

Public Abstract

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Title:Identifying Profiles of Psychological Characteristics of Juvenile Offenders and Adolescent Psychiatric Inpatients

Research indicates that hopelessness levels are high among both young people in the mental health services population (MHSP) and youth in the juvenile detention population (JDP). The current research study assessed hopelessness levels in samples from these two populations. A general hypothesis was that, although the hopelessness levels within the two subgroups may be similar, the manner in which hopelessness levels related to other relevant variables may differ significantly between the two subgroups. Levels of internalizing, externalizing, delinquency, callous-unemotional traits, and sensation seeking were also assessed within the two subgroups, and two core profiles using the Profile Analysis via Principal Component Analysis (PAPCA) procedure (Kim, 2013; Stout Sosinky & Kim, 2013) were extracted from the entire group of participants. While findings indicated that the MHSP has statistically higher levels of hopelessness, there were no significant differences between subgroups in the levels of other variables. The pattern of intercorrelations between hopelessness and the other five variables was significantly different between the two groups. Through use of logistical regression procedures, the measures utilized improved the ability to predict to which group a participant belonged. PAPCA revealed that mean weights representing each subject's relationship to each of the two core profiles differed significantly between each group. Also, participants' delinquency scores were significantly correlated with subject weights. Findings lend credence to the idea that hopelessness manifests itself differently within the two subgroups. Limitations of this study are discussed. The relationship between hopelessness and other variables within vulnerable adolescent groups appears to be very complex, and further study is warranted.