

A review of the literature on personal/emotional need factors (R-76, 1998)

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The personal/emotional domain of the Correctional Service of Canada's risk/need assessment protocol represents a broad grouping of criminogenic needs that are considered to be predictive of criminal and recidivistic behaviour.

This report examines the available empirical literature that documents the link between personal and emotional need factors and criminal and recidivistic behaviour. In addition, this review provides relevant information for assessing whether or not regrouping may improve assessment within the personal and emotional domain. The authors provide some guidelines for grouping of existing items.

Included in the review is a descriptive examination of how offender populations differ from general populations on various personal/emotional need factors. The review also attempts to identify personal/emotional need factors which show promise for predictive purposes and those factors which appear to produce only weak predictive results.

The authors present empirical evidence to support the continued use or elimination of each of the principal components and subcomponents of the Case Need Identification and Analysis (CNIA) currently used by the Correctional Service of Canada as part of the Offender Intake Assessment (OIA) process. Where empirical evidence was limited, the authors used theoretical judgements to recommend how the constructs should be used in the future.

The authors contend that the empirical and theoretical literature supports the continued use of the cognition and behavioural principal components and the elimination of the self-concept, mental ability, and mental health and intervention principal components.

The report provides a comprehensive overview of their methodology and present recommendations that address personal and emotional need factors as dynamic predictors of recidivism. ■