EMOTIONAL CONGRUENCE WITH CHILDREN AND SEXUAL OFFENDING AGAINST CHILDREN: A META-ANALYTIC REVIEW

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Emotional Congruence with Children (ECWC)

- Exaggerated affective or cognitive affiliation with children and childhood

- Children are viewed as less judgemental, more understanding, and easier to relate to than adults

- Offenders report being "in love" with a child, having children as friends, leading child-oriented lifestyles, having child-oriented employment, spending large amounts of time with children

The Current State of the Research Literature

- Three main research topics:
  1. Is ECWC a feature of sexual offenders against children (SOC)? Do certain subgroups of SOC score higher in ECWC?

  2. Is ECWC associated with sexual recidivism?

  3. Is ECWC amenable to change through treatment?

Hypotheses

- SOC with unrelated victims will show the highest levels of ECWC

- ECWC will continue to be predictive of sexual recidivism

- ECWC will show a significant decrease from pre-treatment to post-treatment. This decrease is expected for only those SOC with unrelated victims

Method

- Search strategy: electronic databases, conference programs, manual search of journal websites, researchers in area were contacted

- Inclusion Criteria:
  - Sample of sexual offenders against children
  - Comparison group (non-SOC, SOC subgroup)
  - Report group statistics on measure of ECWC

Method

- Groups included in analyses:
  - sexual offenders against children (SOC)
  - extrafamilial offenders (SOC-E)
  - extrafamilial offenders with male victims (SOC-EMV) or female victims (SOC-EFV)
  - intrafamilial offenders (SOC-I)
  - sexual offenders against adults (SOA)
  - sexual offenders with mixed-age victims (SOC/SOA)
  - non-sexual offenders (NSO)
  - non-offenders (NO)

Measures of ECWC

- Children and Sex Questionnaire's Emotional Congruence with Children Scale (Beckett, 1987)

- Child Identification Scale-Revised (Wilson, 1999)

- Stable-2000 and Stable-2007

- Typologies (i.e., Interpersonal Type, MTC:CM3, Knight & Prentky; Immature Type, Fitch, 1962)

- "Other" measures

Statistical Analyses

- Effect size statistic: Cohen's *d*
  - Generally: Small = 0.3; Medium = 0.5; Large = 0.8

  - Area-specific: Group comparison on risk factor variables range from 0.20 to 0.69 (Dreznick, 2003; Nunes, McPhail, & Babchishin, 2011; Whitaker et al., 2008)

  - Area-specific: Sexual recidivism mean effect sizes from 0.04 to 0.62 (Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2004)

Statistical Analyses

- Random-effects Model

- Heterogeneity Statistics

  - Q reported to facilitate interpretation of between-study effect variation

  - Outliers: a single study accounts for 50% of the value of Q (Whitaker et al., 2008)

  - Q-between: significant variation between the levels of moderator variables (analogue to ANOVA)

Study Demographics

- 29 usable documents were included; 34 documents excluded

- These documents yielded 162 effect sizes
  - 132 for group comparison meta-analyses
  - 15 for sexual recidivism meta-analyses
  - 16 for magnitude of treatment change meta-analyses

- 48% published; all adult samples; all male samples; predominantly Caucasian; incarcerated and supervised samples

SOC Comparisons

Comparison	k ($n_{\text{SOC}}/n_{\text{comparison}}$)	LL	Mean d	UL	Q
Non-SOC	17 (4323/1697)	-0.02	0.11	0.24	**43.16*****
NO	4 (266/211)	-0.22	-0.02	0.18	3.31
NSO	4 (193/116)	-0.19	0.17	0.53	6.19
SOA	12 (4030/1258)	0.01	**0.17**	0.33	**32.51*****
SOC/SOA	4 (1004/112)	-0.21	-0.01	0.19	2.13

*p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001.

SOC Comparisons

- No differences in ECWC for SOC and combined non-SOC groups, non-offenders, non-sexual offenders, and mixed sexual offenders

- SOC did score higher ECWC than rapists

- Significant variation was not explained by moderator variables

SOC-I Comparisons

Comparison	k ($n_{\text{SOC}}/n_{\text{comparison}}$)	LL	Mean d	UL	Q
NO	2 (118/135)	-0.59	**-0.33**	-0.08	0.63
NSO	3 (86/115)	-1.02	-0.43	0.17	**7.51***
SOA	8 (1188/884)	-0.34	-0.10	0.15	**28.55*****
SOC/SOA	4 (452/111)	-0.55	**-0.30**	-0.06	3.47

SOC-I Comparisons

- Intrafamilial offenders typically score lower than non-offenders and mixed sexual offenders

- Intrafamilial offenders score lower than non-sexual offenders and rapists, but differences are not significant

- Sources of significant variability not accounted for by demographic moderators

SOC-E Comparisons

Comparison	k ($n_{\text{SOC}}/n_{\text{comparison}}$)	LL	Mean d	UL	Q
NO[a]	2 (83/135)	0.33	**0.61**	0.89	0.24
NSO	4 (135/147)	0.17	**0.45**	0.73	3.62
SOA[b]	9 (1679/697)	0.06	**0.24**	0.41	14.00
SOC/SOA	4 (525/111)	-0.05	0.18	0.41	3.48
SOC-I	15 (1966/1932)	0.33	**0.51**	0.69	**48.11*****

[a]With outlier: Mean d = 0.35, 95% CI = -0.21, 0.91, $Q(2)$ = 10.85, p = .004. [b]With outlier: Mean d = 0.36, 95% CI = 0.12, 0.60, $Q(9)$ = 39.08, $p < .001$.

SOC-E Comparisons

- Extrafamilial offenders score higher on ECWC compared to non-offenders, non-sexual offenders, and rapists

- Large difference on ECWC between extrafamilial and intrafamilial offenders, although there was marked variance in study effects

- Extrafamilial and mixed sexual offenders score similar levels of ECWC
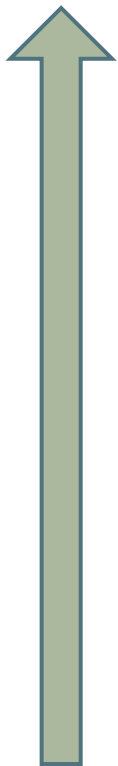
SOC-EMV and SOC-EFV Comparisons

SOC Group	Comparison	k ($n_{\text{SOC}}/n_{\text{comparison}}$)	LL	Mean d	UL	Q
SOC-EMV	SOA	5 (581/562)	0.12	**0.30**	0.47	2.73
	SOC/SOA	3 (123/76)	-0.11	0.20	0.51	0.19
	SOC-I[a]	6 (581/1040)	0.26	**0.50**	0.74	10.00
	SOC-EFV	10 (704/1093)	0.22	**0.45**	0.68	**18.96***
SOC-EFV	SOA[b]	6 (1005/597)	-0.16	0.03	0.22	7.15
	SOC/SOA	4 (409/112)	-0.17	0.12	0.41	4.78
	SOC-I	8 (1112/1223)	0.13	**0.30**	0.48	13.53

[a]With outlier: $d = 0.66$, 95% CI $= 0.32, 0.99$, $Q(6) = 25.46$, $p < .001$. [b]With outlier: $d = 0.19$, 95% CI $= -0.16, 0.54$, $Q(6) = 42.53$, $p < .001$.

SOC-EMV and SOC-EFV Comparisons

- SOC-EMV scored highest on ECWC, with exception of mixed sexual offenders
  - Interestingly, significantly higher than SOC-EFV in published studies only ($d = 0.56$)

- SOC-EFV scored higher than SOC-I, but similar to SOA and mixed sexual offenders

Higher
ECWC

Lower
ECWC

SOC-EMV

SOC-E

SOC/SOA

SOC-EFV

NO

SOA

NSO

SOC-I

Predicting Sexual Recidivism

	k (N)	LL	Mean d	UL	Q
ECWC	7 (4866)	0.17	**0.34**	0.51	**10.15***
Outlier removed	6 (2053)	0.24	**0.39**	0.54	5.21

- ECWC continues to be a significant predictor of sexual recidivism in SOC samples with higher ECWC associated with greater likelihood of recidivism.
- Hanson & Morton-Bourgon (2004): k = 3, d = 0.42, 95% CI = 0.16, 0.69

Predicting Sexual Recidivism by Type of Measure

	k (N)	LL	Mean d	UL	Q	Q-between
Risk Assessment	2 (397)	0.14	**0.45**	0.76	0.28	1.51
Self-Report	3 (3924)	-0.06	0.25	0.56	**6.12***	
Typology	3 (375)	0.15	**0.55**	0.96	4.53	

Predicting Sexual Recidivism by Type of Measure

- Risk assessment and typology measures of ECWC significantly predict sexual recidivism

- Self-report measures are not predictive of sexual recidivism, however, only three studies and significant variance in study effect sizes

Predicting Sexual Recidivism by Victim Relationship

	k (N)	LL	Mean d	UL	Q	Q-between
SOC-E[a]	5 (526)	0.31	**0.58**	0.85	5.86	**8.10****
SOC-I	3 (893)	-0.58	-0.15	0.27	0.14	

[a]With outlier: $d = 0.47$, 95% CI = 0.15, 0.79, $Q(5) = 16.54$, $p = 0.005$, $Q_{between}(1) = 5.21$, $p = .023$.

Predicting Sexual Recidivism by Victim Relationship

- ECWC was a significant predictor of sexual recidivism for extrafamilial offenders

- ECWC was not a significant predictor for sexual recidivism for intrafamilial offenders

- The average effect size for the extrafamilial offenders was significantly higher than for the intrafamilial offenders; this finding was the same with or without one outlier

Magnitude of Treatment Change

Group	k (N)	LL	Mean d	UL	Q	Q-between
All SOC	8 (4045)	0.20	**0.28**	0.36	**16.03****	
SOC-E	5 (1228)	0.33	**0.41**	0.49	3.77	**15.17*****
SOC-I[a]	3 (114)	-0.10	0.06	0.22	0.50	

[a]With outlier: $d = 0.16$, 95% CI = -0.08, 0.40, $Q(3) = 12.99$, $p < .01$, $Q_{between}$ (1) = 3.78, $p = .05$.

Magnitude of Treatment Change

- SOC displayed significant treatment change, study demographic moderators did not account for the variance within study effects

- Extrafamilial offenders displayed significant treatment change; intrafamilial offenders showed relatively little change

- The average effect size for the extrafamilial offenders was significantly higher than for the intrafamilial offenders

Discussion

- Generally, overall SOC groups did not differ from non-SOC on ECWC

- Subgroup analysis provided more meaningful differentiation and supported hypothesis
  - All SOC-E subgroups scored higher than SOC-I; SOC-I lower in most comparisons

  - SOC-EMV scored highest on ECWC, but did not differ from mixed sex offenders

Discussion

- ECWC continued to be a predictor of sexual recidivism for SOC samples, magnitude comparable to Hanson & Morton-Bourgon's (2004) meta-analysis

- Risk assessment and typology measures of ECWC produced significant effects, however, self-report measures did not

- ECWC was a predictor for extrafamilial but not intrafamilial offender samples

Discussion

- ECWC showed a moderate level of positive treatment change

- Extrafamilial offender samples evidenced significantly more treatment change than intrafamilial offenders

- ECWC did not evidence significant change in intrafamilial offender samples

Conclusions

- ECWC is most characteristic of those offenders with extrafamilial, male child victims

- The lack of identification with children in intrafamilial offenders supports the "callous parent" interpretation (Beckett et al., 1994; Beech et al., 1998)

- ECWC continues to be a risk factor for sexual recidivism, especially for extrafamilial offenders, and may be amenable to treatment change

Many Thanks!

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FIN

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