information from files allowed for carrying out comprehensive risk assessments, including assessments of psychopathy, for a total of 107 patients. Data on crime and imprisonment were obtained from The Danish National Crime Register and data on re-hospitalisation were obtained from The Danish Psychiatric Central Research Register. Preliminary analysis supports the use of the HCR-20 violence risk assessment scheme in order to assess and treat violent behaviour. Clinical and methodological implications are discussed as well as future application of the HCR-20 risk assessment scheme in Danish settings.



Aggression amongst teenage girls – how and why do they do it?

Camilla Pedersen*

PsykologCompagniet

During the past decades more and more girls are enacting aggressive acts. As most existent research has focused on boys and measured aggressive acts as acts of physical violence, we know little about girls. One reason being that girls – according to some researchers – are less aggressive compared to boys. Others argue that they are just as aggressive as boys, but express their aggression in different manners than boys, namely as relational aggression targeting her relationship with her peers.

The present project examined how aggression is expressed amongst teenage girls. A qualitative study looking at the reason how and why girls engage in aggression will be presented.

Girls attending secondary school were interviewed. A total of 23 girls participated, divided into 8 focus groups. Each interview was recorded and transcribed, and subsequently analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. Themes were thus generated with regards to girls' reasons for using aggression.

Results suggest that girls' prefer to use acts that target the relationship, rather than using actual physical acts of aggression. Furthermore, girls carefully plan how to hurt the victim, and target what they know is most difficult for the victim to change, thus ensuring a long-lasting effect.

In conclusion, it is vital that girls' preferred form of aggression is not viewed as a 'phase they go through' and as something they 'will grow out off'. Instead, it is important to intervene against the use of this type of aggression as some researchers have speculated links between relational aggression and female psychopathy.

Revisiting the generality versus specificity debate in criminal careers research: Do some offenders specialize in co-offending?

Sarah B. van Mastrigt*

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Introduction:

There is ongoing empirical and theoretical debate with respect to the issue of generality versus specificity in individual offending behaviour. Whilst some scholars suggest that a single psychological construct (e.g., low self-control) underlies all criminal behaviour and leads to generalized offending patterns over time, others contend that differentiated criminal pathways sometimes lead to specialization. In addressing this debate, considerable effort has been dedicated to establishing whether offenders show versatility or continuity in the *types* of crimes they commit (e.g., violent, property, etc). Far less research has considered whether individuals display a preference for offending in a particular *form* (e.g., offending alone or co-offending with accomplices). Such research has the potential to shed new light on the specialization debate, in addition to being of interest from a policy perspective.

Aim: In this paper I explore whether some offenders appear to specialize in co-offending over time, and consider the theoretical and practical implications of this finding.

Methods: The short-term criminal careers of 61,646 offenders were tracked over a 36-month period using official police data from the UK. Quantitative statistical analyses were used to identify patterns and correlates of co-offending specialization and versatility.

Results: A small number of co-offending specialists could be identified in this offending population. These individuals could be distinguished from non-specialists on the basis of their age (younger), but not with respect to their gender, offending frequency, or offence type specialization.

Conclusions: This study provides tentative support for the argument that differentiated and specialized co-offending careers may exist, and highlights the need for additional research on the predictors of joint participation in crime.



Criminal Behaviour amongst persons with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Camilla Pedersen*

PsykologCompagniet

Criminal behaviour amongst persons with ASD has during the last two decades become an area of interest within disciplines such as psychology and law. Within psychology, researchers have tried to identify what types of criminal activities such persons engage in, and why they do so. Some have looked into the similarities with other types of persons who are known to commit the majority of crimes, namely persons with psychopathic traits. Within the legal system it has become, although somewhat slowly, apparent that these persons require special handling. However, in Denmark at present, there are no specific guidelines or approaches as to how to do this most efficiently and most safely.

The present project has three main objectives, namely a) looking at whether there seems to be ASD-typical crimes, b) whether specific characteristics lead persons with ASD to commit crimes, e.g. presence of lack of empathy, and finally, the last objective, c), is to develop guidelines serving as a tool for legal officials in their meeting and interaction with persons with ASD.

Based on a review of existing literature, the aims are sought enlightened. Preliminary results indicate that there is disagreement as to whether there are ASD typical crimes, yet there seems to exist some agreement that the concept 'lack of empathy' plays a vital role.

The conclusion of the present project is that there is an urgent need for more research being conducted within this area. It is important in order to further the understanding of why persons with ASD commit crimes, as this will facilitate prevention and treatment. The implications as to how such knowledge can serve as vital information within legal frameworks, will be discussed.

Psychometric properties of the Police Stress Questionnaire on a sample of Icelandic police officers

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Purpose. The main aim of the study was to translate and collect data on the reliability and validity of the Police Stress Questionnaire (PSQ). The questionnaire consists of two scales tapping into both operational (PSQ-Op) and organizational (PSQ-Org) sources of stress. In accordance with previous research on the PSQ it is expected that the internal reliability of the questionnaire will be satisfactory (Alpha > 0.8) (McCreary and Thompson, 2006). It is hypothesised that detectives will score higher on organizational stress factors than police officers and that police officers will score higher on operational stress factors.

Method. A total of 307 participants answered the PSQ questionnaire, the Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS), and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). The sample consisted of police officers from all around Iceland, except from Vestmannaeyjar and Suðurnes, across the ranks of police officer to detective.

Results. In line with previous studies, the internal reliability of the PSQ was high and results indicate that the questionnaire is measuring specific stress factors. Responses indicate that the stress levels of Icelandic police officers are low to medium. Negative correlation is between stress measurements and satisfaction with life which indicates that stress has an impact on general life satisfaction.

Conclusions. The results indicate that the PSQ has good psychometric properties and is suitable for use in Iceland to measure stress of police officers.

