
PEDOPHILES AND (OR) CHILD MOLESTERS

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It is often discussed whether sexual offenders of children are pedophiles or child molesters. It depends on exact definition and operationalization of the categories and on the difference between socio-legal and psychopathological classification. Practical question from forensic point of view is whether there are any differences between the group of 'pedophiles', who have sexually offended child and the group of child molesters, who do not meet criteria for pedophilia.

Experimental sample consists of 146 forensic cases (all men), they committed child molestation in years 2005-2012. According to the criteria (DSM-IV-TR) for pedophilia, penile plethysmography (PPG), actual clinical and case history data were used for the diagnosis determination. Obtained clinical and sociodemographic data were statistically evaluated.

Only a small part (16,2 %) of sexual offenders against children meet the criteria (DSM-IV-TR) for pedophilia. There is significant difference in occurrence of other psychopathological features between groups of 'pedophiles' and non-pedophilic 'child molesters', i.a. alcohol abuse/dependence, sexual dysfunction, personality disorder, increased aggressiveness, mental deficit, etc.

Research helps increase understanding of correlations and differences between terms that describe sexual offenders of children. It confirms the opinion that not all of child sexual offenders are pedophiles. Regarding pedophilia remains the problem of its definition in conditions of practical acceptance of courts.