

The Evaluative Attitudes toward Sexual Offending Against Children Scale


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Attitudes vs. Evaluative Attitudes

- Use of the lay definition in forensic psychology:
attitude
Collins. (n.d.). Attitude. In CollinsDictionary.com dictionary. Retrieved February 2, 2023, from https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/nary/english/attitude
NOUN
(ˈætt, luːd, -tjuːd)
1. manner, disposition, feeling, position, etc., with regard to a person or thing; tendency or orientation, esp. of the mind
a negative attitude
group attitudes
- The distinction between attitudes and evaluative attitudes (Nunes, Pedneault, & Hermann, 2021):
 - Evaluative attitudes → how positively or negatively one views something



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Evaluative Attitudes toward Sexual Offending Against Children

- Why not use cognitive distortions?
 - Evaluative attitudes separate from cognitive distortions in other cases (Nunes et al., 2018; Pedneault, Hermann, & Nunes, 2021)
- Let's take a look at the Hanson Sex Attitudes Questionnaire (Hanson, Gizzarelli, & Scott (1994)...



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Hanson Sex Attitudes Questionnaire

"Some children are mature enough to enjoy sex with adults."

"The innocent look of young girls makes them attractive."


"If a child does not say 'no', it means the child wants sex."

"Having sex with a lonely child can make the child feel loved and cared for."



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EASOC Development




- Pool of 30 potential items (rated from *very bad* to *not bad at all*)
- 157 men participating in a sex offender treatment program in the U.S.
- Retained 13 items for the EASOC
- Retention/exclusion based primarily on...
 - *very bad* responses (minimize floor effects)
 - inter-item correlations (minimize redundancy)
- Cronbach's alpha = .968 (excellent)

A child wants to touch your penis, and you let them for your sexual pleasure.

very bad pretty bad not so bad not bad at all

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Retained Items



"You sexually touch a child."

"A child asks you about masturbation so you masturbate in front of the child to teach them how to do it."

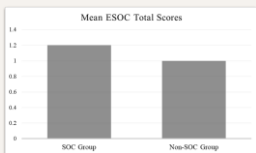
"Your partner wants to sexually touch a child with you, so you do it to make your partner happy."

"A child sits on your lap and rubs against your penis, you let it continue for your sexual pleasure."

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EASOC Scores Were Associated with Sexual Offending Against Children

- Participants divided into SOC ($n = 58$) and Non-SOC ($n = 22$)
- Significant difference between SOC ($M = 1.20$) and Non-SOC ($M = 1.00$) mean EASOC total scores



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Limitations

- Total scores were low, even for the SOC group
- Self-reported offending

Next Steps

- Reliability and validity of the scale
- Distinctiveness from other measures
- Causal role and measure relevance in sexual offending against children



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References (and Thank You!)



- Hanson, R. K., Gizzarelli, R., & Scott, H. (1994). The Attitudes of Incest Offenders; Sexual Entitlement and Acceptance of Sex with Children. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 21(2), 187-202. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854894021002001>
- Nunes, K. L., Hermann, C. A., White, K., Pattersen, C., & Bumby, K. (2018). Attitude May Be Everything, But Is Everything an Attitude? Cognitive Distortions May Not Be Evaluations of Rape. *Sexual Abuse*, 30(1), 43-62. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1079063215625489>
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