Psychopathy in the treatment of forensic psychiatric patients: assessment, prevalence, predictive validity, and clinical implications

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PREFACE

The present thesis comprises several empirical studies with psychopathy, according to the Hare Psychopathy Checklist-Revised (PCL-R; R.D. Hare, 1991), as the central topic.

Chapter 1 is intended as a general introduction. We touch upon the historical conceptualization of psychopathy as a clinical syndrome; we describe the structure and the psychometric properties of the PCL-R, and we discuss research examining the predictive validity of the PCL-R. Also, the main research questions addressed in this thesis are discussed here, and we describe the setting where the reported research was conducted in some detail.

Next, in Chapter 2, we describe a special provision in the Dutch criminal code that allows for a period of treatment (custodial care) following a prison sentence for mentally disordered offenders: Terbeschikkingstelling (TBS order).

In Chapter 3, a study is presented examining the reliability and factor structure of the Dutch language version of the PCL-R.

The aim of the research presented in Chapter 4 is to investigate the association between PCL-R psychopathy and mental disorders defined according to the fourth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV).

In Chapter 5, the relationship between PCL-R scores and various types of disruptive behavior during inpatient treatment is investigated.

The main objective of the study presented in Chapter 6 is to measure treatment progress, by change in indexes of dynamic risk factors.

In Chapter 7, the role of the PCL-R and sexual deviance in predicting recidivism in a sample of treated rapists involuntarily admitted between 1975 and 1996, is investigated.

Finally, in Chapter 8, the major findings are discussed, a critical analysis of the thesis is presented, recommendations for clinical practice are given, and suggestions for further research on psychopathy are outlined.

The majority of the material presented in the various chapters of this thesis was submitted for publication as separate manuscripts, and therefore some overlap is inevitable. This thesis is based on the following papers:


(5) Hildebrand, M., de Ruiter, C., & van Zaane, B. Psychopathy and change in dynamic risk factors during inpatient treatment. Submitted for publication. (Chapter 6)


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