

Literature review of deviant behavior assessments: Suggestions for improvements

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Literature review of deviant behavior assessments: Suggestions for improvements

There are many structured assessments that are currently used to measure deviant behavior. The term “deviant behavior” is used to label a wide variety of behaviors ranging from drug abuse to sexual deviance to mental illness. These assessments are typically used to predict criminal behavior, drug abuse, and aggression. However, studies that have reviewed these measures have had mixed results to their effectiveness in predicting deviant behaviors. Additionally, what is considered deviant behavior is culturally subjective, so what might be considered deviation in one culture would not be in another. These assessments also typically rely on mail-in surveys or self-report questionnaire, which typically have low response rates and/or may not be filled truthfully. As a result, efforts to use these measures to predict deviant acts, including acts of violence, have been largely unsuccessful. A case study of adolescent violent shooters shows that these had no history of behaviors that would be considered deviant behavior. Therefore, these assessments would not have predicted that these adolescents would have committed violent acts. The following poster presents a literature review of deviant behavior assessments and proposes that deviant behavior assessments intended to predict deviant acts may be improved by screening for attitudes towards other psychosocial constructs that may be related to deviant acts. For instance, other constructs that may be related to deviant acts like lack of empathy, attitudes toward authority figures, lack of conscience, and poor social skills, combined with deviant behavior assessments, may provide better screening for and prediction of deviant acts.