

**Signature Page**

**A Systematic Review of Criminogenic Factors of Intrafamilial and Extrafamilial  
Child Sexual Abuse**

**By**

**Rachel Ann Higgins**

**A Thesis Submitted to**

**Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia**

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for**

**the Honour's Degree, Bachelor of Arts in Criminology**

**April 2024, Halifax, Nova Scotia**

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**Approved: Dr. Jay Healey**

**Supervisor**

**Department of Criminology**

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### Abstract

As previous research shows the rates of child sexual abuse are overly static, with all the previous research we are still unable to help prevent such a traumatic moment in a child's life. The present study compares and contrasts criminogenic factors of intrafamilial and extrafamilial child sexual offenders. This study took eleven common factors of child sex offenders and observed how they are linked to one another as well as how they relate back to the offense. These criminogenic factors include; neglect, physical and sexual abuse, poor parental attachments, hypersexual lifestyles, sexual role and masculinity, disinhibition, atypical sexual tendencies, social incompetence, cognitive distortions, social isolation, and low self-esteem.

When it comes to child sexual abuse there are two primary victimologies at play, intrafamilial and extrafamilial victims. Intrafamilial offenders are family members, this often includes those who are blood-related for example; parents, aunts and uncles, step-parents, and even siblings. Extrafamilial offenders are those who are not related to their victims, this often includes coaches, scout leaders, religious leaders, teachers, and strangers.

This study is a systematic literature review aiming to identify and compare criminogenic factors of both intrafamilial and extrafamilial child sexual offenders, and to describe the typical profiles of child sex offenders based on the eleven chosen criminogenic factors. By conducting a systematic review we are able to get unbiased results and critique previous literature. This study is looking at child sexual abuse using; social learning theory, social bonds theory, and routine activity theory.

*Keywords:* Intrafamilial, extrafamilial, child sexual abuse, criminogenic factors, social learning theory, social bond theory, routine activity theory.

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## Introduction

Looking at child sexual abuse we must understand the meaning of child sexual abuse and the differences within the offenders as well as the differences between victims. Throughout previous research, there are many different definitions to determine what is child sexual abuse. The World Health Organization defined child sexual assault as “the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent, or that violates the laws or social taboos of society. Child sexual abuse is evidenced by this activity between a child and an adult or another child who by age or development is in a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power, the activity being intended to gratify or satisfy the needs of the other person. This may include but is not limited to; the inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity; the exploitive use of a child in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices; or the exploitive use of children in pornography performance and materials (WHO, 2003).

Looking at child sex offenders there are two major categories of offenders, there are child molesters and there are pedophiles. There are many similarities between these two groups of offenders however there are also many differences. A child molester is used for offenders who have sexual contact with children (Feelgood & Hoyer, 2008). Child molesters can also experience sexual relationships with adults. The term child molester reflects the behavior of the offender, the term child molester is not related to any psychological or medical phenomenon, it is only used among the justice system. On the contrary, the term pedophile applies to offenders who have a sexual interest and even a preference for pre-pubescent children. This means they are sexually attracted to female children who have not yet developed curves, breasts, or growth of

body hair. They could also be attracted to males who have not yet started growing facial hair, or body hair that has not started increasing muscle mass or have yet to start getting broadening shoulders and chest. Unlike child molesters, pedophiles are one of the eight paraphilias recognized in the DSM (The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders). Pedophiles experience intense or recurring sexual urges over a period of at least six months (The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 2014), the offender has to be at least 16 years of age and at least 5 years older than their victim.

In 1993, there were approximately 150,000 confirmed cases of child sexual abuse reported to the welfare authorities in the United States. This represents 15% of the one million confirmed cases of child abuse and neglect reported to the authorities (Finkelhor, 1994). Child sexual abuse is a common and serious public health concern, it has been estimated that 16% of men and 27% of women in the United States suffer from this form of abuse. When looking at rates of child sexual abuse it is important to understand it is difficult to obtain accurate rates since there are many different obstacles including; cases that go unreported for many different reasons, cases where there isn't proof of the abuse, and the workload of workers in the field. Rates of child sexual abuse have slightly decreased over time but not nearly as much as we would have hoped. In 1997, it was found that there were 1.67 child sexual abuse cases per 1,000 children (Almeida et. al, 2008). In 2002, it was found that there were 1.30 child sexual abuse cases per 1,000 children (ibid). This shows a decline of 0.37 cases per 1,000 children across the United States (ibid), this is a small decrease but the population of the United States currently is 333.3 million people. This means there are roughly 433,290 cases of child sexual abuse in one singular country.



The best way to understand child sexual abuse is to look at what causes offenders to commit the offense. To understand, we need to look at what criminogenic factors push these individuals to offend. These factors include things such as; neglect, physical and sexual abuse, poor parental attachments, hypersexual lifestyles, disinhibition, atypical sexual tendencies, cognitive distortions, social isolation, and many more. When a child is the victim of child sexual abuse they are either related to their offender or they are not. Intrafamilial offending occurs when the victim and the offender are related through blood or are within their extended family. Extrafamilial offenders are those who are not related to the child, they could be; teachers, coaches, religious leaders, scout leaders, or even strangers.

The criminogenic factors that were mentioned above are factors that can cause both intrafamilial and extrafamilial offenders to offend against children. These offenders experience multiple of these factors, not just one or two. Now the factors we will be looking at are broken into two major groups; intrafamilial criminogenic factors and extrafamilial criminogenic factors. These are divided based on how common they are with each type of offender, this does not mean extrafamilial offenders cannot show signs of having intrafamilial factors and vice versa. The most common intrafamilial factors include; neglect, physical and sexual abuse, poor parental attachments, and hypersexual lifestyles. Extrafamilial factors include; disinhibition, cognitive distortions, atypical sexual tendencies, social incompetence, and social isolation.

There are many differences between intrafamilial childhood sexual abuse and extrafamilial childhood sexual abuse, both with the victims and the offenders. Intrafamilial offenders are typically older than extrafamilial offenders and often experience their first offense much later in life. Precious research shows that offenders also tend to stick with one victimology, they either offend within their family or they offend against children to whom they are not

blood-related. A study by Stroebel et al. (2012) found that victims of intrafamilial sexual abuse suffer more negative consequences than victims of extrafamilial sexual abuse. Intrafamilial victims also tend to be younger and experience the abuse for a longer duration than extrafamilial victims (Seto, 2008). Many of these victims develop trauma, they have learned these behaviors at a young age in childhood and relate to them as being acceptable behaviors especially when their abuser has not been held accountable or caught, therefore many victims become offenders later on in life.

### **Research Question**

Considering the frequency of child sex abuse, I am interested in understanding and comparing the criminogenic factors that are commonly seen in intrafamilial and extrafamilial offenders. I am interested in seeing if there is possibly a connection that can help identify individuals who may be at risk for offenders before they make first contact. This is not only a criminal justice issue but it is also a public health issue, child sexual abuse can be detrimental to the mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing of the children. The trauma that occurs stays with the victim for their entire life and at times can put them at risk of offending later on in adolescence and adulthood.

### **Literature Review**

When looking at criminogenic factors of both extrafamilial and intrafamilial child sexual abuse we must understand that there are many similarities between these types of offenders. The offenders primarily stick to one profile of victims but similarities do exist. Some factors can be linked to one another or seem very similar. Just because someone has one or two of these factors does not mean that they will offend, however, when an individual has multiple of these factors

the risk of offending increases. This research will examine five intrafamilial criminogenic factors and six extrafamilial criminogenic factors.

### **Intrafamilial Criminogenic Factors**

#### **Neglect**

A study of 1575 sex offenders found that 9% of their participants had experienced neglect as a child (Widom & Massey, 2015 ). Neglect is defined as a form of maltreatment that focuses on acts of omission or the failure to provide. This can be seen by parents or any other caregivers' actions harming children (Rebbe, 2018). The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act defines neglect as “at a minimum any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation or an act of failure to act which presents an imminent risk or serious harm (Mennen, et al., 2010). Looking at previous research we see that childhood neglect is a significant factor when looking at those offenders who commit child sex crimes. Widom and Massey, also found that 8.3% of their participants experienced both neglect and physical abuse during childhood. Those offenders were significantly more likely to be arrested later in adulthood for sexual offenses. There is a strong relationship between youth who have experienced these traumas and those who later offend against children. This trauma at such a young age frequently turns to negative feelings and actions towards others.

#### **Physical and Sexual Abuse**

Physical and sexual abuse can occur concurrently throughout childhood, or it can also occur separately. Sexual child abuse consists of any harm to a child with the intent to exploit or harm on the part of the adult (Seto, 2015) It is considered any sexual contact with an older

person, whether that is using force, grooming the children, or using a position of authority (Hanson and Slater, 1988). Physical abuse is considered any intentional, non-accidental use of physical force or intentional, nonaccidental acts of omission on the part of a parent or caretaker interacting with a child in their care, aimed at hurting, injuring, or destroying that child (Gil, D.G, 1970). Previous research by Jepersen et al. shows that there is a high frequency between those who have been sexually or physically abused during childhood and those who offend against children later on in life. It is most common for children who have been sexually abused are more likely to have suffered other forms of abuse as well.

### **Poor Parental Attachments**

There is a wide range of definitions regarding poor parental attachments. It can include acts such as poor family dysfunction, poor sexual boundaries, lack of parental supervision, and poor parental care (Smith and Israel, 1987). Craissati et al. found that the affectionless control style of parenting is highly prevalent among sex offenders. Low parental care is highly associated with childhood abuse as well as disturbances within the household (2002). Smallbone and Dadds (1998) found that intrafamilial child abusers were more likely to have feelings of unloving, inconsistent, and abusive bonds with their mothers, they also defined their fathers as being uncaring and abusive. Male victims with poor parental bonds tend to develop emotional difficulties, feelings of loneliness, lack of intimacy, and low self-esteem which can result in offending later in life. These offenders who have poor relationship bonds will continuously resort back to unacceptable relationships to fulfill their needs of intimacy. In 1995, Working compared offenders who offended intrafamilial and those who offended outside of their immediate family. He found that those who offended against their siblings scored higher on parental rejection, they grew up in negative environments and were not satisfied with how their family functioned. These

negative feelings in childhood can often affect these offenders' bonds and relationships in all areas of their lives.

### **Sexual Role and Masculinity**

Sexual roles are defined as society's general feelings of what is normal and deemed acceptable within society. All of these roles are socially constructed, however, intrafamilial offenders tend to have difficulty accepting these norms. As for masculinity, it is defined as socially constructed characteristics and attributes of what a man needs to be to be socially accepted. These characteristics include things such as being strong and physical as well as the inability to show weakness and vulnerability. When looking at intrafamilial children sexual offenders have doubts about their masculinity and feel as though they have difficulties identifying with traditional male roles. In particular, looking at the acceptable sexual role, sex offenders tend to have a lower level of sexual functioning than the general population, they also have reported lower feelings of inadequacy or disgust when having intimate relations with adult females. It has also been reported that boys who have been sexually abused during childhood have a harder time accepting their masculinity throughout adulthood, which lowers their confidence in sexual relationships with adults. When it comes to their confidence these feelings often lead them to befriend children who do not necessarily hold others to such high levels of social norms in comparison to their adult counterparts.

### **Hypersexual Lifestyles**

When looking at sex crimes it is important to understand the offender's approach when it comes to their sexual activity. A hypersexual person cannot control their sexual behavior and impulses. It is only considered a hypersexual lifestyle when their impulses or urges cause distress within their personal lives. Hypersexual lifestyles can include many different factors, including;

an increased level of interest in pornography, prostitutes, strip clubs, compulsive masturbation as well and high numbers of sexual partners. It has been reported that those who live hypersexual lifestyles frequently have a short temper and higher levels of aggression. It is also very common for these individuals to have reported having deviant sexual fantasies as well as dissatisfaction with their sex life, forcing them to look elsewhere to satisfy that need. There are a wide range of different factors that can be included in a hypersexual lifestyle and many of these factors are also seen within child offenders. A study by Perera et al (2009) found that those who retrospectively reported childhood sexual abuse scored high on hypersexuality. We also know there is a strong relationship between those who experienced childhood sexual abuse and those who offend against children later in life.

### **Extrafamilial Criminogenic Factors**

#### **Disinhibition**

Disinhibition is the inability to withhold inappropriate behaviors, it is a pattern of antisocial, impulsive, and norm-violating acts. These acts can include minor violations such as substance abuse or antisocial attitudes, or as severe as sexual abuse or murder. Many of these offenders realize that their desires and fantasies are wrong however they cannot move past those desires and this is when they are impacted by behavioral disinhibition. Marshall and Barbaree (1990) found that when an individual has disinhibition and any fantasies towards having sex with children they are reinforced by masturbation and increase the individual motivation to have sexual contact with a child. Having both disinhibition and access to the potential victim can increase the likelihood of sexual offenses against children. In addition, when the offender experiences sexual pleasure, a sense of control, or a reduction of negative feelings it increases

the likelihood of them repeating this behavior and possibly harming more children or harming the same child over and over. This type of offender also lacks empathy towards the child therefore allowing them to act on their desires despite the fear and pain they may cause the child, the child's family, and their own family when they are caught.

### **Atypical Sexual Tendencies**

Atypical sexual behaviors are simply sexual activities that do not commonly occur in society. This can be a range of different behaviors, simply because something that may be uncommon to one may be common to another. Since sex is still a topic that isn't openly discussed there are no set behaviors that raise red flags. However, when looking for atypical behaviors many of them involve paraphilias. Looking at previous literature atypical sexual tendencies are one of the major differences between those offenders who offend against children and those who offend against adults. It has also been reported that when these fantasies escalate there is a higher risk of violence and harm done to the child. The offenders who have these fantasies alongside other factors that have previously been mentioned have an increased likelihood of offending. Those who experience fantasies after their first assault can experience an increase in violence and aggression within their fantasies as well as in their actions during their next assault.

### **Social Incompetence**

Previous literature has shown that there is a strong relationship between those who offend against children and those who experience social incompetence. Social incompetence is seen when people don't know how to comfortably engage and socialize with others. They often misread social cues and feel physically anxious when they need to socialize with others. The individuals also lack the appropriate skills to perform specific social tasks. These individuals

who offend against children are unable to function up to society's standards in social situations, meaning many lack adult connections. They become more comfortable with children because they are more accepting and do not hold the offenders to such a high social standard.

### **Cognitive Distortions**

Cognitive distortions were originally defined as an identifiable error in how we process information and perceive reality. Those who suffer from cognitive distortions inaccurately perceive reality and have difficulty understanding certain information. Cognitive distortions are common in all types of sexual offenders however they are frequently seen in child molesters. Child molesters tend to have beliefs that encourage them to commit these offenses against children (Abel, Gore, et. al, 1989). Some common cognitive distortions found in child molesters include; "children often initiate sex and know what they want," "Children enjoy sexual contact with adults," "Sex is good for children," and "men can do what they want with their children" (Ward et al., 1997). By these offenders justifying their acts they are more likely to continue abusing children and feeling no remorse as they do not see a problem with their behavior or the harm they are causing. Abel et. al also found that these offenders are more likely to blame the victims or social circumstances for their actions (1989).

### **Social Isolation**

Social isolation is the lack of relationships with others. This includes those who have little to no social contact with others and those who are lacking social support. These individuals do not need to be lonely, these individuals may feel as though they are being social. But in comparison to 'normal' individuals their level of social interaction is significantly lower (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, n.d). As previously mentioned research shows that poor social attachments are commonly found in sex offenders. Many of these offenders experience



difficulty when developing meaningful relationships. Those offenders who experience these difficulties have an increased chance of re-offending later in life (Marshall, 2010). Child abusers tend to have the highest rate of social isolation in comparison to other sex offenders. Since they have a higher rate we can look into their actions and try to understand how social isolation contributes to the sexual abuse of children. These individuals can continuously offend against their victims because they target those who cannot protect themselves during childhood.

### **Low Self Esteem**

Low self-esteem can cause feelings of self-criticism, thinking they are unworthy or incapable. Additionally, having low self-esteem can cause these individuals to feel shy or anxious around large groups of people, which can lead to social isolation due to the added stress and difficulty in developing confident relationships with adults. By having these two factors combined there is an overall higher chance that these individuals could commit sexual offenses against children and put them at added risk. Since these two factors are often seen together it is difficult to develop meaningful relationships with those their age, as well as they can struggle to develop acceptable sexual relationships. The combination of these two criminogenic factors can make their social lives very difficult.

### **Methodology**

A systematic review is a structured method that uses clear criteria to locate, obtain, and evaluate previous literature directly relating to the research topic (Davies & Francis, 2018). Systematic reviews can offer a wide range collection of current knowledge of the topic at hand and can provide an unbiased evaluation that is not always possible with other forms of reviews (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2017; Davies & Francis, 2018).

Systematic literature reviews started to gain population in the early 2000s when criminologists used this method of secondary research to assess policies in prior studies (Davies & Francis, 2018). Systematic reviews can also be used in an attempt to advance epidemiological knowledge and identify risk and preventative factors of criminal behavior (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2017). In this study we are using a systematic review to do just that, I am hoping to advance our understanding of common criminogenic factors of child sexual abuse offenders and understand the possible links between these factors both within one victimology as well as the links between extrafamilial and intrafamilial offenders. Systematic reviews in criminology typically include an introduction to the topic of research, a method section describing the sources of data, and a study section with a specific outline of inclusion and exclusion criteria. It will then discuss the results describing all findings, an area to discuss the significant findings, and appropriate conclusions (Davies & Francis, 2018; Jolliffe & Farrington, 2017; James & Proulx, 2014).

The main method to be employed is an internet-based search of online databases. In this study, the platforms included were Sage Journals, EBSCOhost, SpringerLink Journals, Taylor and Francis Online, Elsevier Science Direct, Heinonline Law Journal Library, JAMA Pediatrics, and APA PsychNet.

The purpose of this study is to identify common criminogenic factors of intrafamilial and extrafamilial offenders. It is also gain knowledge to be able to describe the typical profiles of child offenders based on the eleven criminogenic factors we are exploring. When looking for significant articles or previous studies the criteria followed included they had to be peer-reviewed articles, they had to be published within the last 40 years, and they had to contain studies and findings directly relating to criminogenic factors present in intrafamilial and extrafamilial sexual abuse of children.

The reason for conducting a systematic literature review was to compare and contrast the findings of previous studies to understand the key factors that are commonly seen within offenders. This was done as a qualitative research study, looking to gather a range of previous literature to compare and critique. The large data range of articles was chosen because statistically, the frequency of childhood sexual abuse is overall very static, therefore the findings of older articles are still very reliable for the current rates of childhood sexual abuse. The frequency of these factors being present in offenders is also very static. Sadly, the factors and results of childhood sexual abuse have continuously stayed the same over time, there have not been many changes in reporting of child sexual abuse and the risk factors of offenders have not changed. The large majority of studies and articles used in this research have come from the leading researchers in this field of study.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Due to the complicated topic of research at hand, we will be looking at intrafamilial and extrafamilial child sexual abuse through the lens of multiple theories. This will allow us to explore in-depth and help us gain a thorough understanding of victims, offenders, and the rate of victims who offend later in life. We will be looking at it using social learning, social control, and routine activity theory so we will be able to have a better understanding of what influences these behaviors.

#### **Social Learning Theory**

Regarding social learning, this theory believes that people's behaviors can be learned by observing similar behaviors from other people with whom they surround themselves. Relating to sexual abuse this theory suggests that children who are abused grow into being sexually abusive

adults (Felson & Lane, 2009). Vicarious learning occurs primarily when the model or observers are rewarded. Relating this to research on intrafamilial and extrafamilial child sexual abuse, children who are abused intrafamilial can be exposed to this harm at a very young age and possibly very frequently and for extrafamilial sexual abuse, it is very common offenders will use gifts to gain the trust of their victims in s form of grooming (Finklehor, 1984). By learning these behaviors the victims are then at risk for developing into potential offenders once they have reached adulthood or become sexually active. When a child victim offends later in life they have become a victim of intergenerational transmission of violence (Felson & Lane, 2009). This is not just for a victim who has physically experienced the abuse it can also affect those who observed the abuse. This theory explains why it is so common for victims of sexual abuse at a young age to follow their learned behaviors and become offenders themselves at a later time in their lives. We know that these victims are at a higher risk for committing childhood sexual abuse later in life and research following their live course could help us understand connections in life and explain why they are likely to commit sexual assault later on. These victims can experience multiple criminogenic factors we are researching, including; physical and sexual abuse, neglect, poor parental attachments, hypersexual lifestyles, and atypical sexual tendencies.

### **Social Bonds Theory**

Many of the criminogenic factors that are commonly found with child sexual offenders are due to a lack of social bonds. In previous literature, we see that victims and offenders tend to have weaker parental bonds and social bonds with individuals within their families. This theory believes that individuals who have strong social bonds should have the bonds needed to inhibit social deviance. This being said children would be at a higher risk to commit crimes if they were exposed to intrafamilial sexual assault and are at a higher risk for offending in the future due to

the weaker bonds that they lost in those strong and supportive relationships. The specific factors directly relating to low social bonds include; poor parental attachments, social incompetence, social isolation, and low self-esteem.

### **Routine Activity Theory**

Lastly, routine activity theory looks at crime from the offender's point of view. These offenders assess their victims and tend to act when their victims are easily accessible. Three interrelated factors must be present to explain a crime using routine activity theory. Those include a motivated offender, a suitable target who in this case is the child, and lastly lack of a capable guardian. The majority of these offenders gain access to their victims from within their households or within organizations that give the offender access (scouts, team sports, etc.). This can be done easily because these offenders tend to easily gain access to their victims and isolated locations where they can abuse the children. They may also pick their target specifically if they can access the children in a low-risk setting. Using this theory regarding child sexual abuse we can look at why these offenders choose their victims as well as see their point of view. It is often seen that these offenders are neglectful, physically and sexually abusive, and socially incompetent.

## **Results**

Widom and Massey (2015) found that individuals with histories of childhood abuse and neglect were at an increased risk of being arrested for a sex crime compared to their control individuals. Their study found that physically abused and neglected males were at the highest risk. This supports previous research that states males are most likely to commit sexual offenses. In their study they took of juveniles in the Midwest area, they included physical abuse cases

resulting in bruises, welts, burns, abrasions, lacerations, wounds, cuts, bone skull fractures, and other evidence of physical abuse. The sexual charges included sexual assault, fondling, rape, sodomy, and incest. Neglect cases reflected a judgment that the parent's deficiencies in child care were beyond those acceptable by community and professional standards. Their study included 1575 individuals, 776 were males. Their study found that 13.6% had experienced physical abuse, 14.4% experienced neglect and 14.3% experienced both neglect and abuse. The control group also mimicked the offenders in sex, race, date of birth, and economic class. Overall, there were 667 matches for abused and neglected children (Widom & Massey, 2015).

Dwahwan and Marshall looked at 16 child molesters, using interviews and questionnaires they found that 50% of the child molesters were classified as abused. 87.5% of the child molesters had reported suffering from contact abuse. Out of all the offenders who were questioned 41.9% had reported high subjective impact due to their abuse history. They also found that 83% of the offenders in their study reported multiple sexually abusive episodes and 69% reported having multiple abusers (Dwahwan & Mashall, 1996).

McKillop et al. (2012) conducted a study looking at self-reported data obtained by 107 male child sexual abusers regarding their attachment problems. Most defined their parental attachments as affectionless control. 51% of the offenders reported having insecure maternal attachments, and 63% reported insecure paternal attachments. They also found that offenders were more likely to report insecure attachment relationships with their fathers compared to their mothers.

Previous research looking into the cognitive distortions of sexual offenders started by looking at offenders and their lack of empathy toward their victims. It was found later on by Fernandes et al. that the offenders do not suffer from global empathy deficits, they experience a

lack of empathy due to cognitive distortions which allow the victim to offend and continue offending. Many offenders display cognitive distortions when they are discussing their crime to maintain self-esteem and reduce their shame (Fernandez & Marshall, 2003; Fernandez et al., 1999; Marshall, Marshall & Serran, 2007). When this occurs they are incapable of showing empathy for their victims. Cognitive distortions are to be expected, they do not represent a defect, but rather it is a response to their situation and their experiences. These distortions can be expected to vary depending on the offenders' level of self-esteem and the degree of shame they experienced regarding their actions (Marshall, Marshall, Serran & O'Brien, 2009).

Dandescu & Wolfe (2003) studied 82 participants to understand their use of atypical sexual tendencies. When looking at child sexual offenders one of the most common atypical sexual tendencies is sexual fantasies involving children. 57 participants whom we will be focusing on in their study were in treatment for sexual assaults against children. 31.5% of the child molesters reported no deviant sexual fantasies prior to their first offense. However, 64.9% reported having deviant fantasies prior to their offense. Out of those who experienced these deviant fantasies they reported having between 1 and 100 deviant fantasies prior to their offense, and 17.5% reported having experienced 100 and 500 deviant fantasies (Dandescu & Wolfe, 2003). The data from this study supported the fact that child molesters who have offended against both male and female victims reported a significantly larger number of fantasies both before and after their first hands-on offense (Dandescu & Wolfe, 2003).

Research suggests that adolescent sex offenders seek sexual contact with children because they lack the social skills to fulfill their sexual and emotional needs an age-appropriate relationships (Finklehor, 1984; Marshall & Barbaree, 1990; Ward & Siegert, 2002). It is believed that offenders who experience social incompetence have deficits in skills such as approaching

someone, engaging them in conversation, and accurately decoding affective cues during interactions with those of the same age (Becker & Kaplan, 1988; Knight & Prentky, 1993; Marshall et al., 1993; Marshall, Serran, & Cortoni, 2000; Worling, 2001). Social incompetence predicts that adolescent sex offenders would score significantly lower than adolescent non-sex offenders in heterosocial skills, as well as they predict that they will score lower on general measures of social skills.

Marshall & Mazzucco conducted a study using self-reported data, they had 24 nonfamilial child molesters and a group of nonoffenders. Their study showed that child molesters had scored significantly lower on self-esteem and higher on the rate of childhood sexual abuse than the nonoffenders. This goes with the prediction that those who experience sexual abuse during their childhood have lower levels of self-esteem during adolescence and into adulthood. In their study, they also found that the child molesters were 41.85% reported having maternal rejection and 49.37% reported having paternal rejection. Relating this to parental social bonds it is observed that there is also a link between parental rejection and self-esteem.

All the previous literature shows that many factors are commonly seen within the same offenders. As seen through previous literature, many of the factors can be experienced by the same offenders, and many of them can be considered related. Individuals who have multiple of these criminogenic factors are at a higher risk of offending compared to those who may just have one or two of these factors. It is important to understand that not everyone who shows signs of these factors are potential offender.



## Discussion

This thesis examined the criminogenic factors of intrafamilial and extrafamilial child sex offenders. This thesis took eleven of the most common factors of child sex offenders to help understand what possible signs can point to a potential offender before they offend against children. By comparing these factors between the two types of offenders we can gain knowledge that could help us protect the younger generations. Children are considered such a vulnerable population and research on this topic can help us protect these children. These forms of abuse can be detrimental to a child's mental, physical, and emotional health. Sexual abuse can be the root of trauma that they will carry throughout their entire life. I chose to conduct a systematic literature review looking at different studies that have been conducted that can give insights on the commonality of these factors.

Child sexual abuse can be detrimental to a child, it can impact them throughout their whole lives and often can put them at risk of offending themselves during adolescence and adulthood. These children are the future and if we cannot protect them we are truly letting them down. Children are not able to protect themselves and with continuous research into what can be done to prevent child sexual abuse, hopefully, one day we will finally see a decrease in rates of abuse.

As we know there are many commonalities between factors and many of them can be linked to each other. One of the key links can be seen with social isolation and poor self-image or self-esteem. These types of offenders tend to stick with one type of abuse whether that is intrafamilial or extrafamilial. However, some factors are present in both types of offenders. I feel as though the next step for research in this field of study is to try and determine preventative factors that can overall help protect the younger generations.

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