Multiple murder and criminal careers: A latent class analysis of multiple homicide offenders.

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Multiple murder and criminal careers: A latent class analysis of multiple homicide offenders

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Abstract

Purpose

To construct an empirically rigorous typology of multiple homicide offenders (MHOs).

Method

The current study conducted latent class analysis of the official records of 160 MHOs sampled from eight states to evaluate their criminal careers.

Results

A 3-class solution best fit the data ($-2LL = -1123.61$, Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) $= 2648.15$, df $= 81$, $L^2 = 1179.77$). Class 1 ($n = 64$, class assignment probability $= .999$) was the low-offending group marked by little criminal

record and delayed arrest onset. Class 2 (n = 51, class assignment probability = .957) was the severe group that represents the most violent and habitual criminals. Class 3 (n = 45, class assignment probability = .959) was the moderate group whose offending careers were similar to Class 2.

Conclusion

A sustained criminal career with involvement in versatile forms of crime was observed for two of three classes of MHOs. Linkages to extant typologies and recommendations for additional research that incorporates clinical constructs are proffered.

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Keywords

Murder; Homicide offender; Criminal career; Latent class; Career criminal

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