

## Classifying Queensland Incarcerated Sexual Offenders<sup>1</sup>

*There are numerous explanations about the most accurate and effective way in which to classify sexual offenders. Typologies of sexual offenders may be based on offender or victim characteristics, situational characteristics or a combination of these (Bickley & Beech, 2001). These factors can also be combined to classify the offender according to characteristics such as the severity of the offending which might be based on an assessment of the age of the offender at first offence, the age of the victim as well as the level of violence involved.*

*This report outlines traditional sex offender typologies often discussed in empirical research literature. Following this, a sample of 173 sex offenders incarcerated in Queensland as at 18 January 2012 have been grouped via a statistical cluster analysis. This grouping process is based on offender information gathered on the Integrated Offender Management System (IOMS), and detailed contextual information on the event(s) and the victim from court sentencing transcripts.*

*Essentially, the analysis aims to develop a typology of the Queensland sex offender population and compare it to the traditional typologies. This comparison will identify any sex offender groups unique to the Queensland incarcerated sex offender population. Furthermore, findings will allow for the development of an operational tool that can be used at prison reception to manage sex offenders and sex offender programs more efficiently.*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The overarching objective of this project is to gain a better understanding of the incarcerated Queensland sex offender population. This project aims to explore the types of sex offenders incarcerated in Queensland, the characteristics and diversities that exist amongst this population and determine whether Queensland's incarcerated sex offenders fit the typologies proposed in the international literature. It is anticipated that the development of a Queensland specific sex offender typology will enable the development of an operational tool for use at prison reception to categorise sex offenders. The need for front end categorisation has four key drivers. These are:

- collect better data on the demand for sex offending intervention programs and services;
- streamline programs to be more cost effective by better scheduling of programs across the State;
- move sex offenders to appropriate correctional centres after reception; and
- ensure that high risk sex offenders are provided with the most intensive programs.

### Key findings

#### *Child versus adult sex offenders*

Two thirds of the sample of sex offenders incarcerated as at 18 January 2012 were classified as child sex offenders, with the remaining being adult sex offenders. Most of these child sex offenders would be legally (not necessarily clinically) considered to be paedophiles (victim aged under 12 years) rather than hebephiles (victim aged 12-16 years).

#### *Sex offender typology*

A cluster analysis was conducted based on four predictors: offender-victim relationship, level of violence, victim age and offender ethnicity. The most important of these predictors in the formation of the clusters was the offender-victim relationship.

Whilst 90% of the sex offender sample could be clearly classified into the established typology, the remaining 10% had unique offending patterns that caused them to be excluded from the analysis. After these outliers were excluded from this analysis, 155 Queensland sex offenders fit seven distinct clusters.

*Regressed intra-familial (28.4%):* typified by non-violent sex offences against children in their family. The offender was usually the parent or step-parent of the victim. Usual offences include rape or maintaining a relationship with a child. All offenders were non-Indigenous.

*Fixated extra-familial (18.7%):* typified by non-violent sex offences against children most often family friends or friend's of the offenders' children. Most frequent offence type is indecent treatment/ dealings with a child. All offenders were non-Indigenous. Indigenous child sex offenders were far less likely to engage in grooming behaviours or show signs of paraphilia which are typical characteristics of fixated child sex offenders.

*Predatory child (10.3%):* typified by violent sex offences against children that were strangers to the offender. The most common offence type was rape. This category was the most likely of all child sex offender categories to victimise males, however female victims were still

predominant. All offenders were non-Indigenous.

*Predatory adult (14.8%):* typified by violent sex offences against adult strangers. The most common offence type was rape. This category included both Indigenous and non-Indigenous offenders.

*Indigenous regressed intra-familial (14.2%):* typified by non-violent sex offences against children in the offender's family. In contrast to their non-Indigenous counterparts, Indigenous regressed intra-familial sex offenders were often within the extended family of the victim. Their most likely offence is rape, with no offenders in this group having a most serious offence of maintaining a relationship with a child. This finding supports other previously discussed results regarding the absence of targeted effort invested in child sex offending (e.g. grooming behaviours) by Indigenous sex offenders in comparison to non-Indigenous child sex offenders. This may be a reflection of some cultural norms associated with these behaviours, particularly in remote communities.

*Young opportunistic (7.7%):* typified by non-violent rape and sexual assault offences committed by young non-Indigenous male offenders against young adult female victims that were friends or strangers with some prior interaction. The events often involve intoxication of offender and/or victim. Rapes of such circumstances are commonly referred to as 'date rape' or 'acquaintance rape.'

*Violent intimate partner (5.8%):* typified by violent rape and sexual assault offences by males against current partners or recent ex-

partners. The offence was often an escalation of existing violence in the relationship as most offenders that fit this profile have a current or prior Domestic Violence Order.

### **Points of discussion**

These findings support empirical research which indicates that regressed intra-familial, fixated, predatory adult and predatory child sex offenders are common sex offender groups in sex offender typologies (Woessner, 2010). This analysis also highlights the unique elements of Indigenous sex offenders, and the existence of sex offender types that are not typically discussed in sex offender typologies (i.e. young opportunistic sex offenders and violent intimate partner sex offenders).

It is anticipated that these findings will improve current knowledge around the frequency of these various offender types within Queensland prisons. Profiles that are specific to Queensland sex offenders and which highlight the key characteristics of each profile, could be used to develop an operational tool for screening offenders on reception to prison. This tool would essentially categorise each sex offender, and in doing so, provide a starting point for determining treatment pathways and intensity as well as provide an initial indication of sexual reoffending likelihood.

For example, empirical research suggests that predatory adult and child sex offenders are at the highest risk of recidivism of all sex offender types, whilst also having a low likelihood of responding to treatment. These offenders are excessively violent, victimise strangers, and are

likely to present with a personality disorder. These factors combined emphasize the need for such offenders to receive the most intensive treatment available.

Accordingly, the ability to identify sex offender types can provide key indicators with regards to the demand, scheduling, and allocation of sexual offending programs, and is related to the placement of sex offenders in centres where they can access the programs and services they require. This research also reinforces the need for culturally

specific sexual offending programs for Indigenous offenders.

Whilst the majority of the sex offender sample clearly fit one of the seven profiles, there were a small number of outliers that had unique characteristics. It is expected that if this typology were to be applied to the general sex offender population, a similar proportion of offenders would be considered outliers. For such offenders, further contextual information would be needed to identify appropriate management and treatment needs.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>2</b>
Key findings	2
Points of discussion	3
<b>Chapter 1</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	
Generalised and specific sex offenders	7
Intra-familial and extra-familial sexual offenders	7
Regressed and fixated offenders	8
Rapists	9
Adolescent sex offenders	9
Internet sex offenders	10
Intimate partner sex offenders	10
Treatment-ready typology	11
<b>Chapter 2</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	
Research questions	18
Sample	18
Data collection	18
Cluster analysis	19
Limitation	19
<b>Chapter 3</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>RESULTS</b>	
Descriptive statistics	20
Cluster analysis	27
<b>Chapter 4</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	
Key Findings	35
Discussion	36
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>38</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Regressed Intra-familial Offender Profile .....	13
Table 2: Predatory Child Sex Offender Profile .....	14
Table 3: Fixated Sex Offender Profile .....	15
Table 4: Mentally Handicapped Offender Profile.....	16
Table 5: Predatory Adult Offender Profile .....	17
Table 6: Offenders' Correctional Centre location as at 31 January 2012 .....	20
Table 7: Age of victim.....	21
Table 8: Offender's relationship to the victim by sex offender type .....	22
Table 9: Offender ethnicity by sex offender type .....	23
Table 10: No. of victims the offender was sentenced for at one time by sex offender type .....	23
Table 11: Gender of victim(s) by sex offender type.....	24
Table 12: Prior sex offence by sex offender type .....	24
Table 13: Head sentence offence by sex offender type .....	25
Table 14: Use of violence against victim by sex offender type .....	26
Table 15: Offender age at time of offence.....	26
Table 16: Age of offending onset (not limited to sexual offending).....	27
Table 17: Cluster formations based on factors.....	28
Table 18: Young Opportunistic Sex Offender Profile.....	33
Table 19: Violent Intimate Partner Sex Offender Profile.....	34

## **Chapter 1**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter will review a number of validated typologies on sex offenders. More specifically, differentiations are made between general and specific sex offenders, intra-familial and extra-familial sex offenders, regressed and fixated sex offenders, and typologies on rapists, adolescent sex offenders, intimate partner sex offenders and the newer internet sex offenders are explored. Following this, Woessner's treatment-ready typology is discussed which provides a general overview of a number of these sex offender types.

Differing approaches to how typologies are developed can result in different typologies being identified within a population of interest. For example, clinical typologies might focus on diagnosing psychiatric disorders in accordance with the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders – IV* (DSM-IV) which identifies a number of paraphilia's<sup>2</sup> including paedophilia, fetishism, sexual sadism and exhibitionism. In this context, paedophilia is a psychiatric diagnosis that can only be made by psychiatrists or psychologists, and refers to individuals who suffer from recurrent and intense sexual urges, fantasies or behaviours involving prepubescent children (Borgenson & Kuehnle, 2010). In a legal context, a paedophile can refer to anyone who sexually offends against a child without the need for a formal diagnosis (Marshall, 2007). In this paper, a paedophile refers to a child sex offender that victimises children aged under 12 years.

#### **Generalised and specific sex offenders**

Sex offenders may be classified as generalised versus specialised offenders. The generalised hypothesis states that sexual offenders are versatile and engage in different types of criminal and antisocial behaviours depending upon opportunities that are available (Lussier, 2005). This hypothesis states that sexual crimes would occur randomly amongst other offending behaviours. On the other hand, the specialisation hypothesis posits that sexual offenders have a specific propensity to engage in sexual offending. Rather than a range of offences occurring in a random fashion, it is expected that each subsequent episode of criminal behaviour for specific-type sexual offenders will be an offence of a sexual nature (Lussier, 2005).

#### **Intra-familial and extra-familial sexual offenders**

Sex offenders can also be categorised based upon characteristics of the offence. Perhaps the most common of all the offender typologies which focus on offence characteristics are those that differentiate between intra-familial and extra-familial offenders. Intra-familial and extra-familial sexual offenders are also labelled incest and non-incest offenders. Sexual contact between members of the same family (intra-familial, incest) is typically viewed as a different type of behaviour than sexual contact with someone outside of the family (extra-familial, non-incest)

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<sup>2</sup> Paraphilia's are longstanding deviant sexual-arousal conditions (Nichol, 1991).

regardless of the age of the offender (Gahm & Brown, 1989). Some researchers including Smallbone and Wortley (2001) also identify mixed-type offenders who have self-reported committing sexual offences both inside and outside of the family environment.

Research has found that intra-familial child sexual offenders present with a different pathology to extra-familial child sexual offenders in a number of ways (Ames & Houston, 1990). Intra-familial offenders are rarely diagnosed with a mental illness and usually act impulsively. Victims of these offenders are more than ten times more likely to be female. Furthermore, intra-familial offenders typically offend repeatedly against one or two victims who suffer greater overall harm due to the context of the offending and the lack of family support (Nichol, 1991). In contrast, extra-familial offenders typically offend against males and have a larger number of victims.

### **Regressed and fixated offenders**

Intra-familial and extra-familial offenders are also often characterised as regressed and fixated. Regressed offenders are a heterogeneous group who are often portrayed as “normal” heterosexual men who are married. They are usually attracted to adults but due to precipitating personal issues and stressors turn to children as an outlet for their sexual gratification (Groth & Birnbaum, 1979, p. 176). The co-occurrence of psychological, social and family problems such as substance abuse, marital problems or vocational pressures can result in sexual offending against their own female children (intra-familial) in an attempt to cope with external pressures. Regressed offenders have less sexual arousal to children when compared to extra-familial or fixated offenders (Lang, Black, Frenzel & Checkley, 1988).

In contrast, fixated offenders have an exclusive preference for children as a sexual partner as well as social companions. Fixated offenders are usually psychosexually immature and have unresolved developmental issues which affect their personality functions in such a way that they are sexually attracted to children throughout their life (Simon, Sales, Kaszniak & Kahn, 1992). This group typically engage in compulsive behaviour which results in a higher number of victims and usually offend against others' children (extra-familial). The victims are usually male and sexual contact with individuals of similar age is rare. When sexual contact with adults does occur, this is usually the result of situational factors and not reflective of a sexual preference (Simon *et al*, 1992).

The dichotomy of regressed and fixated offender is useful in helping to understand different offending patterns of sexual offenders. However, some studies argue that classifying sexual offenders into discrete categories is problematic as the inclusion and exclusion criteria for any particular category is unclear and not all offenders can be placed neatly into one of the categories. For example, incest offenders may also victimise individuals outside of the family that have not been officially reported or detected (Bickley & Beech, 2001). Instead, Bickley and Beech (2001) argue that the regressed and fixated dichotomy should be viewed as a continuum



with offenders able to be placed anywhere between the two categories depending upon characteristics of the offending behaviour.

## **Rapists**

Typologies have also been developed in order to classify adult offenders who rape their victims. Groth and Birnbaum (1979) provide the most common typology for rape and group offenders into one of three categories; power rapists, anger rapists and sadistic rapists.

Power rapists do not typically engage in violence but resort to rape to reinforce their dominance, strength and authority over the victim. This is the most common form of rape and this group is akin to the regressed intra-familial offender as identified in the treatment-ready typology. This type of rape commonly explains marital and acquaintance rape as well as cases where “date-rape” drugs are used.

Anger rapists use rape as a means to punish and degrade their victims. It is typically a very violent act that is used as a means of coping with frustration that is associated with the victim, or that uses the victim as a scapegoat. Anger rapists are akin to the cognitively impaired offender who commits violent offences following periods of intense frustration.

Sadistic rapists are the most violent of all rapists. This offence type typically involves torture and degradation of the victim which can become sexualised. As the offenders’ arousal increases, violence may also increase to a level that results in murder. Sadistic rapists usually inflict the most serious physical harm to their victims and at times even death. This type of rape is the most dangerous given that they typically contain elements of torture and may result in the death of the victim. This group of rapist corresponds with the predatory adult sex offender as identified earlier.

## **Adolescent sex offenders**

Psychological assessment measures have also frequently been used to assess and classify adolescent sexual offenders. The techniques employed by researchers such as Oxnam and Vess (2008) used personality indicators to categorise adolescent sexual offenders (sex offenders aged between 13 and 19) into one of four discrete categories: antisocial, passive aggressive, inadequate and conforming. Grant *et al* (2009) summarised a number of studies that have examined adolescent sexual offenders in this manner and found that there is general agreement upon four different personality types. These are:

1. *Antisocial* – characterised by antisocial, impulsive and conduct disordered behaviour;
2. *Narcissistic* – characterised by personality disorders, aggressiveness and passive aggressiveness;

3. *Inadequate* – characterised by immaturity, isolation and submissiveness; and
4. *Over-controlled* – characterised by socialised delinquents, over-controlled and conforming.

Adolescent sex offenders that fit these profiles generally offend against pre-pubescent children. For example, in Oxnam and Vess' (2008) study, 82% of victims were aged 12 and under and 48% of offenders had offended against a male child.

However, there is another category of young, often adolescent sex offenders that are frequently discussed in the literature. This group are essentially young male rapists who almost always offend against young women, and are strongly influenced by situational factors. More specifically, this type of offending often occurs in a university, or nightclub / party setting, and involves acquaintance rape, or 'date rape.' According to Alicke and Yurak (1995), cultural values and circumstances surrounding this type of rape can make prosecution difficult. For example, if a woman consented to a date, had some intimate contact, and/or invited a man to her room, it may be inferred that she encouraged sexual intercourse. Furthermore, circumstances surrounding this type of event often involve the consumption of alcohol, making witness and victim testimony less reliable and subject to question in court.

### **Internet sex offenders**

More recently, the internet has given rise to new forms of sexual offending. Technological advances have increased the accessibility and affordability for those seeking to view and disseminate sexually abusive images. It also provides a level of anonymity for those involved in the offending as well as increased opportunities for offenders to network and engage with other offenders and procure victims. As with other sex offenders, internet sex offenders are a heterogenous group that makes a definitive typology problematic.

Despite these challenges, in attempts to understand the actions, motivations and level of networking of internet sex offenders, new typologies have been developed that seek to categorise those who misuse the internet for sexual gratification. Krone's (2004) categorises internet sexual offenders according to the seriousness of the offending activity which relates to the level of contact with the victim; the networking characteristics of the activity; and the level of security employed to avoid detection. Any internet sex offender may also be classified as a distributor.

### **Intimate partner sex offenders**

Sexual violence in intimate relationships is often secondary to physical violence and an array of other types of abuse that typically define domestic violence. According to Campbell and Soeken (1999), approximately half of physically abused women also report forced and/or abusive sex. In one US study, it was found that coercive controlling violence was experienced by 68% of women that

filed for the equivalent of a Domestic Violence Order (Johnson, 2006). This type of intimate partner violence is primarily conducted by men and involves a cycle of abuse that may not necessarily involve physical or sexual violence (Kelly & Johnson, 2008). However, on average, violence is more frequent and severe in coercive controlling domestic violence than other types of domestic violence (Kelly & Johnson, 2008). According to Wilson and Daly (1993) women experiencing coercive controlling violence are particularly at risk of escalating violence and even homicide around the time of relationship separation.

### **Treatment-ready typology**

Although classifying such a heterogeneous population is naturally a reductive exercise, as Woessner (2010, p343) explains, from a treatment perspective the benefits of generating typologies are that they can help to “understand the dynamics of sexual offences and can thus contribute to a more type-specific intervention”. Treatment-ready typologies also seek to identify the absence or presence of comorbidity of psychiatric diagnoses. The following typology of sex offenders is based around Woessner’s (2010) work and seeks to identify practical categorisations of offenders and treatment options for each group.

Woessner’s (2010) treatment-ready typology identifies five groups of sexual offenders. Based upon an assessment of 199 incarcerated sexual offenders, a total of 11 separate factors were grouped into five broad categories of distinguishing traits upon which a treatment-ready classification of sexual offenders was designed. The five variable groups and their associated factors are:

1. Offence features
  - a. Victim-offender relationship
  - b. Intensity of violence
2. Coping skills
  - a. Conflict management skills
  - b. Experience of personal violence
3. Social adjustment
  - a. Social adjustment and integration
4. Psychopathological problems
  - a. Substance abuse
  - b. Personality disorder
  - c. Paraphilia
5. Treatment potential
  - a. Minimising or denying the offence
  - b. Available resources
  - c. Intelligence

Woessner analysed a sample of offenders according to the above variables and identified five groups of offenders, categorised as follows:

1. Regressed intra-familial offenders
2. Predatory child sex offenders
3. Fixated sex offenders
4. Mentally handicapped offenders
5. Predatory adult sex offenders

The following pages provide an overview of Woessner's (2010) offender typology. To summarise some of the findings of this typology, three of the groups (predatory child sex offenders, mentally handicapped offenders and predatory adult sex offenders) typically victimise strangers; whereas the regressed intra-familial offenders and fixated sex offenders typically offend against people that are known to them although fixated offenders are extra-familial offenders. The characteristics of the regressed intra-familial offender and the fixated offender typology are consistent with the characteristics of these categories discussed earlier.

With respect to violence, mentally handicapped offenders, along with predatory child and adult sex offenders, all have a particular propensity to engage in high levels of violence in the course of their offending. Whilst regressed intra-familial offenders display virtually no likelihood of being diagnosed with a personality disorder or paraphilia, predatory adult sex offenders have very high levels of antisocial and combined personality disorders, and predatory child sex offenders have high levels of paraphilia diagnoses with approximately half being clinically diagnosed with paedophilia.

Mentally handicapped offenders represent a special case of offender. These offenders have an IQ score of less than 80 which has a flow-on effect to a range of other factors which impact on the types of treatment options that are appropriate as well as their overall treatment potential. For example, mentally handicapped offenders display very low levels of social integration when compared to the other categories as well as very low levels of social support and resources available to them. Both of these factors appear to be directly related to their inherent intellectual deficits. Further, the combination of these factors means that treatment options must be designed in consideration of these factors which should include basic sexual education and interventions that address social skills and intimacy.

**Table 1: Regressed Intra-familial Offender Profile**

Regressed Intra-familial Offenders													
Typical Offence type	Offence characteristics		Coping Skills		Social Adjustment		Psychopathological problems			Treatment Potential			
	<i>Victim-Offender relationship</i>	<i>Intensity of violence</i>	<i>Conflict management skills</i>	<i>Experience of parental violence</i>	<i>Level of social integration (e.g. willingness to perform, education, lack of prior criminal record)</i>	<i>Levels of prior or present substance abuse</i>	<i>Likelihood of being diagnosed with a personality disorder</i>	<i>Likelihood of being diagnosed with a paraphilia</i>	<i>Extent to which the offence is minimised or denied</i>	<i>Availability of resources (e.g. social support, future prospects, readiness for change)</i>	<i>Intelligence</i>	<i>Overall treatment prospects</i>	
<b>Group Characteristics</b>	Rape, sexual abuse, indecent assault.	Close. Often partners and children.	Low	Poor. Often commit offences in situations of personal crisis. Deficits in conflict management and problem resolution skills.	Low	Very High. Often married and employed.	Low. Occasional problematic alcohol consumption.	Virtually non-existent.	Virtually non-existent.	Moderate tendency to minimise and deny the offence.	High level of reliable resources.	Normal	Very High
<b>Suggested treatment</b>	Less stringent prison conditions that allow offenders to retain their existing resources; Programs that assist in dealing with stress and respect for one's own feelings and those of others; and Programs that enhance coping skills												

Source: Adapted from Woessner (2010)

**Table 2: Predatory Child Sex Offender Profile**

Predatory Child Sex Offenders													
Typical Offence Type	Offence characteristics		Coping Skills		Social Adjustment		Psychopathological problems			Treatment Potential			
	Victim-Offender relationship	Intensity of violence	Conflict management skills	Experience of parental violence	Level of social integration (e.g. willingness to perform, education, lack of prior criminal record)	History of prior or present substance abuse	Likelihood of being diagnosed with a personality disorder	Likelihood of being diagnosed with a paraphilia	Extent to which the offence is minimised or denied	Availability of resources (e.g. social support, future prospects, readiness for change)	Intelligence	Overall treatment prospects	
<b>Group Characteristics</b>	Rape. Most likely group to commit sexually motivated murder.	Strangers	Excessively violent	Good	Very low	Moderate level of social adjustment. Usually employed. Few social contacts. Live discreetly until commission of offence.	No	High. Often comorbid with a paraphilia.	High. Approx. 50% diagnosed as paedophiles. One-third diagnosed with sexual sadism.	Mixed. Some acceptance of offence, some denial.	Low	Normal	Low
<b>Suggested treatment</b>	Requires the most intensive treatment; Personality disorders and paraphilias both require lengthy therapeutic attention; and Treatment should encourage offenders to develop an understanding of why they seek deviant ways to satisfy their needs and provide them with the necessary skills and attitudes to meet their needs in a pro-social way.												

Source: Adapted from Woessner (2010)

**Table 3: Fixated Sex Offender Profile**

Fixated Sex Offenders													
Typical Offence Type	Offence characteristics		Coping Skills		Social Adjustment		Psychopathological problems			Treatment Potential			
	Victim-Offender relationship	Intensity of violence	Conflict management skills	Experience of parental violence	Level of social integration (e.g. willingness to perform, education, lack of prior criminal record)	History of prior or present substance abuse	Likelihood of being diagnosed with a personality disorder	Likelihood of being diagnosed with a paraphilia	Extent to which the offence is minimised or denied	Availability of resources (e.g. social support, future prospects, readiness for change)	Intelligence	Overall treatment prospects	
<b>Group Characteristics</b>	Child Abuse	Close	Very Low	Good	High	High	No	Very Low	Very High	Very Low	Very High	Normal	High
<b>Suggested treatment</b>	Cognitive-behavioural techniques that address impulse control as well as cognitive distortions between feelings of helplessness, impotence and relationship preference for children; Treatment programs that focus on developing adequate coping skills; and Provide offenders with alternatives to usual patterns of internal fantasy and retreat to allow them to control their urges – not to cure them.												

Source: Adapted from Woessner (2010)

**Table 4: Mentally Handicapped Offender Profile**

<b>Mentally Handicapped Offenders</b>													
<b>Typical Offence Type</b>	<b>Offence characteristics</b>		<b>Coping Skills</b>		<b>Social Adjustment</b>		<b>Psychopathological problems</b>			<b>Treatment Potential</b>			
	<i>Victim-Offender relationship</i>	<i>Intensity of violence</i>	<i>Conflict management skills</i>	<i>Experience of parental violence</i>	<i>Level of social integration (e.g. willingness to perform, education, lack of prior criminal record)</i>	<i>History of prior or present substance abuse</i>	<i>Likelihood of being diagnosed with a personality disorder</i>	<i>Likelihood of being diagnosed with a paraphilia</i>	<i>Extent to which the offence is minimised or denied</i>	<i>Availability of resources (e.g. social support, future prospects, readiness for change)</i>	<i>Intelligence</i>	<i>Overall treatment prospects</i>	
<b>Group Characteristics</b>	Sudden violent attacks following feelings of sexual and general frustration.	Strangers	High. A particular propensity to engage in violence.	Low. Often resort to violence as a coping strategy.	Moderate	Very Low – related to intellectual deficiencies	No	No	Yes	Very Low	Very Low	Low	Very Low
<b>Suggested treatment</b>	Treatment must respect limited intellectual capacity – e.g. tailored programs for sexual offenders with an IQ less than 80; Program elements that seek to reduce the use of violence Basic sexual education and interventions to address intimacy, social skills and assertiveness; and Upon release community rehabilitation and placement in assisted-living arrangements and supervised work is preferred over treatment in forensic facilities												

Source: Adapted from Woessner (2010)



**Table 5: Predatory Adult Offender Profile**

Predatory Adult Offenders													
Typical Offence Type	Offence characteristics		Coping Skills		Social Adjustment		Psychopathological problems			Treatment Potential			
	Victim-Offender relationship	Intensity of violence	Conflict management skills	Experience of parental violence	Level of social integration (e.g. willingness to perform, education, lack of prior criminal record)	History of prior or present substance abuse	Likelihood of being diagnosed with a personality disorder	Likelihood of being diagnosed with a paraphilia	Extent to which the offence is minimised or denied.	Availability of resources (e.g. social support, future prospects readiness for change)	Intelligence	Overall treatment prospects	
<b>Group Characteristics</b>	Rape and sexual assault.	Strangers	Very High	Very poor. A very high disposition for violence as a means of conflict resolution.	High	Very low. Fundamental antisocial attitude. An absolute lack of social adjustment and a deviant personality structure.	Very High	Very High	Very Low	Very high levels of denial and minimisation.	Low. Lack of social support and lack of future prospects.	Normal	Low. Lack of social support and lack of future prospects makes treatment difficult.
<b>Suggested treatment</b>	<p>A large number of characteristics that are likely to result in recidivism are present. These include attitudes that are tolerant of sexual assault, an antisocial lifestyle, substance abuse, employment problems, personality disorders and previous violence. The risk of recidivism can be reduced when these risk factors are addressed.</p> <p>Factors that impact on poor impulse control including personality disorders, psychiatric issues and substance abuse all need to be addressed. Program elements that seek to reduce the use of violence as a coping strategy needs to be addressed.</p>												

Source: Adapted from Woessner (2010)

## **Chapter 2**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter presents the methods used to address three research questions. The research questions are outlined followed by a description of the sample. The data collection methods are discussed, and a description of the statistical cluster analysis, including variable definitions, is provided. Limitations of the research design are also addressed.

#### **Research questions**

This project aims to respond to three key research questions:

- 1) What types of sex offenders are incarcerated in Queensland prisons?
- 2) What are the identifiable characteristics of each sex offender type?
- 3) Do the sex offender types incarcerated in Queensland have different characteristics to those discussed in international literature on traditional sex offender typologies?

#### **Sample**

A list of sex offenders incarcerated in Queensland as at 18 January 2012 was extracted from IOMS. From this list, a random sample of 173 sex offenders were investigated.

#### **Data collection**

*Sentencing transcripts* – sentencing transcripts that related to the offenders' current sex offence(s) were downloaded from the prisoners' IOMS profiles. These transcripts were analysed for information about the sex offence(s) event that indicates what type of sex offender they are. One 'event' may in fact include several events over time, but relates to all events reviewed by a Judge in one case. Specific variables that were coded from transcripts included: age of youngest victim of event(s), gender of victim(s), number of victims, offender-victim relationship, head sentence for the event, offender's age at the start of the event, age of offending onset not necessarily sex offending (may be earlier than QCS' first contact with the offender), use of violence or threats during event, prior sex offence (if prior to their first contact with QCS), the environment that the offence(s) took place, cognitively impaired offender flag, mentally handicap victim flag, group sex offence event, marital status at time of event, and life stressor(s) at time of event.

*IOMS* – all other demographic and offending history information was obtained from the IOMS profiles of the sample. Such variables included: Correctional Centre location as at 18 January 2012, offender ethnicity, age of offending onset not necessarily sex offending (if not discussed clearly by Judge in sentencing

transcript), prior sex offence (cross-checked with details in sentencing transcript, or exclusively used if not discussed in sentencing transcript), age of offending onset (cross-checked with details in sentencing transcript or exclusively used if not discussed in sentencing transcript) to capture any offending after the commencement of QCS electronic data collection (approximately 1992).

## **Cluster analysis**

A two step cluster analysis was conducted using SPSS software (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) to group together like cases based on chosen characteristics. In this analysis, four key variables or predictors were chosen to define the clusters, based on their dominance in sex offender literature. These variables are: victim-offender relationship, use of violence, offender ethnicity and age of the victim. Coding of these variables was as follows:

- Victim-offender relationship: partner/ex-partner, intra-familial, extra-familial (including family friend, friend's parent, teacher, acquaintance), and stranger (including stranger with or without interaction).
- Use of violence: violence (including with or without weapon, and stupefying), and no violence (including threats).
- Offender ethnicity (Australian Indigenous, and other).
- Age of the victim: (child – 16 years and under, or adult).

Each of these predictors play a different role in the creation of the clusters. The predictors are weighted during the analysis between '1' which represents a very important predictor playing a significant role in cluster formation, and '0', a predictor that is not at all important, playing no role in cluster formation.

Outlier or noise handling was used as a robust clustering method to reduce error in the clustering process and improve the quality of clusters by ensuring there are small within-cluster differences and large between-cluster differences. Noise or outlier handling was set at 5%. By using this tool and choosing the optimum number of clusters to fit the data, a cluster quality or silhouette measure is produced. A silhouette measure of 1 would reflect perfectly distinct clusters whilst a value of -1 would reflect no distinction between clusters, or random grouping of cases.

## **Limitation**

*Unreliable/missing data* - some coded data drawn from sentencing transcripts were not analysed due to the likelihood that it was not reliable. Furthermore, many cases had missing data. For example, sentencing comments of the court often failed to go into any detail regarding information on the marital status of the offender at the time of the event, the stressors in their lives, or their prior experience as a victim of sexual abuse. Consequently, there were limited variables of sufficient quality to include in the cluster analysis.

## Chapter 3 RESULTS

This chapter presents a sex offender typology based on various event and offender factors of a sex offender sample incarcerated in Queensland as at 18 January 2012. Following the presentation of descriptive statistics, findings from a statistical cluster analysis are reported. Findings respond to three research questions on Queensland sex offender types, type characteristics, and the comparability of Queensland types to those types outlined in international literature.

### Descriptive statistics

#### *Location of sex offenders (Correctional Centres)*

Table 6 shows the spread of the sample of sex offenders across the Queensland prisons. Almost one in three sex offenders (29.5%) were residing at Wolston CC. Other Queensland prisons where a significant proportion of the sex offender sample were residing included Lotus Glen CC (15.6%) and Maryborough CC (14.5%).

**Table 6:** *Offenders' Correctional Centre location as at 31 January 2012*

Correctional Centre	Count	Percentage
Arthur Gorrie CC	5	2.9
Borallon CC / Southern Queensland CC	6	3.5
Brisbane CC	15	8.7
Brisbane Womens CC	2	1.2
Capricornia CC	17	9.8
Lotus Glen CC	27	15.6
Maryborough CC	25	14.5
Townsville CC (Male)	18	10.4
Wolston CC	51	29.5
Woodford CC	7	4.0
Total	173	100%

#### *Child versus adult sex offenders*

Table 7 shows that the most common group of incarcerated sex offenders in the Queensland sample were paedophiles (victims aged under 12 years), representing 38.2% of all sex offenders. Hebephiles, (whose victims were post-pubescent children aged 12 to 16 years) represented 27.2%. Collectively, these

two groups of child sex offenders represented 65.9%, or two thirds of the sex offender sample. The remaining third (34.1%) were adult sex offenders.

**Table 7:** *Age of victim*

<b>Victim</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Child <12yrs	67	38.7
Child 12-16yrs	47	27.2
Adult	59	34.1
Total	173	100%

### *Offender-victim relationship*

An analysis of the relationship between the offender and the victim shows that child sex offenders were most likely a guardian (parent/step-parent/legal guardian) to the victim (30.7%) or were another relation such as a grandparent, uncle, or sibling (22.8%). In a further 14.0% of cases, child sex offenders were a family friend who may or may not act as a carer at times. Child sex offenders were strangers to the victim in only 14.0% of cases. More specifically, child sex offenders were complete strangers with no interaction with the victim in 5.3% of cases, and were strangers with some interaction with the victim in 8.8% of cases. In addition, child sex offenders were rarely teachers (0.9%), pastors (0.9%) or employers of the victim (0.9%).

Paedophiles were the most likely group to be convicted of offending against multiple victims in the one case (29.9%). They often offended against victims that they had some guardianship over (temporarily or permanently), with the most likely offenders being parents or step-parents (40.6%), other family members (21.9%) or family friends (18.8%). Paedophiles were less likely to offend against strangers (12.5%).

Hebephiles also predominantly offended against their children or step-children (18.0%) or other family members (24.0%). Offenders of this category were more likely to offend against children that were strangers than paedophiles, representing 16.0% of all hebephile cases. This victim age group (12 to 15 years) may spend more time at friend's places (including overnight) than the younger age group (paedophile victims). Consequently, opportunities for offending by victim's friend's parents increase, reflected in 14.0% of offender-victim relationships for hebephile cases. Hebephiles were rarely friends or acquaintances (10.0%), family friends (8.0%), boyfriends or girlfriends (6.0%), pastors (2.0%) or employers (2.0%). Of all hebephile cases analysed, 19.6% involved multiple victims.

Figures in Table 8 also show that for adult sex offenders (where the victim is aged 16 or over), the most likely victim was a stranger, representing 55.9% of all cases. More specifically, the offender was a stranger to the victim with some

interaction (e.g. meeting in a nightclub or at a party the night of the offence) in 18.6% of all adult sex offender cases. They were complete strangers with no interaction with the victim (e.g. sudden attack on the street) in 37.3% of all adult sex offender cases. In 15.3% of adult sex offender cases, offenders were friends or acquaintances of the victim. In a further 6.8% of cases, offenders were partners of the victim, while ex-partners represented 10.2% of the offenders. Adult sex offenders were least likely to be parents or guardians of the victim (5.1%), another relation (5.1%), or an employer of the victim (1.7%). Adult sex offenders were also more likely than child sex offenders to be involved in group sex offences (one victim and multiple offenders). Cases of adult sex offenders were the least likely to involve multiple victims.

**Table 8:** *Offender's relationship to the victim by sex offender type*

<b>Relationship to victim</b>	<i>Paedophile</i>	<i>Hebephile</i>	<b>Child Sex Offender</b>	<b>Adult Sex Offender</b>
Parent/Step-parent/Guardian	40.6	18.0	30.7	5.1
Other family	21.9	24.0	22.8	5.1
Partner / boyfriend-girlfriend	-	6.0	2.6	6.8
Ex-partner	-	-	-	10.2
Friend/Acquaintance	4.7	10.0	7.0	15.3
Employer	-	2.0	0.9	1.7
Stranger	12.5	16.0	14.0	55.9
Family friend	18.8	8.0	14.0	-
Friend's parent	-	14.0	6.1	-
Teacher	1.6	-	0.9	-
Pastor	-	2.0	0.9	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### *Offender ethnicity*

Distinct differences in the ethnic profile of the sex offender groups are evident from the sample. Almost three quarters (71.6%) of paedophiles and over half (61.7%) of all hebephiles in Queensland prisons identify themselves as non-Indigenous Australians. Almost half (45.8%) of all adult sex offenders identify as Indigenous Australian. Row percentages (rather than the column percentages presented in Table 9) suggest that non-Indigenous sex offenders were far more likely to be child sex offenders (81.1%) than Indigenous or sex offenders of 'other' ethnic backgrounds (approximately 50%). Furthermore, Indigenous hebephiles are more likely to be closer in age to the victim than Non-Indigenous Australian hebephiles, and were also more likely to be friends or in a girlfriend-boyfriend relationship with the victim.

**Table 9: Offender ethnicity by sex offender type**

<b>Offender ethnicity</b>	<i>Paedophile</i>	<i>Hebephile</i>	<b>Child Sex Offender</b>	<b>Adult Sex Offender</b>
Non-Indigenous Australian	71.6	61.7	67.5	30.5
Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander	17.9	25.5	21.1	45.8
Other	10.4	12.8	11.4	23.7
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

### *Number of victims*

Figures in Table 10 show that child sex offenders were more likely to be convicted for sex offences against multiple victims (25.7%) compared to adult sex offenders (10.2%). Furthermore, paedophiles, and to a smaller extent hebephiles, may have more opportunity to offend against multiple victims if the victims do not report the offence until adulthood. Also, the likelihood of conviction differs with each offence type (linked to likelihood of evidence).

**Table 10: No. of victims the offender was sentenced for at one time by sex offender type**

<b>Number of victims</b>	<i>Paedophile</i>	<i>Hebephile</i>	<b>Child Sex Offender</b>	<b>Adult Sex Offender</b>
1	70.1	80.4	74.3	89.8
2	13.4	10.9	12.4	10.2
3	6.0	4.3	5.3	0.0
4+	10.5	4.3	8.0	0.0
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

### *Gender of victims*

An analysis of the gender of victims suggests that generally, sex offenders prefer female victims, however child sex offenders were more likely than adult sex offenders to victimise males, particularly post-pubescent male children. Moreover, figures in Table 11 show that only 5.1% of adult victims were male compared to 23.7% of all child victims. Of the child victims, the analysis found that 20.9% of paedophile victims and 27.7% of hebephile victims were male.

**Table 11:** Gender of victim(s) by sex offender type

Gender of victim(s)	<i>Paedophile</i>	<i>Hebephile</i>	<b>Child Sex Offender</b>	<b>Adult Sex Offender</b>
Male	20.9	27.7	23.7	5.1
Female	79.1	70.2	75.4	94.9
Both	-	2.1	0.9	-
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

*Prior sex offence*

Figures in Table 12 show that child sex offenders were significantly more likely to have a prior sex offence before the sentence in question than adult sex offenders, with figures being 31.6% and 22.0% respectively. There is no significant difference between the likelihood of a prior sex offence for a hebephile versus a paedophile.

**Table 12:** Prior sex offence by sex offender type

Prior sex offence	<i>Paedophile</i>	<i>Hebephile</i>	<b>Child Sex Offender</b>	<b>Adult Sex Offender</b>
No	68.7	68.1	68.4	78.0
Yes	31.3	31.9	31.6	22.0
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

*Head sentence offence*

Of all offences considered at a court sitting, the head sentence is that which attracts the longest sentence (and is usually therefore the most serious of the offences considered). Table 13 shows that rape was the most common head sentence offence for 45.5% of paedophiles, 31.9% of hebephiles (39.8% of child sex offenders overall), and 69.5% of adult sex offenders. The smaller percentage of child sex offenders charged with rape is attributed to the other grooming and sexual offending behaviours often engaged in by child sex offenders with or without the intention to escalate to rape.



These types of sexual behaviours (e.g. touching) are represented by the high number of child sex offenders with a head sentence of indecent treatment or dealing with a child under 12 (15.0%) or under 16 (17.7%), or in the case of this behaviour continuing for an extended period of time, maintaining a relationship with a child (17.7%). For adult sex offenders, the second most likely head sentence offence is sexual assault, accounting for 15.3% of head sentence offences for adult sex offenders. There was one adult sex offender charged with unlawful carnal knowledge of an intellectually impaired person.

**Table 13:** *Head sentence offence by sex offender type*

<b>Offence type</b>	<i>Paedophile</i>	<i>Hebephile</i>	<b>Child Sex Offender</b>	<b>Adult Sex Offender</b>
Unlawful carnal knowledge	-	10.6	4.4	1.7
Indecent treatment/dealing of a child under 12	24.2	2.1	15.0	NA
Indecent treatment/dealing of a child under 16	10.6	27.7	17.7	NA
Maintaining a relationship with a child	18.2	17.0	17.7	NA
Incest	-	2.1	0.9	NA
Indecent assault	1.5	-	0.9	3.4
Sexual assault	-	-	-	15.3
Assault - Intent to rape	-	2.1	0.9	6.8
Attempted rape	-	2.1	0.9	3.4
Rape	45.5	31.9	39.8	69.5
Unnatural offences	-	2.1	0.9	-
Sexual offences, unspecified	-	2.1	0.9	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### *Violence*

As shown in Table 14, violence, with or without a weapon was frequently used in adult sex offence cases (25.4% and 39.0% respectively). The use of any violence was rare in child sex offence cases (10.5% collectively). Moreover, paedophiles were the most likely to not use violence or threats or violence (82.1%), followed by hebephiles (66%) and adult sex offenders (33.9%). Hebephiles were the most likely sex offenders to stupefy the victim with alcohol (8.5%) or make threats of violence (12.8%).

**Table 14:** Use of violence against victim by sex offender type

<b>Use of violence</b>	<i>Paedophile</i>	<i>Hebephile</i>	<b>Child Sex Offender</b>	<b>Adult Sex Offender</b>
Non-violent	82.1	66.0	75.4	33.9
Threat of violence	7.5	12.8	9.6	1.7
Stupefying victim	1.5	8.5	4.4	-
Violence no weapon	9.0	6.4	7.9	39.0
Violence with weapon	-	6.4	2.6	25.4
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

*Offender age at time of offence*

Table 15 shows that almost half of all adult sex offenders were aged under 25 years, whilst only one in five child sex offenders were aged under 25 years. The analysis also found that the majority of adult sex offenders aged under 25 years offended against a victim who was a stranger of similar age.

**Table 15:** Offender age at time of offence

<b>Age</b>	<i>Paedophile</i>	<i>Hebephile</i>	<b>Child Sex Offender</b>	<b>Adult Sex Offender</b>
<25 years	19.7	22.2	20.8	44.1
25+ years	80.3	77.8	79.2	55.9
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

*Age of offending onset*

The average age of offending onset, including all offending, was mid twenties, with a mean of 28 years, a median of 24 years and a range of 11 to 77 years. Across the different sex offender types presented in Table 16, there was essentially no difference in the percentage of paedophiles and hebephiles that started offending before turning 25 years old. Moreover, approximately half of all sex offenders started offending early (prior to 25 years old) and the remaining half started offending late (at 25 years or more). Adult sex offenders were far more likely to have a criminal history by 25 years old, with two thirds having early onset offending.

**Table 16:** Age of offending onset (not limited to sexual offending)

<b>Age</b>	<i>Paedophile</i>	<i>Hebephile</i>	<b>Child Sex Offender</b>	<b>Adult Sex Offender</b>
Early onset (<25 years)	47.8	46.8	47.4	67.8
Late onset (25+ years)	52.2	53.2	52.6	32.2
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

### **Cluster analysis**

A two-step cluster analysis was conducted trialling various cluster numbers. The most sound outcome was an analysis conducted with seven clusters, with a robust silhouette or quality measure of 0.7. Outliers were removed from the analysis, representing 18 cases or 10.4% of the original data. Many of these outliers were Indigenous offenders. This group of excluded sex offenders is discussed in more detail on page 32. This process resulted in 155 cases being distributed (unequally) across seven clusters. The strongest predictor that played the largest role in the formation of the clusters was the victim-offender relationship, with a predictor importance weight of 1. Use of violence, age of victim and offender ethnicity all played moderate roles in cluster formation, with weightings of 0.39, 0.38 and 0.31 respectively.

Table 17 shows the clusters formed. Typical profiles identified in Woessner's (2010) treatment-ready sex offender typologies were found in the QCS sex offender population. These included: the regressed intra-familial, fixated extra-familial, predatory child and predatory adult typologies. Whilst some offenders were identified as fitting the mentally handicapped profile, there were not enough offenders (from the available information) to make a cluster. A violent intimate partner cluster was evident, supporting literature on domestic violence typologies. Also, a new cluster was evident that draws on the acquaintance rape literature. This cluster has been named the 'young opportunistic' cluster.

Indigenous child sex offenders were almost exclusively regressed intra-familial sex offenders, with the remaining child sex offenders making up much of the outlier cluster. Indigenous adult sex offenders were almost exclusively violent sex offenders, which resulted in them being categorised as predatory adult sex offenders or violent intimate partner sex offenders, but not young opportunistic sex offenders.

**Table 17:** Cluster formations based on factors

Factor	Clusters						
	1 <i>n</i> = 44 (28.4%)	2 <i>n</i> = 22 (14.2%)	3 <i>n</i> = 29 (18.7%)	4 <i>n</i> = 12 (7.7%)	5 <i>n</i> = 16 (10.3%)	6 <i>n</i> = 23 (14.8%)	7 <i>n</i> = 9 (5.8%)
Offender relationship	Family	Family	Friend	Friend/ Stranger (with interaction)	Stranger	Stranger	Partner/ Ex-partner
Violence	Non-violent	Non-violent	Non-violent	Non-violent	Violent	Violent	Violent
Victim age	Child	Child	Child	Adult	Child	Adult	Adult
Ethnicity	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous & non-Indigenous	Indigenous & non-Indigenous
Typology	<b>Regressed Intra-familial</b>	<b>Indigenous Regressed Intra-familial</b>	<b>Fixated Extra-familial</b>	<b>Young Opportunistic</b>	<b>Predatory Child</b>	<b>Predatory Adult</b>	<b>Violent Intimate Partner</b>

### *Cluster 1 – Regressed intra-familial non-Indigenous child sex offender*

The largest cluster was the regressed intra-familial (non-Indigenous) child sex offender group, representing 44 sex offenders, or 28.4% of all sex offenders in the sample. In 100% of these cases, victims were family members of the offender, and in most cases (62%), were the offender's own children or step-children. Victims were female in 60% of cases and male in 40% of cases. Furthermore, violence was not used in any of the cases, however threats were sometimes made towards the victim. Offenders that fit this profile have a relatively low risk of sexual reoffending, with 22.8% of these offenders having had a prior sex offence. The average age of regressed intra-familial non-Indigenous child sex offenders at the time of the offence was 36 years old.

### *Cluster 2 – Regressed intra-familial Indigenous child sex offender*

There were 22 sex offenders (14.2%) that fit the profile of a regressed intra-familial Indigenous child sex offender. Indigenous child sex offenders analysed almost always offended against a child that was a relative, and the offending against a particular child was often a unique rather than repeated event, evidenced by there being no Indigenous sex offenders convicted of 'maintaining a relationship with a child.' Regardless of this, Indigenous intra-familial child sex offenders were the most likely of all sex offenders to have had a prior sex offence conviction (36.4%). Furthermore, unlike their non-Indigenous counterparts, Indigenous intra-familial child sex offenders were more likely to have a history of generalised sexual offending behaviour.

In contrast to non-Indigenous intra-familial child sex offenders, Indigenous intra-familial child sex offenders offend against their own children or step-children in 33% of cases, with more frequent victims being extended family such as nieces or nephews (42%). Furthermore, their child victim was almost always a female in (92%), compared to 77.3% of all victims of non-Indigenous intra-familial child sex offenders. Indigenous intra-familial child sex offenders were on average, slightly younger than their non-Indigenous counterparts at the time of the offence, with the mean age being 32.

### *Cluster 3 – Fixated extra-familial child sex offender*

Fixated extra-familial child sex offenders represented 29 or 18.7% of all sex offenders in the sample. The average age of those that fit the fixated child sex offender profile was 38 years. No sex offenders that fit this profile were violent towards their victim (although may have made threats of some kind).

There were very limited Indigenous child sex offenders that displayed the characteristics of a fixated extra-familial child sex offender, where extensive grooming and a number of sexual incidents often occur over an extended period of time. This is evident not only in the event descriptions, but is also reflected in the fact that no Indigenous sex offender had a most serious offence conviction of

'maintaining a relationship with a child.' For that reason, all offenders in this category were non-Indigenous.

Fixated child sex offenders were often considered a 'friend' of some kind to the victim. More specifically, in 44.8% of cases the offender was a family friend, and in a further 17.2% of cases, the offender was a parent of one of the victim's friends. Also, in a number of cases, the offenders were internet sex offenders, grooming their victims in chat rooms, followed by grooming via text messages. In such cases, they were considered friends of the victims due to their anonymity being compromised as their relationship progressed, and the victim may believe that the offender, as portrayed on the internet or via text message, is of a similar age.

The small number of remaining offenders were strangers with interaction, or guardians to some extent, be that teacher, employer or pastor. This relationship reflects offender opportunity and access to the victim, which is often associated with the victim's age and the offender's role as a trusted adult. Not surprisingly then, those who met this profile were more likely to be considered hebephiles (58.6%), whilst regressed non-Indigenous sex offenders were more likely to be considered paedophiles (72.7%). Of all fixated child sex offenders, 27.6% had a prior sex offence, making them one of the groups most likely to have a history of sexual offending.

#### *Cluster 4 - Young opportunistic sex offender*

There were 12 sex offenders who fit the 'young opportunistic' profile. This is a new profile unique to Queensland, and is typified by non-Indigenous adult sex offenders (33% aged 22 years and under, and 75% aged 38 years and under). Young opportunistic sex offenders differ from predatory sex offenders in that predatory offenders often victimise strangers with no interaction, in a semi-planned, violent offence, whilst young opportunistic sex offenders generally commit non-violent sex offences against friends, acquaintances, and strangers with some interaction. Furthermore, their offending is often driven by situational rather than pathological factors.

A profile for these offenders is presented in Table 18. Whilst these offenders are non-violent towards victims, they are likely to show personality traits of narcissism and self-entitlement, exacerbated by drug and alcohol use. In keeping with these personality traits and potential intoxication, they may have some disposition to using violence as a means to conflict resolution, but are unlikely to be violent towards the victim during the offence. They are unlikely to have experienced parental violence. They are likely to be of normal intelligence with a high level of social integration and future prospects. However, their social networks are likely to be at a superficial level, and therefore, do not necessarily translate to good social support.

Further investigation suggests that in all cases that fit this profile, the offender was male and the victim was female. Victims were often of a similar age or

younger than the offender. The most frequent offence type was rape, which often took place at the offender, victim, or friend's residence.

Young opportunistic sex offenders' levels of denial and minimisation of the offence(s) are likely to be high, often due to the belief that they were receiving cues from the victim that indicated an opportunity for a sexual encounter. The likelihood of victim cues being mis-read is likely increased due to factors associated with the use of drugs or alcohol in typical pre-offence or offence settings such as nightclubs or parties where there is a level of acceptability regarding intoxication and aggressive sexual behaviour. In addition to their likely denial, their lack of genuine social support makes treatment difficult and they may have low motivation to pursue treatment. The likelihood of fixation or recidivism is low.

#### *Cluster 5 – Predatory child sex offender*

Predatory child sex offenders were characterised by the likelihood that they were strangers to the victim (50%) and were in most cases violent (75%). In most of these incidents of violence, the victim was stupefied with alcohol or assaulted (without a weapon). All sex offenders that fit this profile were non-Indigenous. The average age of the offender was 39 years old whilst the average age of the victim was 10 years old. One in four predatory child sex offenders had a prior sex offence conviction. Predatory child sex offenders were the most likely type of child sex offender to offend against a male victim (37.5%).

#### *Cluster 6 – Predatory adult sex offender*

Predatory adult sex offenders represented 14.8% of all sex offenders in the sample. In all cases, they were strangers to the adult victims and used violence in their assaults. These offenders were 25 years old on average, and all but one of the victims were female. As expected, the most serious offences for the majority of these offenders was rape (65.2%), assault with intent to rape (13%) or attempted rape (8.7%). Sex offenders that fit this profile were one of the least likely groups to have a prior sex offence (21.7%). Furthermore, this group was comprised of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous sex offenders, representing 43.5% and 56.5% respectively.

#### *Cluster 7 – Violent intimate partner sex offender*

All offenders that fit this profile were partners or recent ex-partners of the victim. In most cases, the offence was characterised by sexual and physical violence of a degrading nature. In all but one case, the victim (or a past partner) had a Domestic Violence Order against the offender. Furthermore, these offenders often had a history of breaching these orders. All but one of these cases had a most serious offence type of rape or assault with intent to rape. The average age of sex offenders that fit this profile was 38 years old. There were not enough

cases to create culturally specific clusters. Moreover, 55.6% of these sex offenders were non-Indigenous and 44.4% were Indigenous.

Table 19 provides some information on the key predictors of this sex offender type. Violent intimate partner sex offenders have a disposition for violence as a means of conflict resolution, which may stem from a higher than average chance of having experienced sexual or physical parent abuse. As these offenders are primarily offenders of domestic physical abuse, they vary considerably on a variety of factors. For example, there are varied levels of social integration and education, which have some impact on their access to resources such as social support and future prospects. These offenders also have varied levels of prior or current substance abuse. There is a moderate to high likelihood of a personality disorder (e.g. anti-social), but low likelihood of a paraphilia diagnosis. Furthermore, offenders often have high levels of denial and minimisation of their offending which impacts on their motivation and perceived need for treatment.

### *Outlier Cluster*

There were some similarities between many of the 18 outlier cases. Approximately two thirds of offenders considered outliers were Indigenous. These Indigenous offenders were on average 28 years of age, with many of them aged 22 or under. This particular group of sex offenders did not fit a category because whilst most violent sex offences against children are often against children that are strangers (e.g. predatory child sex offences), many of these violent sex offences were committed against a child that was known to the offender in the community as a family friend, or what was considered an (underage) sexual partner. In some of these cases, the offence and the circumstance surrounding the offence were similar to that of a violent intimate partner sex offender, with the victim being a child rather than an adult. Moreover, in some cases in remote Indigenous communities, it was apparent that there was some cultural acceptance of sex offending against young girls, and that these victims were viewed in some sense as suitable sexual partners. For example, one child sex offender from Aurukun, a remote Indigenous community, indicated that he offended against the pre-pubescent victim because 1) a number of other boys had sexually offended against the same victim; 2) the offender had previously sexually offended against the victim; 3) the victim did not resist; and 4) it was not uncommon in the Aurukun community for boys to have sex with young girls.



**Table 18: Young Opportunistic Sex Offender Profile**

Young Opportunistic Offenders													
Typical Offence Type	Offence characteristics		Coping Skills		Social Adjustment		Psychopathological problems			Treatment Potential			
	<i>Victim-Offender relationship</i>	<i>Intensity of violence</i>	<i>Conflict management skills</i>	<i>Experience of parental violence</i>	<i>Level of social integration (e.g. willingness to perform, education, lack of prior criminal record)</i>	<i>History of prior or present substance abuse</i>	<i>Likelihood of being diagnosed with a personality disorder</i>	<i>Likelihood of being diagnosed with a paraphilia</i>	<i>Extent to which the offence is minimised or denied.</i>	<i>Availability of resources (e.g. social support, future prospects readiness for change)</i>	<i>Intelligence</i>	<i>Overall treatment prospects</i>	
<b>Group Characteristics</b>	Rape and sexual assault.	Acquaintance, Stranger with interaction. Female adult victim.	Low	Poor. Some disposition for violence as a means of conflict resolution.	Low	High	Moderate -High	Moderate. Personality traits such as narcissism and self-entitlement ..	Very Low	Very high levels of denial and minimisation .	High. High social interaction and future prospects but not necessarily social support.	Normal	Low. Lack of social support makes treatment difficult. Poor motivation to pursue treatment.
<b>Suggested treatment</b>	<p>Recidivism unlikely. However, offender may have risk factors such as substance abuse, self-harm behaviour, narcissistic personality and previous violence. The risk of recidivism can be reduced when these risk factors are addressed.</p> <p>Factors that impact on poor impulse control including personality disorders, psychiatric issues and substance abuse all need to be addressed. Program elements that seek to reduce the use of violence as a coping strategy needs to be addressed.</p>												

**Table 19: Violent Intimate Partner Sex Offender Profile**

Violent Intimate Partner Sex Offenders													
Typical Offence Type	Offence characteristics		Coping Skills		Social Adjustment		Psychopathological problems			Treatment Potential			
	Victim-Offender relationship	Intensity of violence	Conflict management skills	Experience of parental violence	Level of social integration (e.g. willingness to perform, education, lack of prior criminal record)	History of prior or present substance abuse	Likelihood of being diagnosed with a personality disorder	Likelihood of being diagnosed with a paraphilia	Extent to which the offence is minimised or denied.	Availability of resources (e.g. social support, future prospects readiness for change)	Intelligence	Overall treatment prospects	
<b>Group Characteristics</b>	Rape and sexual assault.	Female partner or ex-partner.	High to very high.	Poor. Disposition for violence as a means of conflict resolution.	Some likelihood for sexual or physical parent abuse.	Varied.	Varied.	Moderate-High Borderline personality disorder & anti-social personality disorder.	Very Low	Very high levels of denial and minimisation ..	Varied.	Low to normal	Very low. Poor motivation to pursue treatment, and high denial of offence & need for treatment.
<b>Suggested treatment</b>	<p>Sexual reoffending unlikely. However, offender is at high risk of violent reoffending. May have risk factors such as substance abuse and previous violence. The risk of recidivism can be reduced when these risk factors are addressed.</p> <p>Factors that impact on poor impulse control including personality disorders, psychiatric issues and substance abuse all need to be addressed. Program elements that seek to reduce the use of violence as a coping strategy needs to be addressed.</p>												

## **Chapter 4**

### **CONCLUSION**

The fundamental purpose of this research was to add to the current knowledge base on different sex offender types currently incarcerated in Queensland prisons. A sex offender typology specific to QCS can lead to more purposeful collection of data on sexual offending programs and services demand; allow for more effective forward planning/scheduling of sexual offending programs and associated correctional centre placement of sex offenders; and ensure that the most high risk sex offender types are offered the most intensive programs.

This report utilised one central classification system, Woessner's treatment-ready typology as the foundation of the analysis, whilst also presenting new sex offender categories identified from the Queensland sample. A typology was established that sought to understand the distribution of Queensland sex offenders across the recognised categories, as well as the emergence of additional and unique sex offender categories. This was achieved by conducting a cluster analysis on key event and offender factors for a sample of 173 incarcerated sex offenders. Conclusively, this analysis process has resulted in a Queensland sex offender specific classification system that will be useful to practitioners in terms of the identification, classification and treatment of sex offenders.

#### **Key Findings**

##### *Child versus adult sex offenders*

Findings showed that of those incarcerated sex offenders as at 18 January 2012, two thirds were child sex offenders, with the remaining being adult sex offenders. Of those that are considered child sex offenders, the majority were paedophiles rather than hebephiles.

##### *The Queensland sex offender population in relation to Woessner's typology*

A cluster analysis was conducted based on four factors: offender-victim relationship, level of violence, victim age and offender ethnicity. Of these predictors, the offender-victim relationship played the most significant role in cluster formation. Eighteen offenders were excluded as they were considered outliers.

Results showed that the 155 Queensland sex offenders included in the analysis clearly matched four of Woessner's five profiles: regressed intra-familial, fixated, predatory child and predatory adult. Proportionally, 28.4% were considered regressed intra-familial child sex offenders, 18.7% were fixated extra-familial child sex offenders, 10.3% were predatory child sex offenders and 14.8% were predatory adult sex offenders. Some offenders did match Woessner's fifth profile – mentally handicapped sex offender, however the number of these offenders in the Queensland sex offender population was too small to make a cluster based

on the limited information that was available regarding the individual's cognitive impairment.

### *Unique Queensland sex offender profiles*

The cluster analysis also highlighted three other sex offender profiles. These included: Indigenous regressed intra-familial, young opportunistic and violent intimate partner.

Apart from the difference in offender ethnicity, the Indigenous regressed intra-familial group is unique to the non-Indigenous regressed intra-familial group in that the victim was a family member in two thirds of incidents rather than all cases. Furthermore, the victims in non-Indigenous regressed sex offender cases were frequently the offender's children or step-children, whilst for Indigenous regressed intra-familial cases offenders were also often extended family such as uncles. In the remaining one third of cases, the offender was a stranger to the victim. Whilst these offenders have been coded 'stranger' in many cases they were residing in remote communities with the victims and may have been known to them without associating directly with each other. The majority of the cases were against children. All but one remaining case involved a victim that was a young adult, aged between 17 and 22 years.

The young opportunistic profile is typified by young male non-Indigenous offenders that were non-violent (during offence), who sexually assaulted or raped female friends of a similar age or strangers that they had some interaction with.

The violent intimate partner profile is also typified by male offenders. These offenders generally had a history of domestic violence orders and offend against a female partner or ex-partner (often shortly after a relationship break-down). The offence itself involves the use of violence. This group includes Indigenous and non-Indigenous offenders.

## **Discussion**

Understanding the sex offender population in Queensland can allow for effective management of offenders and treatment resources. Findings from this research suggest that 25% of the sex offender population are at high risk or reoffending whilst concurrently having a low likelihood of responding to treatment. They are excessively violent predatory sex offenders that prey on strangers (children or adults). These offenders present with a range of interpersonal characteristics (e.g. personality disorders) that play a significant role in their offending behaviour, and make the reduction and prevention of reoffending difficult. Consequently, these offenders require the most intensive treatment response.

Other offending groups such as those categorised as the young opportunistic sex offenders and the violent intimate partner sex offenders, have a low likelihood of responding to treatment, but are also at low risk of sexual reoffending. For violent

intimate partner sex offenders, treatment for violent offending behaviour may further reduce the risk of future violent offending – physical and sexual.

The existing literature suggests that the two most common types of sex offenders in this research - regressed intra-familial and fixated extra-familial, are typically non-violent and have a high likelihood of responding positively to treatment. These offenders are likely to have access to some resources outside of prison, and have a low likelihood of suffering from a personality disorder. In particular, these groups respond well to cognitive-behavioural techniques and programs that enhance coping skills.

This research also reinforces the need for culturally specific sexual offending programs for Indigenous offenders. Results display clear differences in victim preference, motivations, and targeted effort in sexual offending (e.g. grooming behaviours) between most Indigenous and non-Indigenous sex offenders.

Furthermore, whilst 90% of the of the sex offender sample are clearly compatible with one of the established profiles, the remaining 10% were considered outliers due to unique characteristics. It is therefore expected that when applying these profiles to the general Queensland sex offender population, a similar proportion of sex offenders would not fit one of the seven profiles. For such offenders, further contextual information would be needed for management and treatment purposes.

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