



## A Typology of Offenders Engaging in the Sex Trafficking of Juveniles (STJ): Implications for Risk Assessment<sup>☆</sup>



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### ABSTRACT

Psychopathy is highly prevalent within offenders who engage in the sex trafficking of juveniles (STJ) as 75% ( $n=27$ ) of offenders with sufficient data to assess the PCL-R ( $n=36$ ) met the criteria for psychopathy ( $n=24$  with a score of  $\geq 30$ ) and/or were close to the threshold ( $n=3$  with a score of 29.5) and 25% ( $n=9$ ;  $M=26.78$ ) exceeded the average score of North American adult male inmates (Patterson et al., 2013). Latent class analyses (LCAs) were conducted on 117 STJ offenders with data derived from protocols including demographics of the offenders and victims and various aspects of the nature of the criminal act(s) perpetrated by the offender focused upon the STJ offense(s). The LCA indicators were the STJ Scales measuring Criminal History Severity, Violence Severity, Criminal Sophistication and Charismatic Offender Behavioral Style. The second author's expertise from the field and interviews with victims and offenders were utilized to substantiate the findings. Two broad types of STJ offenders emerged: 1- Aggressive/Antisocial and 2- Charismatic/Manipulative with subtypes. The STJ Risk Scale scores suggested that Violent Charismatic/Manipulative STJ Offenders posed the greatest danger to society. Enhanced understanding of STJ offenders especially in regards to risk assessment may result in reduction of harm to juveniles.

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The aim of this study was to conduct exploratory research examining the criminal histories, offending behaviors and behavioral characteristics of STJ Offenders with the objective of developing a preliminary STJ Offender Typology. Much of the literature supports the notion that the development of typologies informs investigative practices of law enforcement professionals, judicial decisions, forensic risk assessment, correctional management, offender treatment and victim services (Helfgott, 2013; Herve, 2007). Helfgott contends that gaining greater understanding as to the characteristics of specific types of criminals is the “keystone of theory building and the cornerstone of intervention,” (Knight and Prentky, 1990 as cited in Helfgott, 2013, p. 5). With the preceding assertion in mind, an extensive literature review was conducted on STJ offenders, STJ victims and the construct of psychopathy in order to develop a theoretical framework for the study.

There is little extant research on the study of psychopathy in offenders who live off the avails of prostitution (Spidel et al., 2006).

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Harris, Skilling et al. (2001 as cited in Duntley & Shackelford, 2008) define psychopathy as, “a life-long persistent condition characterized, in males at least, by aggression beginning in early childhood, impulsivity, resistance to punishment, general lack of emotional attachment or concern for others, dishonesty and selfishness in social interaction, and high levels of promiscuous and uncommitted sexual behavior,” (pp. 197–198). Psychopathy is associated with a lack of ability to have “sincere social emotions” such as empathy (Hare, 1980, 1985 as cited in Baron-Cohen, 1997).

The construct of psychopathy was originally developed by Herve Cleckley and was expanded upon by Robert Hare (Malatesti & McMillan, 2014). According to Hare (1993, 2003) and Hare & Neumann (2005), the psychopathic personality is comprised of interpersonal (Facet 1), affective (Facet 2), lifestyle (Facet 3) and antisocial (Facet 4) traits and characteristics. Hare (2003) categorizes the four facets into two factors on the PCL-R: 1- Factor I, referred to as the Interpersonal/Affective factor, is comprised of Facets 1 and 2 and 2- Factor II, the Deviant/Antisocial Lifestyle factor, is comprised of Facets 3 and 4 (Duntley & Shackelford, 2008; Hare, 2003). The PCL-R includes 20 behavioral, affective and personality characteristic items that are associated with their corresponding Facet and Factor and contribute to the scores of their respective Facets and Factors (Herve, 2007). The PCL-R has demonstrated clinical utility as it has been a consistent predictor of violence risk and recidivism,

treatment effectiveness as well as revocation of parole (Hervé & Yuille, 2007; Leistico et al., 2008 as cited in Hare, 1993, 1999, 2003; Hare & Neumann, 2009; Hobson, Shine, & Roberts, 2000 as cited in Derefinko, 2009).

Research conducted by the authors of the present study had results suggesting a high prevalence of psychopathy in STJ Offenders (Patterson, Hargreaves & Muirhead, 2013) as 75% ( $n=27$ ) of the offenders that had sufficient data to assess the PCL-R ( $n=36$ ) met the criteria for psychopathy ( $n=24$  with a score of 30 or higher) and/or were extremely close to the threshold ( $n=3$  with a score of 29.5) and the remaining 25% ( $n=9$ ;  $M=26.78$ ) exceeded the average score of North American adult male correctional inmates (Patterson, Hargreaves and Muirhead, 2013). Spidel et al. (2006) also suggested that a high proportion of pimps are psychopathic as 36% of the sample scored 30 or higher on the PCL-R. This is significant given that 20% of the normative sample of North American inmates meet the criteria for psychopathy (Spidel et al., 2006). Total PCL-R scores and Factor 1 (Interpersonal & Affective) as well as Facet 1 and 2 scores were significantly higher in the sample of pimps when compared to the normative sample of North American male inmates (in each case  $p<.005$ ) (Spidel et al., 2006).

Psychopaths have higher crime rates (especially for sexual and violent crimes) and increased levels of violence severity and criminal versatility in comparison to other non-psychopathic offenders (Hare & Neumann, 2009; Porter, Birt & Boer, 2001 as cited in Helfgott, 2013; Seto & Barbaree, 1999). The high prevalence of psychopathy in STJ offenders and the gravity of their offenses bring forth awareness of the danger they pose to society. Psychopathy is a static risk factor for violence and is considered to be a stable measurement that is typically persistent throughout the lifespan (Heilbrun, 2003) and is rarely if ever treatable in clinical settings thereby remaining a valid indicator of persistent danger to society (Beck, 2010; Quinsey, Harris, Rice, & Cormier, 1998).

Other salient risk factors include: 1- Early onset of engagement in crime (Kempf, 1973; Langevin & Curnoe, 2014); 2- Escalation in crime seriousness (Liu, Francis, & Sothill, 2011); 3- Escalation in crime frequency (Liu et al., 2011); and 4- Criminal and violent histories (serving as predictors of future violence) (Hanson & Thornton, 1999; Quinsey et al., 1998 as cited in Langevin & Curnoe, 2014). Specific clinical features in sex offenders that may serve as risk factors of dangerousness include: "(a) deviant sexual history and paraphilic sexual preference, especially sadism; (b) substance abuse; (c) personality and mental illness (especially psychosis, antisocial personality disorders [ASPD], and ADHD); (d) criminal and violent history; (e) borderline cognitive functioning; and (f) biological factors, such as endocrine abnormalities," (Langevin & Watson, 1996 as cited in Langevin & Curnoe, 2014, p. 782). The STJ offenders within the present study are a unique population comprised of sex offenders, violent offenders as well as both violent and sexual offenders.

Despite the myth espoused that there is great commonality between various types of sex offenders, the evidence does not suggest such similarity (Hall & Hirschman, 1992 as cited in Sample & Bray, 2006; Seto, 2008). Thus, it is important to recognize that sexual offenders as a whole are a heterogeneous population of offenders (Sample & Bray, 2006). The STJ offenders within the present study are primarily comprised of offenders who are psychopathic.

In comparison with non-psychopathic offenders, psychopathic offenders are more likely to select pubescent or post-pubescent females and have a decreased likelihood of being pedophilic (Seto, 2008). Motivation is a primary differentiating factor between pedophiles and other types of sex offenders (Seto, 2009). Motivation for most pedophiles is driven by sexual fantasy whereas the motivation of most STJ offenders (in alignment with the increased prevalence of psychopathy in such offenders) is more instrumental or predatory in nature with the intent to obtain financial gain and/or sexual gratification.

Overall, the typical STJ offender tends to exhibit higher levels of social competence in comparison with the typical pedophile. Further, it is important to note that given the high prevalence of psychopathy in STJ offenders that the population of pubescent children that are typically victims of STJ offenders meet the victim selection factors of vulnerability and accessibility yet not necessarily preference in most cases. Thus the typical literature on child sex offenders does not translate well to the STJ offender population. Awareness of this gap within the literature speaks to the need for research on STJ offenders.

The literature suggests that the typical sex offender who engages in contact sexual offenses against children has a likelihood of recidivating ranging between approximately 36-37% (Hanson & Bussiere, 1996, 1998 as cited in Greenberg, 1998). In the meta-analysis of 61 studies including approximately 28,972 sexual offenders by Hanson and Bussiere (1998) the average follow-up of period was 4-5 years and the recidivism rate was 37%. In a subsequent Hanson and Bussiere (1996 as cited in Greenberg, 1998) study, the recidivism rate was 36%. The authors of the present study posit that the recidivism rate for STJ offenders is likely consistent with the recidivism rate in typical contact sex offenders, however recidivism may be higher in STJ offenders given their set of motivations.

The definition of risk assessment endorsed within the present study is: "The using of risk factors to estimate the likelihood (i.e., probability) of an outcome occurring in a population," (Kraemer et al., 1997 as cited in Monahan & Skeem, 2014, p. 1). This definition was chosen given its focus on defining a risk factor as, "a correlate that precedes the outcome in time, with no implication that the risk factor and the outcome are causally related (e.g. past violence is a robust risk factor for future violence)," (Monahan & Skeem, 2014, p.1).

In order to better conceptualize the STJ offender it is important to have at least a broad understanding of the juvenile victims who typically have the following stressors: 1- Break-up in the household (Child Protective Services involvement and/or removal to foster care); 2- Dysfunctional family dynamics, family conflict and/or financial strain and/or 3- Residing in geographic areas associated with crime and low socioeconomic status. STJ offenders frequently target victims based on their vulnerability, evidenced in most instances by one or more of the aforementioned factors. When these factors converge with predatory STJ offenders whom are often highly skilled in their ability to exploit these vulnerabilities, some juveniles are particularly susceptible to recruitment and victimization.

It is also important to expound upon STJ offender/victim dynamics. In addition to providing a false sense of love and an unhealthy attachment, the STJ offender often creates an illusion of a fantasy life while simultaneously preying on the juvenile victim's vulnerabilities and attachment issues, specifically the issue of abandonment, by threatening to leave the juvenile (ultimately resulting in the victim's perception of the loss of a loved one as well as the potential for a better life as promised by the offender) (Bracey, 1983). The offender's manipulation of the juvenile victim is a psychologically destructive process intended to train and control their victims. This multilayered method involves several steps, all designed to serve practical purposes in addition to increasing the victim's physical and psychological isolation. In conclusion, the conscious motivation(s) of the STJ offenders are broadly based in the desire for power and control as well as greed.

Given the complex nature of STJ offenders it was of paramount importance to conduct latent class analyses (LCAs) in order to obtain an enhanced understanding of their characteristics. Additionally, STJ Risk Scales were developed to assess and quantify the level of risk which different types of STJ offenders pose to society. STJ offenders were initially classified into four types: 1- Charismatic/Manipulative Type #1A (Non-violent Type); 2- Charismatic/Manipulative Type #1B (Violent Type); 3- Aggressive/Antisocial Type with Minor Charismatic/Manipulative Traits Type #2A (Violent Type); and 4- Aggressive/Antisocial Type with No Charismatic/Manipulative Traits Type #2B (Violent Type). For the LCAs in the present study the aforementioned

Aggressive/Antisocial Offender sub-types (#2A & #2B) were collapsed into one category referred to as Aggressive/Antisocial Offenders. The rationale behind doing so was based upon adhering to best practices in statistical methodology such as parsimony while also accurately capturing the constructs under examination within the study.

The research questions investigated in the LCAs were as follows: 1- What are the conditional probabilities of specific offender style traits, behavioral characteristics, offending behaviors and/or criminal history given latent class membership? and 2- What predicts membership into the specific latent class representative of offender type/sub-type? Additionally, descriptive statistical analyses were conducted to examine the following research questions: 3- What is the level of risk posed to society by STJ offenders? and 4- Which sub-type of STJ offenders poses a greater likelihood of danger to society (in comparison to the other sub-types of STJ offenders) as measured on the STJ Risk Scales? Descriptive statistical analyses were also conducted to determine if there were any differences in the amount of time/experience in the criminal justice system between STJ offender sub-types. It was hypothesized that three to four latent classes would emerge with the following indicators: 1- Criminal History Severity; 2- Violence Severity; 3- Criminal Sophistication and 4- Offender Behavioral Style serving as predictors of membership into specific latent classes. It was also hypothesized that Violent Charismatic/Manipulative STJ Offenders will have a decreased number of years in the criminal justice system and pose an elevated likelihood of engagement in criminal activity and/or exhibit risk factors suggesting that they may pose a greater likelihood of danger to society.

## 1. Method

### 1.1. Participants

This study includes 117 offenders and 179 victims in cases involving the sex trafficking of juveniles that were adjudicated from 1990–2011. All 117 offenders were included in the analyses conducted within the present study.

### 1.2. Materials and Procedure

#### 1.2.1. Protocols and Software Utilized for Statistical Analyses

Protocols were developed to obtain information regarding the demographics of the offenders and victims as well as various aspects of the criminal act(s) perpetrated by the offender. Interpersonal and behavioral characteristics as well as traits evident in such offenders were derived from review of case files including law enforcement records, official criminal histories, interviews with offenders, investigators and victims among other sources of data. SPSS Predictive Analytics Software v.21 (2012) was utilized to analyze the descriptive statistics. Latent Gold 4.5 (Vermunt & Magidson, 2005) was used to conduct the LCAs.

#### 1.2.2. Statistical Analyses

Latent class analysis (LCA) identifies unobservable subgroups or segments referred to as latent classes (Vermunt & Magidson, 2005) based upon latent variables referred to as indicator measures. Fox and Farrington (2012) assert that the increase in popularity of the use of LCA with criminological research is due to “its usability to detect underlying patterns or subgroups,” (p. 1591). As discussed in Fox and Farrington (2012), “The goal of this technique is to group subjects into categories where individuals within a group are similar to each other but qualitatively different from individuals in other categories,” (Muthen & Muthen, 2000 as cited in Fox & Farrington, 2012, p. 1591). Fox and Farrington (2012) also suggest that LCA is advantageous in comparison to other statistical analyses in that it relies on “person-based case probabilities,” (Vaughn et al., 2008 as cited in Fox & Farrington, 2012). In order to adhere to best practices in statistical methods, parsimony was of paramount importance and thus 1–4 potential classes were selected within the analysis of the LCA Model. Further,

the following goodness-of-fit values/criteria were examined to identify the best model fit: 1- Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC); 2- Log Likelihood (LL) and the number of parameters were all factored into the decision as to which model had the best fit. Models with lower values are typically chosen as they indicate the best fit to the data.

#### 1.2.3. STJ Typology Scales

Four STJ Scales: 1- The Criminal History Severity Scale (CHSS), 2- Violence Severity Scale (VSS), 3- Criminal Sophistication Scale (CSS) and the 4- Charismatic Offender Behavioral Style Scale (COBSS) were created for this study to develop a STJ Typology. The STJ Scales were devised to empirically measure objective indicators that differentiate STJ offenders.

The CHSS was based upon the Cormier-Lang Index for Violent and Non-Violent Offenses used within the Violence Risk Appraisal Guide (Quinsey et al., 1998). The full CHSS ranges from 0 (Not Observed) to 10 points (Severe). Non-violent offenses ranged between the scores of 1–5 and violent offenses ranged between the scores of 6–10.

The VSS was developed to measure the level of known violence severity which the offender engaged in throughout the course of the offender's life. The VSS included violence that the offender committed against both juveniles and adults. The VSS is comprised of a nine point scale with a score of 0 classified as “No Known Violence” and the known type of violent act(s) perpetrated by the offender increasing in severity as the scale increases from 1–9. The acts of violence and their corresponding score on the VSS are as follows:

- 1- At least one of the following: Punching, Slapping, Pushing/Shoving
- 2- One of the following: Kicking and/or dragging and/or hair pulling and/or throwing objects at victim
- 3- Two or more of the above (see #2)
- 4- One of the following: Hitting with blunt force object; Stabbing, Choking, Shooting, Stomping, Whipping, Pistol Whipping
- 5- Two or more of the above (see #4)
- 6- Three or more of the above (see #4)
- 7- Four or more or more of the above (see #4)
- 8- Five or more of the above (see #4)
- 9- Biting and/or burning and/or other sadistic act(s).

The scores were then rated with the following designations: 1 = Mild Level of Violence; 2 = Moderate Level of Violence; 3 = Severe Level of Violence; 4 = Egregious; 5 = Egregious and Elevated Frequency; Scores ranging between 6–8 = Egregious and Highly Elevated Frequency and the highest rating was 9 = Egregious and/or Sadistic.

The CSS included variables related to the offender's initial contact with the juvenile victim(s); types of transportation utilized to perpetrate the crime of juvenile sex trafficking as well as the marketing techniques employed and the geographic range in which the juvenile victims were sex trafficked by the offender. Scores ranging between 0–3 were classified as “Low”; scores ranging between 4–6 as “Moderate” and scores ranging from 7–9 as “High”. Lastly, a score of 10–11 was categorized as “Superior”.

The COBSS included variables related to the level of charisma and manipulation exhibited by the offender as measured by their recruitment location choice, recruitment tactics and punishment style. For example, typical recruitment location choices of highly Charismatic/Manipulative (C/M) STJ offenders include social gatherings, direct contact via the phone and/or internet and/or through a family member or acquaintance of the victim. The following are examples of typical recruitment tactics employed by C/M STJ offenders included on the COBSS: 1- Promise of love and/or romance; 2- Promise of vacation and/or travel; 3- Promise of a job and 4- Recruitment of victims with their charm in a social setting and/or as part of a ruse. Lastly, typical punishment by C/M STJ offenders measured on the COBSS Scale included withholding love/affection/sex and/or no known punishment.

### 1.2.4. STJ Risk Scales

The present study employed best practices in the development of a risk scale by adhering to the violence risk assessment process suggested by Monahan and Skeem (2014) which is comprised of the following steps: 1- Identification of empirically valid and legally acceptable risk factors; 2- Determination of a method for the measurement and scoring of the aforementioned factors; 3- Establishment of a procedure for combining the risk factor scores and 4- Production of an assessment of risk factors. In accordance with the violence risk assessment process by Monahan and Skeem (2014), the CHSS was modeled from the Cormier-Lang Index for Violent and Non-Violent Offenses used within the Violence Risk Appraisal Guide (VRAG) (Quinsey et al., 1998). The VRAG has been referred to as the, “best known forensic instrument that structures all four of the components of the violence risk assessment process,” (Monahan & Skeem, 2014, p. 2). Further, the VSS was based on objective information from official law enforcement records regarding known violent acts perpetrated by STJ offenders. A method and scale for the measurement and scoring of the CHSS, VSS, CSS and COBSS was also thoroughly and meticulously developed for use within the present study as well as the procedure for combining the aforementioned scales resulting in the STJ Risk Scales. The STJ Risk Scale I was a composite scale (Maximum Score = 40 points) comprised of STJ Offender scores on the CHSS, VSS, CSS and the COBSS. STJ Risk Scale II was also a composite risk scale (Maximum Score = 31 points) which included the CHSS, CSS and the COBSS.

### 1.2.5. Methodology or Development of the Typology (See Fig. 1)

In alignment with best practices for the development of typologies, the STJ Offender Typology was created based on a four stage process conducted by experts from a wide variety of disciplines and practice such as knowledge from working directly with STJ offenders and victims in the field as well as in applied research settings (second author), a licensed mental health professional/clinician (first author) and a statistician (third author) among other professionals in law enforcement who assisted with the study. The four stage process was comprised of the following stages by Knight and Prentky (1990) as discussed in Helfgott (2013): Stage 1- Theory Development; Stage 2- Implementation; Stage 3- Validation and 4- Integration. In Stage 1, the authors extensively researched STJ offenders and victims, the construct of psychopathy as well as sex offender typologies to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the conceptual framework most closely resembling the STJ offender population within the literature. The authors then applied practical knowledge from the field regarding types of STJ offenders discussed by both victims and offenders in interviews conducted as part of the Juvenile Sex Trafficking Research Project Study.

In Stage 2- Implementation, STJ offender types were operationally defined in order to conduct empirical analyses. The STJ offender typology was evaluated and analyzed by the research team through the use of the STJ Offender Typology Scales as indicators on the LCAs. In Stage 3, construct validity was examined by comparing the results to theoretical frameworks in the literature. The results were also submitted for evaluation by law enforcement professionals with expertise in the field. In the integration stage, the fourth and final stage, the results from the pilot study (Patterson, Hargreaves and Muirhead, 2013) and the present study were synthesized to obtain the STJ Offender Typology. Construct validity was scrutinized based upon feedback from experts in the field and will continue to undergo review by various professionals providing substantive feedback regarding the results and their relevance to the application of law enforcement. The meticulous analysis and feedback resulted in the typology presented within this study.

## 2. Results

### 2.1. Offender Demographics (See Table 1)

The majority of the offenders were male (95.7%;  $n=112$ ) and African-American (91.5%;  $n=107$ ). Female (4.3%;  $n=5$ ), Hispanic (4.3%;  $n=5$ ); Caucasian (1.7%;  $n=2$ ); Asian (.9%;  $n=1$ ) offenders and offenders of mixed race (1.7%;  $n=2$ ) were less prevalent within the sample. The age of the offenders at the time of their arrest ranged from 18–48 years of age, with a mean age of 30 years ( $n=117$ ;  $SD=7.14$ ). All offenders were arrested between 1990–2011.

### 2.2. Victim Demographics (See Table 2)

A total of 179 victims (excluding duplicate victims across offenders) were trafficked by the offenders. Of those 179 victims, all were female and the majority were African-American (37.4%;  $n=67$ ) or Caucasian (34.1%;  $n=61$ ). The remainder of the victims were Hispanic (15.6%;  $n=28$ ); Asian (2.8%;  $n=5$ ) or classified as “Other” (3.9%;  $n=7$ ). Further, 6.1% ( $n=11$ ) of the victims’ race/nationality was unknown.

### 2.2.1. STJ Scales (See Table 3).

2.2.1.1. STJ Typology. Development of the STJ Typology indicated that the subjects could be classified into two broad types with varying subtypes based on level of severity. The two broad types of STJ Offenders with varying subtypes are: 1- Charismatic/Manipulative (C/M) STJ Offenders and 2- Aggressive/Antisocial (A/A) STJ Offenders. The C/M STJ Offenders were classified by subtype as follows: A- Non-Violent

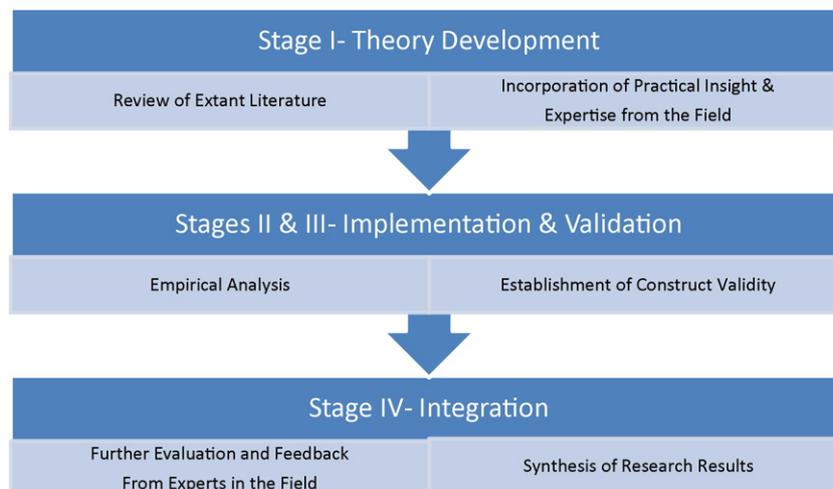


Fig. 1. Stages of Typology Development (Modified from Knight & Prentky, 1990).

**Table 1**  
Demographics of Offenders Engaging in the Sex Trafficking of Juveniles.

Total Sample N=117		n	Percent
Gender	Male	111	94.9%
	Female	6	5.1%
Race	Asian, Asian-American	1	.9%
	Black, African-American	107	91.5%
	Hispanic, Latino, Mexican-American	4	3.4%
	White, Caucasian, European-American	3	2.6%
	Other	2	1.7%

*Charismatic/Manipulative (NVCM) STJ Offenders*:  $\geq 1$  on the COBSS and 0 on the VSS and B- *Violent Charismatic/Manipulative (VCM) STJ Offenders*:  $\geq 1$  on the VSS and  $\geq 3$  on the COBSS. The A/A STJ Offenders were also classified by subtype with the following scores: A- *Aggressive/Antisocial Subtype with Minor Charismatic/Manipulative (AAMCM) Characteristics*: Score of 1-2 on the COBSS and Score of  $\geq 1$  on the VSS and B- *Aggressive/Antisocial Subtype with No Charismatic/Manipulative (AANCM) Characteristics*: Score of 0 on the COBSS and Score of  $\geq 1$  on the VSS. These offenders classified as A/A STJ Types were further classified into subtypes based on the level of frequency and/or severity of the violent acts which they perpetrated upon the victims. Additionally, C/M STJ Types were also further classified by subtype based on severity level as well.

The operational definitions utilized which distinguish the two broad STJ types are as follows: I- *Charismatic/Manipulative* STJ offenders are primarily characterized by behaviors, characteristics and traits such as: 1- Superficial charm and 2- Expression of cunning/manipulative behavior and engagement in manipulative tactics such as promise of love and provision of attention as motivating factors and the primary methods employed to control and coerce their juvenile victims; whereas II- *Aggressive/Antisocial* STJ offenders are primarily categorized by behaviors, characteristics and traits such as: 1- Lack of superficial charm and 2- Expression of aggressive and coercive behavior and tactics as the primary methods employed to control and coerce their juvenile victims.

**2.2.1.2. STJ Risk Scales.** As discussed in the Methods section, the STJ Risk Scale I is a composite scale (Maximum Score = 40) comprised of STJ Offender scores on the Criminal History Severity Scale (CHSS), Violence Severity Scale (VSS), Criminal Sophistication Scale (CSS) and the Charismatic Offender Behavioral Style Scale (COBSS) and STJ Risk Scale II was also a composite risk scale (Maximum Score = 31 points) which included the CHSS, CSS and the COBSS. The Violent Charismatic/Manipulative (VCM) STJ Offenders had the highest scores on both STJ Risk Scale I ( $n = 32$ ,  $M = 23.06$ , Range = 11-31,  $SD = 4.83$ ) and STJ Risk Scale II ( $n = 32$ ,  $M = 18.16$ , Range = 10-24,  $SD = 3.69$ ). The Aggressive/Antisocial STJ Offenders with Minor Charismatic/Manipulative Traits (AAMCM) had the second highest scores on STJ Risk Scales I ( $n = 32$ ,  $M = 18.72$ , Range = 11-26,  $SD = 4.16$ ) and II ( $n = 32$ ,  $M = 14.66$ , Range = 7-20,  $SD = 2.98$ ). The Aggressive Antisocial STJ Offenders with No Charismatic/Manipulative Traits (AANCM) had the lowest scores on STJ Risk Scale I ( $n = 16$ ,  $M = 16.69$ , Range = 11-23,  $SD = 3.66$ ) and STJ Risk Scale II ( $n = 16$ ,  $M = 13$ , Range = 10-16,  $SD = 1.93$ ). The Non-violent Charismatic/Manipulative STJ Offenders were excluded from

**Table 2**  
Demographics of Victims of Offenders Engaging in the Sex Trafficking of Juveniles.

Total Sample N=179		n	Percent
Gender	Female	179	100%
	Male	0	0%
Race	Asian, Asian-American	5	2.8%
	Black, African-American	67	37.4%
	Hispanic, Latino, Mexican-American	28	15.6%
	White, Caucasian, European-American	61	34.1%
	Other	7	3.9%
	Unknown	11	6.1%

**Table 3**  
Offenders Engaging in the Sex Trafficking of Juveniles (STJ) Typology Scales.

Total Sample N=117	n	Range	Mean	Std. Deviation
Criminal History Severity Scale (CHSS)	117	0-10	7.01	2.70
Violence Severity Scale (VSS)	117	0-9	2.96	3.06
Criminal Sophistication Scale (CSS)	117	1-11	5.61	1.71
Charismatic Offender Behavioral Style (COBSS)	117	0-8	2.56	2.00

the comparison of scores across STJ offender types for STJ Risk Scale I given the inclusion of the VSS on Risk Scale I and had the second lowest scores on STJ Risk Scale II ( $n = 37$ ,  $M = 13.97$ , Range = 8-19,  $SD = 3.15$ ). The aforementioned results answered the research question regarding what level of risk STJ offenders pose to society and support the hypothesis that Violent Charismatic/Manipulative STJ Offenders pose a greater likelihood of danger to society (in comparison to the other sub-types of STJ offenders) as measured on the STJ Risk Scales.

**2.2.1.3. Number of Years Experience in the Criminal Justice System (CJS).** With minor exclusion, all of the STJ offenders in the present study (97%;  $n = 114$ ) had a prior arrest record and an average of 11 ( $M = 10.63$ ; Range = 0-27;  $SD = 7.16$ ) years experience in the CJS. Number of years experience in the CJS was measured as the time between the first known arrest and the instant offense arrest on the offender's criminal history record. As suggested in the following results, the number of years of experience in the CJS varied by type/sub-type of STJ offender.

The AANCM Offenders had the greatest number of years experience in the CJS ( $M = 12.63$  yrs; Range = 5-26;  $SD = 5.14$ ;  $n = 16$ ) followed by the AAMCM Offenders ( $M = 11.88$ ; Range = 0-27;  $SD = 8.04$ ;  $n = 32$ ) and the NVCM Offenders ( $M = 10.51$ ; Range = 0-27;  $SD = 7.28$ ;  $n = 37$ ). The VCM Offenders had the least number of years experience in the CJS ( $M = 8.53$ ; Range = 0-26;  $SD = 6.69$ ;  $n = 32$ ). These findings are in alignment with the hypothesis that charismatic/manipulative offenders will have less time/experience in the criminal justice system.

**2.2.1.4. Estimation of Latent Classes (Clusters).** Latent Class Analyses (LCAs) were conducted in order to answer the following research questions: 1- What are the conditional probabilities of specific offender style traits, behavioral characteristics, offending behaviors and/or criminal history given latent class membership? and 2- What predicts membership into the specific latent class representative of offender type/sub-type? A three-class model was determined to be the best fit for the data based on goodness-of-fit measures for the latent class cluster analyses. The first latent class cluster model included the Criminal History Severity Scale (CHSS) and the Charismatic Offender Behavioral Style Scale (COBSS) as indicators and the covariate of age. The three clusters in Model 1 were labeled as follows: Cluster 1 (C1-CHSS)- Violent Charismatic/Manipulative (VCM) STJ Offenders; Cluster 2 (C2-CHSS)- Primarily Aggressive/Antisocial (A/A) STJ Offenders; and Cluster 3 (C3-CHSS)- Non-Violent Charismatic/Manipulative (NVCM) STJ Offenders. C1-CHSS was estimated as 66% of the population; C2-CHSS was approximately 18% of the population and C3-CHSS comprised the remaining 16% of the population.

Similarly, there were three clusters in the second latent class model which was comprised of the following indicators: 1- The Violence Severity Scale (VSS) and 2- COBSS as well as the covariate of age. The three clusters in the second model were labeled as follows: Cluster 1 (C1-VSS)- VCM STJ Offenders; Cluster 2 (C2-VSS)- NVCM STJ Offenders and Cluster 3 (C3-VSS)- A/A Offenders. C1-VSS was estimated to be around 37% of the population; C2-VSS was approximately 35% of the population and C3-VSS comprised the remaining 28% of the population. In both models, the offenders were assigned into the cluster in which they had the maximum posterior probability of membership.

**2.2.1.5. Overview of Results for Model 1.** Cluster 1 (C1-CHSS)- VCM STJ Offenders was comprised of offenders who had the greatest probability of having high scores, specifically the scores of 8 or 9 on the CHSS. The mean CHSS score for this cluster (C1-CHSS) was approximately 8. C1-CHSS also had the second greatest probability of scoring high on the COBSS with the mean COBSS score for this cluster at approximately 2. With respect to the covariates, C1-CHSS was predominately a male cluster and most likely to be 18–30 years of age. While the offenders in this cluster were most likely to be between 18–30 years of age when compared with the other clusters, C1-CHSS had the greatest probability of all the clusters in ranging in age from 41–48 years of age.

Cluster 2 (C2-CHSS)- A/A STJ Offenders, was the cluster with the second highest scores on the CHSS with most offenders in this class having a mean score of approximately 6 or 7 on the CHSS. C2-CHSS offenders scored the lowest on the COBSS with almost half of the offenders in the cluster scoring a 0 and the mean score in this class scoring a 1 or below on the COBSS scale. This cluster was also predominately male and most of the offenders in this cluster were 18–30 years of age. While most of the offenders in this cluster were likely to be 18–30 years of age, in comparison with the other clusters, this cluster (almost tied with C1-CHSS) had the highest probability of ranging in age from 31–40 years of age.

Lastly, Cluster 3 (C3-CHSS)- NVCM Offenders had the greatest likelihood of either no criminal history or a minor non-violent criminal history with the majority of the offenders in this cluster having a score ranging from 0–4 on the CHSS. The C3-CHSS cluster also had the greatest probability of scoring the highest on the COBSS of all the clusters with most offenders scoring at least a 3 and ranging up to 8 on the COBSS. While the majority of offenders in the C3-CHSS cluster were males, this cluster had the highest probability of all the clusters of being female as well as being in the youngest age category of all the offenders (18–30 years of age).

**2.2.1.6. Overview of Results for Model 2.** Cluster 1 (C1-VSS) consisted of the VCM STJ Offenders with the highest scores on the VSS as well as the COBSS. The mean VSS Score for the C1-VSS offenders ranged between 5–6 and the mean COBSS score was in the range of 3–4. C1-VSS offenders were predominately males and had the greatest likelihood of being between 18–30 years old. Cluster 2- NVCM STJ Offenders (C2-VSS) had the lowest scores on the VSS with the majority of offenders in this group having a score of 0. C2-VSS also had the second highest score on the COBSS with a mean score of 2 and most scores ranging between the scores of 2–4. The C2-VSS cluster was comprised of mostly males, yet it was the cluster most likely to be female when compared with all the clusters. Offenders in the C2-VSS cluster were typically younger (between 18–30 years of age) yet they did not vary significantly from the other clusters with respect to age. Finally, the A/A Offenders whom constituted Cluster 3 (C3-VSS) had the lowest scores on the COBSS with most scores ranging between 0–1 as well as the second highest scores on the VSS with a mean score of approximately 3 or 4. The C3-VSS cluster was predominately male with the highest probability of being between the ages of 31–40 in comparison with all the other clusters yet within the C3-VSS cluster itself offenders within this cluster were typically between 18–30 years of age.

Three separate significant groups or clusters emerged in both of the LCAs conducted in the present study suggesting that all three scales, the VSS, CHSS and the COBSS contribute in a significant way towards the ability to discriminate between the clusters. The  $R^2$  values for the LCA in Model 1 indicated that 56% of the variance of the CHSS is explained by this 3-cluster model and 29% of the variance of the COBSS is also explained by Model 1. Similarly, the results of Model 2 suggest that 60% of the variance of the VSS as well as 53% of the COBSS is explained by the model. The hypothesis that three to four latent classes would emerge with the following indicators: 1- Criminal History Severity; 2- Violence Severity; 3- Criminal Sophistication and 4- Offender Behavioral Style serving as predictors of membership into specific latent classes was

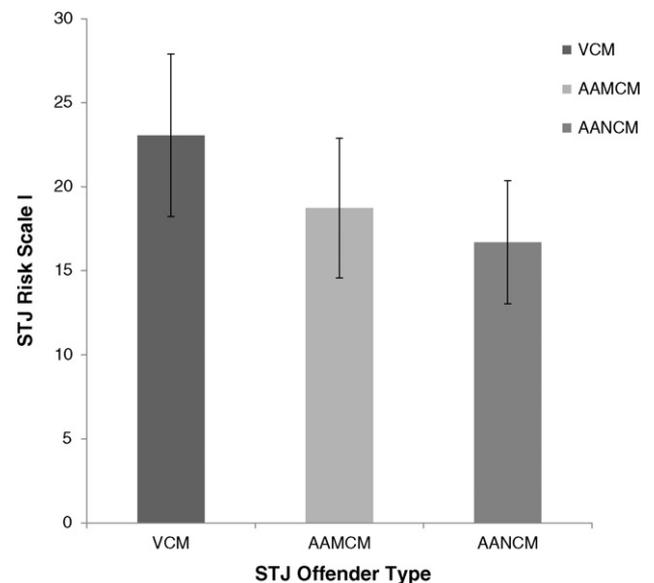
supported. Contrary to the hypothesis, the CSS was not statistically significant in initial latent class cluster analyses. The CSS will be further developed in future research.

### 3. Discussion

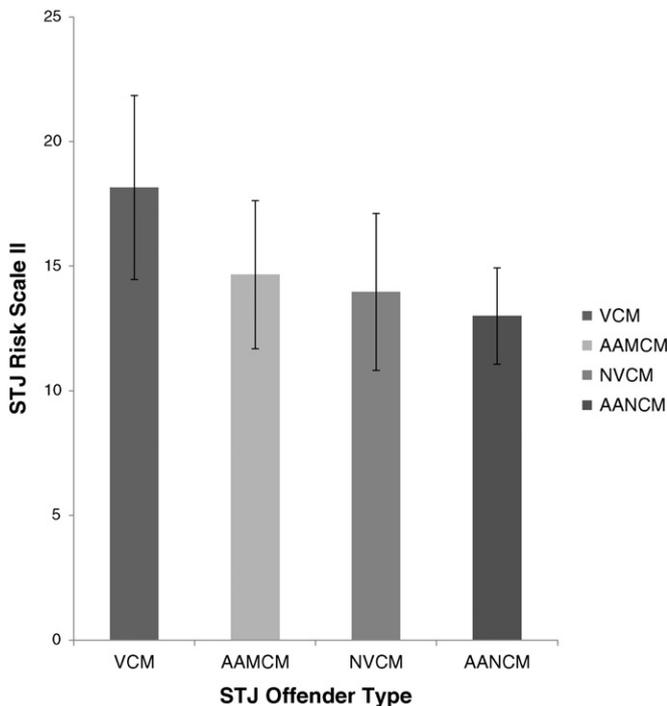
Two broad classes emerged: 1- Primarily Aggressive/Antisocial Offenders and 2- Charismatic/Manipulative Offenders with varying subtypes. The main findings from this study indicate that the majority of STJ offenders have violent criminal histories (Mean CHSS Score = 7.01;  $n = 117$ ) and many engage in acts of violence towards victims (Mean VSS Score = 2.96;  $n = 117$ ). It is important to note however that while violence often plays an instrumental role in the maintenance of control over juvenile victims, it is not the only strategy employed by STJ offenders as oftentimes they use charismatic/manipulative tactics which victims perceive to be caring/love either alone or in unison with violent punishment to influence and control victims. In fact approximately 86% of the STJ offenders within this study employed at least one charismatic/manipulative tactic to recruit and/or maintain control of the victim once recruited.

The results from STJ Risk Scale I (comprised of the CHSS, VSS, CSS and the COBSS) assessing the level of danger which a STJ offender poses to society suggests that the VCM offenders pose the greatest risk to society followed by AAMCM Offenders and the AANCM Offenders (See Fig. 2). Similar to STJ Risk Scale I, the findings from STJ Risk Scale II (comprised of the CHSS, CSS & COBSS) suggest that VCM Offenders pose the greatest risk to society followed by AAMCM Offenders, NVCM Offenders and AANCM Offenders (See Fig. 3). VCM STJ Offenders were also the most prevalent type of STJ offender in the sample of offenders whom met the criteria for psychopathy in the pilot study (Patterson, Hargreaves and Muirhead, 2013).

While the offenders in the present study had a mean score of 11 years of experience in the criminal justice system (CJS), when comparing across STJ Types, the results suggest that the offenders who had charismatic and manipulative traits had a decreased number of years in the CJS. Factors related to increased social competence and/or intelligence may have contributed to the offender's ability to evade law



**Fig. 2.** Level of risk/danger posed to society by offenders engaging in the sex trafficking of juveniles (STJ) as measured by the STJ Risk Scale I comprised of the STJ Criminal History Severity Scale, STJ Violence Severity Scale, STJ Criminal Sophistication Scale and the STJ Charismatic Offender Behavioral Style Scale across STJ Types: Violent Charismatic/Manipulative STJ Offenders (VCM), Aggressive/Antisocial STJ Offenders with Minor Charismatic/Manipulative Traits (AAMCM), and Aggressive/Antisocial STJ Offenders with No Charismatic/Manipulative Traits (AANCM). Error bars denote one standard error around the mean.



**Fig. 3.** Level of risk/danger posed to society by offenders engaging in the sex trafficking of juveniles (STJ) as measured by the STJ Risk Scale II comprised of the STJ Criminal History Severity Scale, STJ Criminal Sophistication Scale and the STJ Charismatic Offender Behavioral Style Scale across STJ Types: Violent Charismatic/Manipulative STJ Offenders (VCM), Aggressive/Antisocial STJ Offenders with Minor Charismatic/Manipulative Traits (AAMCM), Aggressive/Antisocial STJ Offenders with No Charismatic/Manipulative Traits (AANCM), and Non-violent Charismatic/Manipulative STJ Offenders (NVCM). Error bars denote one standard error around the mean.

enforcement detection. Future research is suggested below to ascertain whether such effects are present within STJ offenders.

It is contended that the reason why STJ offenders with charismatic/manipulative traits have a lower average number of years experience in the CJS and pose a greater danger to society is because they likely have increased levels of intelligence, at a minimum proficient social skills and typically exhibit criminal sophistication. Thereby we surmise that with the increased social competence, intelligence and criminal sophistication present in such offenders they are more likely to successfully perpetrate STJ offenses as well as have the ability to evade law enforcement. It is also posited that the enhanced social competence exhibited by offenders with charismatic and/or manipulative traits who also employ violent and coercive tactics should be carefully examined as such offenders are likely to pose the greatest risk to society.

With respect to limitations for the present study, as noted in studies such as Langevin and Curnoe's (2014) study, while criminal and violent history serve as the best predictors of classification of offenders by level of severity/dangerousness posed to society it is also important to note that as with all assessments of risk there are multiple variables contributing to likelihood of dangerousness that may not have been accounted for such as cognitive functioning, biological factors and endocrine functioning. Further, as contended by Kempf (1973), "Thus of all the sources accessible to researchers, the records obtained from police agencies are perhaps the best available to gather crime information," (p. 529). Thus while official law enforcement information is the best possible data obtainable one must recognize that it only reflects known data that was reported to law enforcement.

It is also important to note that the Criminal History Severity Scale (CHSS) was based on the Cormier-Lang Index for Violent and Non-Violent Offenses used within the Violence Risk Appraisal Guide (VRAG; Quinsey et al., 1998). Further, the VRAG is based on the Criminal Code of Canada (CCC) thus there may be some discrepancies with the

United States Criminal Code (USCC) especially with respect to level of severity attributed to prostitution. While recognition of cultural differences is critical it is also important to note that both the CCC and USCC are based upon British Common Law.

Results from the present study contribute to both theory as well as the practical application of research to the field. Development of a typology of STJ offenders utilizing LCAs elucidates the role that risk factors such as severity of violence towards victims and previous criminal history experience have on STJ offender typology. It also brings forth greater awareness about how factors related to offender behavioral style, particularly the mechanisms underlying the recruitment and maintenance of compliance of the victims through punishment techniques and other strategies employed by STJ offenders play a significant role in perpetration of STJ.

In light of increased rates of human trafficking occurring domestically as well as internationally, the scarcity of research on STJ offenders speaks to the need for future research to be conducted by interdisciplinary teams of professionals. The second author of the present study serves on the American Psychological Association's Task Force on Trafficking of Women and Girls (APA TFTWG). In the Executive Summary: Report of the TFTWG, a call was recently made for research on trafficker coercion tactics, especially psychological tactics employed by such offenders as well as development of a typology of traffickers and studies focused on survivors of trafficking (Sidun et al., 2014). While the research on sex trafficking that has been conducted thus far by the authors of the present study serves as a good foundation for future research, expansion upon such research is needed for development of a more comprehensive understanding of the crime of sex trafficking.

Ongoing collection of data examining current crime trends in sex trafficking especially as they relate to technological advances impacting STJ offenders is needed as well as additional interviews with offenders and victims. Future research should include more interviews and collect more information about recidivism rates of STJ offenders as well as examine the characteristics of STJ victims/survivors with focus placed upon implications for treatment and intervention. Longitudinal studies examining sex trafficking crime trends as well as longitudinal studies on both victims/survivors and offenders would be beneficial for the field. Further, follow-up studies in which variables and/or covariates discussed previously such as the constructs of social competence/emotional intelligence and/or criminal sophistication are isolated and examined in more depth should be conducted in order to have a more comprehensive understanding of such constructs and their potential impact upon study results would also yield valuable findings for the field. We suggest further development of scales to measure such constructs and then subsequent analyses to determine whether such constructs can be accounted for within models and compare traits such as social competence/emotional intelligence and/or criminal sophistication as covariates across STJ types as well as other groups of offenders especially as they relate to risk assessment.

The expectation is that the findings from the present study will inform the application of law enforcement, legal decisions such as determination of sentencing, probation and parole considerations, and the allocation of resources for mental health treatment. It is posited that by incorporating the knowledge gained from this study in such crucial decision making that the professionals involved will be adhering to best practices and in so doing providing a safer society especially to juveniles whom are particularly vulnerable to STJ offenders.

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