

Heterogeneity in perpetrators of sexual crimes: a latent class approach

Arjan BLOKLAND (NSCR, Netherlands)

Pascalie SPAAN (NSCR, Netherlands)

Martine BLOM (WODC, Netherlands)

Luc ROBERT (NICC, Belgium)

Rembert DE BLANDER (NICC, Belgium)

Lieven PAUWELS (UGent, Belgium)

Eric MAES (NICC, Belgium)

- **Offender characteristics**
 - Male versus female
 - Juvenile versus adult
- **Offense characteristics**
 - Hands-on versus hands-off
 - Common versus cyber
- **Victim characteristics**
 - Peer versus child
 - Familial versus non-familial
 - Boy versus girl
- **Other**
 - Motivations
 - Sexual acts

- **Criminal career characteristics**



Research questions

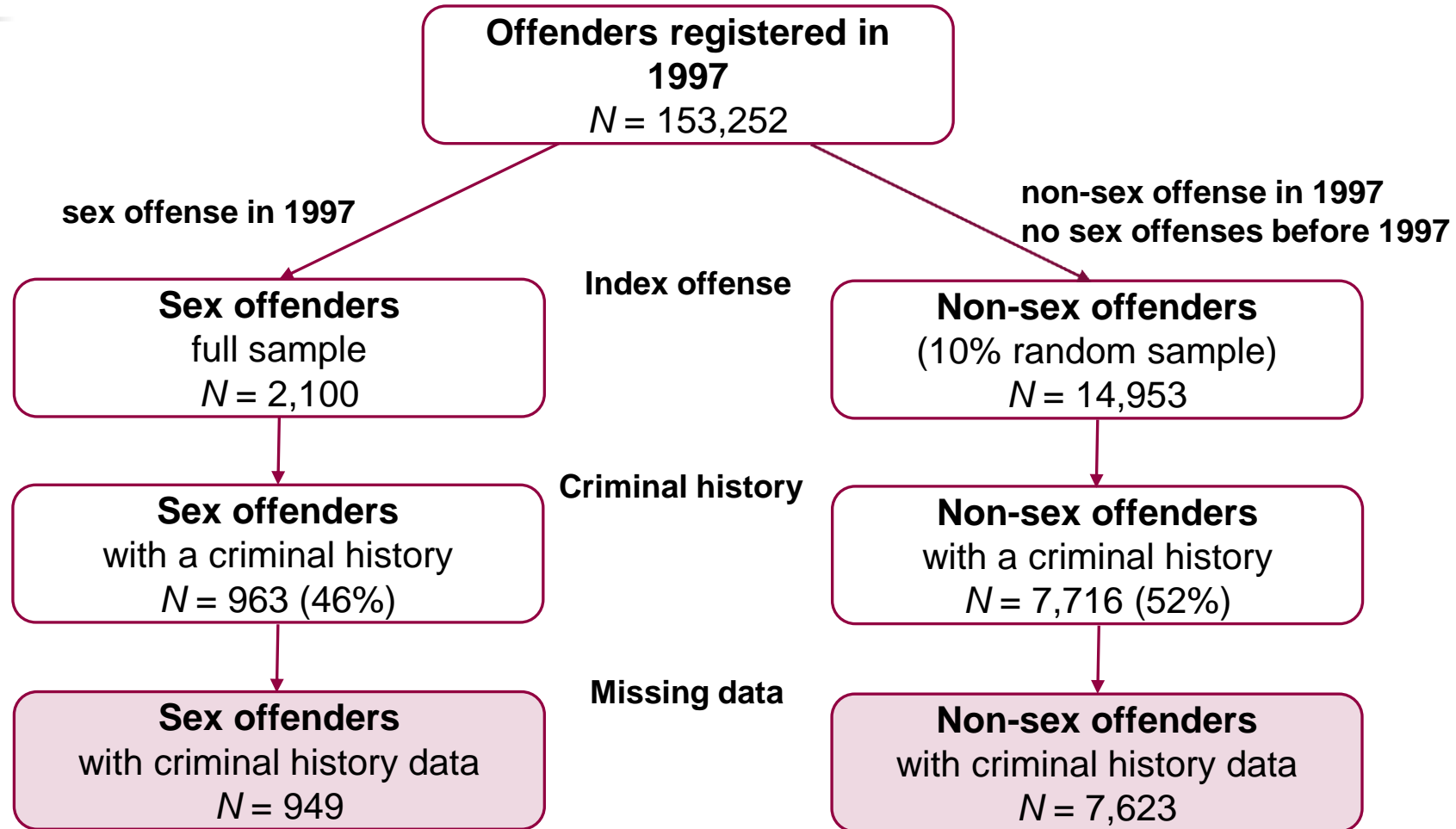
Can different types of sex offenders be distinguished based on the characteristics of their criminal careers?

And if so,

Are these types comparable to those generally used, that is, those based on offense/victim characteristics?

Are the types of sex offenders (based on criminal career characteristics) comparable to types of non-sex offenders?

Sample

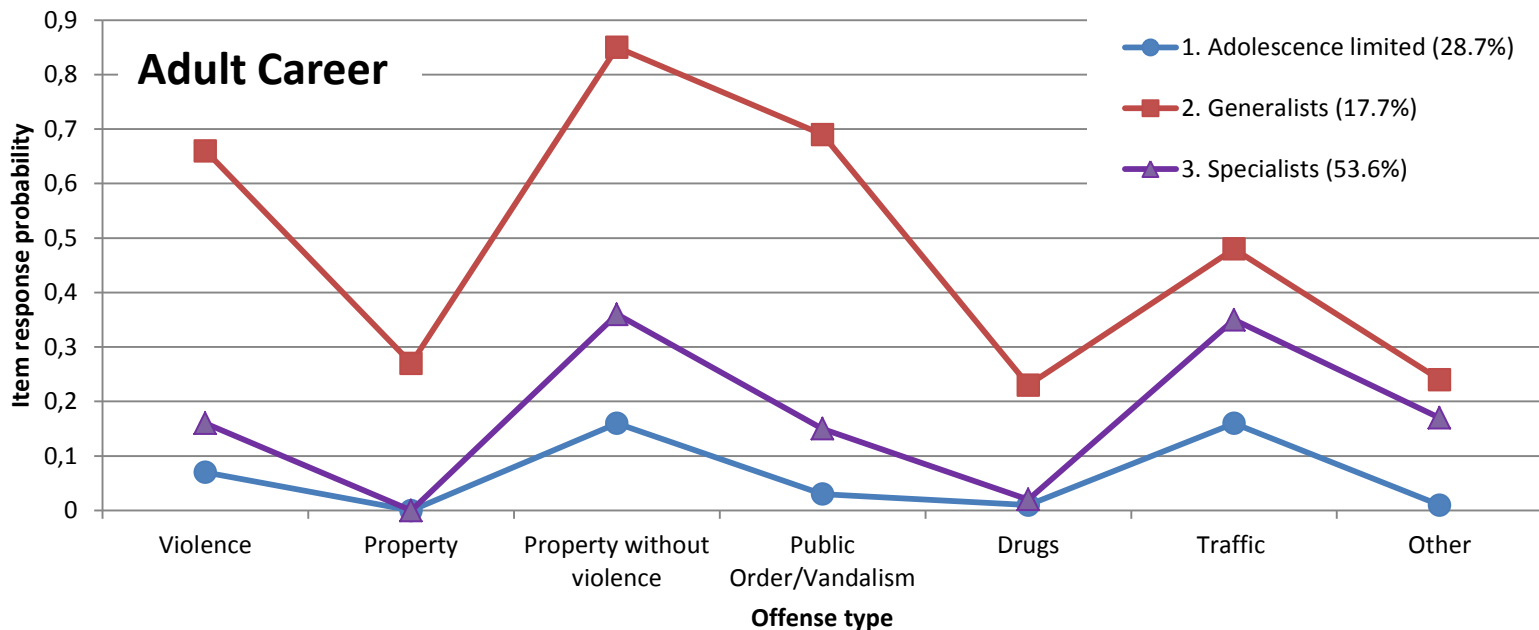
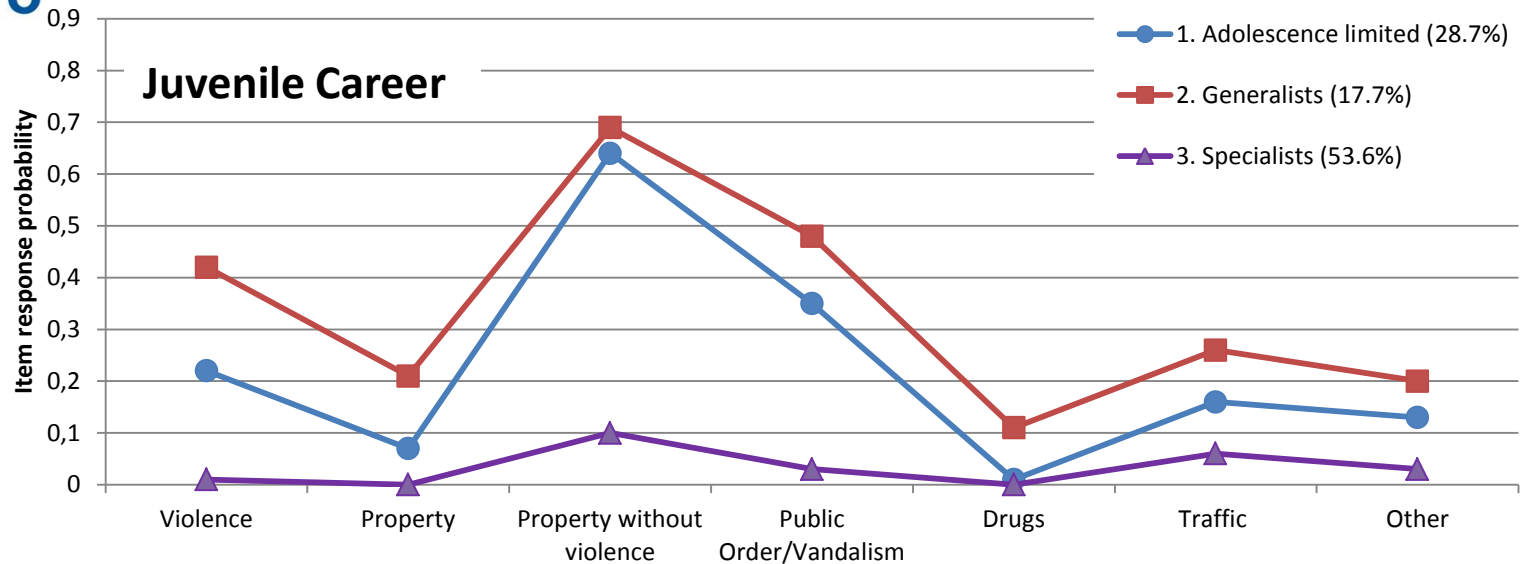


	Sex offenders N = 963	Non-sex offenders N = 7.716
Sex (%male)	99.2%	90.1%
Nationality (%Dutch)	76.6%	74.2%
Age of first registration (M, SD)	25.1 (10.5)	24.0 (9.8)
Age at index offense, 1997 (M, SD)	36.2 (12.7)	34.2 (11.7)
Criminal career (%yes)		
Only before age 25	17.3%	19.0%
Only after age 25	52.6%	47.5%
Before and after age 25	30.1%	33.5%
Crimes before age 25 (M, SD)		
Sex offenses	0.2 (0.7)	0.0 -
Non-sex offenses	2.3 (4.4)	2.5 (3.9)
Crimes after age 25 (M, SD)		
Sex offenses	0.7 (2.3)	0.0 -
Non-sex offenses	3.4 (6.6)	3.5 (6.0)

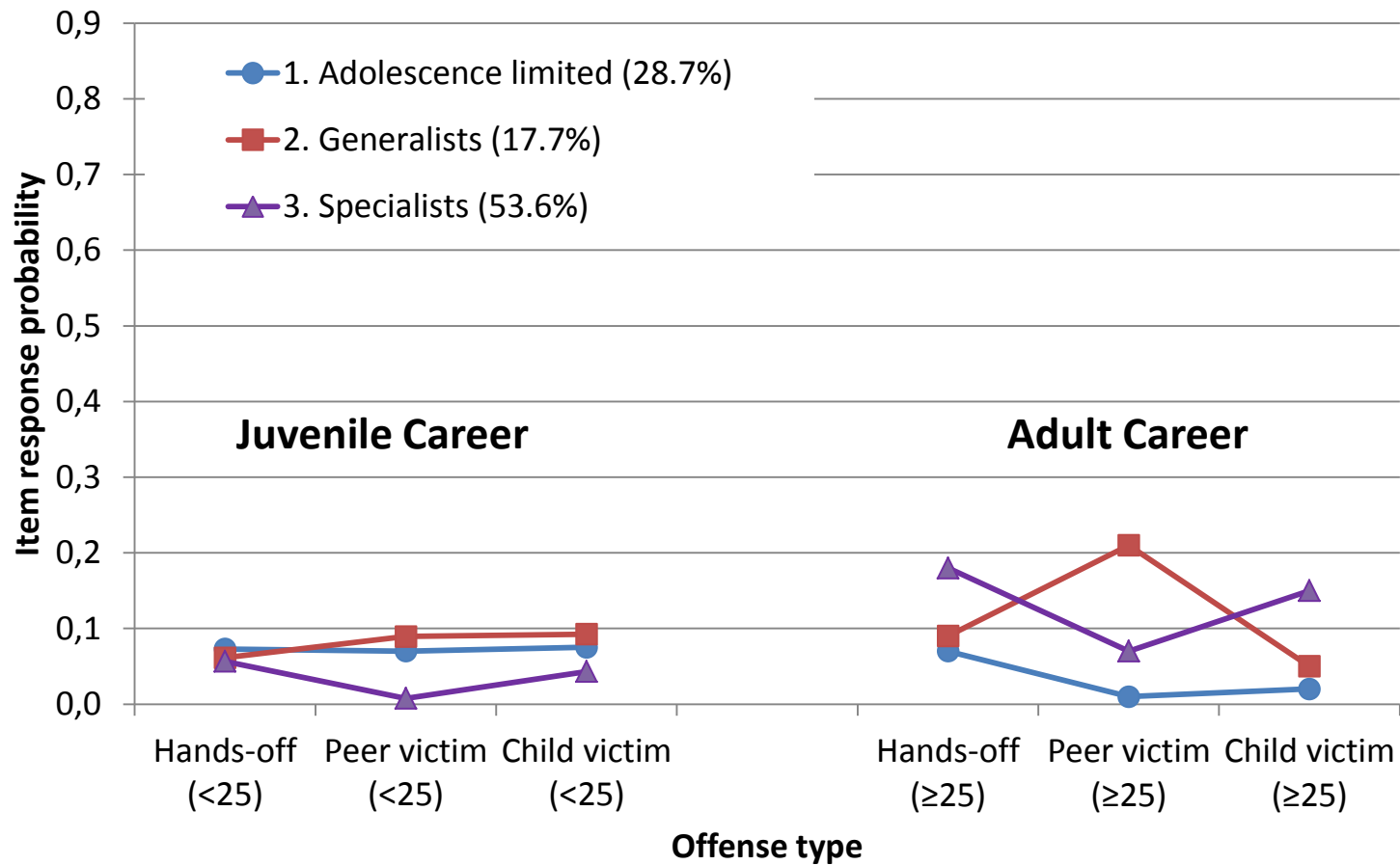
Latent Class analysis

- Focusses on finding latent classes based on similar response patterns
 - Similar to factor analysis
- Latent classes based on similar juvenile (< age 25) and adult criminal history (> age 25)
 - Sex offenses: (1) hands-off (2) child (3) peer
 - Non-sex offenses: (4) violence (5) property (6) property no violence (7) vandalism/public order (8) drug-related (9) traffic (10) other
- Model fit (1-6): G^2 , AIC, BIC, entropy, %solution

Can different types of sex offenders be distinguished?



Can different types of sex offenders be distinguished?



Can different types of sex offenders be distinguished?

Descriptive statistics for each latent sex offender class.							
		Adolescence limited		Persistent Generalists		Late onset Specialists	
Descriptive characteristics		N = 305		N = 143		N = 501	
Sex (%male)		98.7%		100%		99.4%	
Ethnicity (%Dutch)		76.4%		64.3%		80.0%	
Age of first registration (M, SD)		17.7 (2.9)		17.2 (3.2)		28.8 (10.2)	
Age at index offense, 1997 (M, SD)		26.9 (5.9)		31.4 (8.1)		38.4 (12.6)	
Criminal career activity (%active)							
Only before age 25		60.3%		0.0%		4.5%	
Only after age 25		0.0%		8.6%		81.9%	
Before and after age 25		39.7%		91.4%		13.6%	
Crimes before age 25 (M, SD)							
Sex offenses		0.3 (0.9)		0.4 (0.8)		0.2 (0.6)	
Non-sex offenses		3.2 (3.6)		8.0 (7.2)		0.2 (0.6)	
Crimes after age 25 (M, SD)							
Sex offenses		0.1 (0.5)		0.7 (1.8)		1.0 (2.7)	
Non-sex offenses		0.6 (1.2)		13.1 (12.6)		2.2 (2.8)	

Are the offender types based on criminal career history comparable to those based on offense characteristics?

Sex offender type, based on 1997 offense	Latent class based on criminal career		
	Adolescence limited (29%)	Persistent/Generalist (18%)	Late onset/Specialist (54%)
Hands-off offender (n)	64	22	128
% of hands-off offenders	29.9%	10.3%	59.8%
Peer abuser (n)	102	78	133
% of peer abusers	32.6%	24.9%	42.5%
Child abuser (n)	139	43	240
% of child abusers	32.9%	10.2%	56.9%

Are types of sex offenders comparable to types of non-sex offenders?

Differences in item response probabilities (IRPs) compared to sex offenders LCA outcomes, for a 3- class model based on criminal career histories of non-sex offenders (N = 7,623).

	Latent classes and class prevalence		
	1. Adolescence limited 30.9%	2. Persistent/Generalists 17.6%	3. Late onset/Specialist 51.5%
Item Response Probabilities			
Non-sex offenses, before age 25			
Violence	0.01	-0.01	0.02
Property	0.03	0.04	0.00
Property without violence	0.01	0.16	0.06
Public Order/Vandalism	0.05	0.04	0.02
Drugs	0.03	0.09	0.02
Traffic	0.10	0.04	0.05
Other	0.02	0.01	0.01
Non-sex offenses, after age 25			
Violence	0.00	-0.15	-0.03
Property	0.00	-0.02	0.01
Property without violence	0.03	-0.02	0.01
Public Order/Vandalism	0.02	-0.14	-0.01
Drugs	0.01	0.08	0.04
Traffic	0.03	-0.02	0.11
Other	0.01	0.02	0.09

- Can different types of sex offenders be distinguished based on their criminal career characteristics?
 - **Yes**, we distinguish three type of sex offenders in our data:
 - Adolescence limited
 - Persistent generalists
 - Late onset specialists

- Are these types comparable to those generally used, that is, those based on offense/victim characteristics?
 - **No**, hands-off, peer and child abusers are found across all three types
 - Peer abusers overrepresented in the persistent generalist group
 - Hands-off and child abusers overrepresented in the late onset specialist group

- Are the types of sex offenders (based on criminal career characteristics) comparable to types of non-sex offenders?
 - **Yes**, to a large extent
 - Persistent generalist sex offenders more violent, more public order and less non-violent property than non-sex offenders in the persistent generalist class



Questions?

- Ablokland@nscr.nl