

SFU

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The Dynamics of Psychopathy

**DEVELOPING A CHANGE-SENSITIVE
MEASURE OF PSYCHOPATHIC
PERSONALITY DISORDER**

The Quest for the Holy Grail

Specifying Content Domain

- We needed to identify the primary symptoms of psychopathy for inclusion in the new measure
- Our search was guided by:
 - Preference for breadth over narrowness, to avoid construct under-representation
 - Preference to define symptoms in terms of personality traits, as reflected in natural language

Step 1: Literature Review

- Systematic review of clinical and theoretical literatures on psychopathy specifically and personality disorder more generally
 - Both historical and contemporary
 - From fields of clinical psychiatry, clinical psychology, and experimental psychopathology

Step 2: Expert Interviews

- Interviews with expert clinicians and important theorists
 - With experts from Europe and North America
 - By telephone or face-to-face
 - Using a semi-structured interview to identify symptoms useful for diagnosis, including differential diagnosis

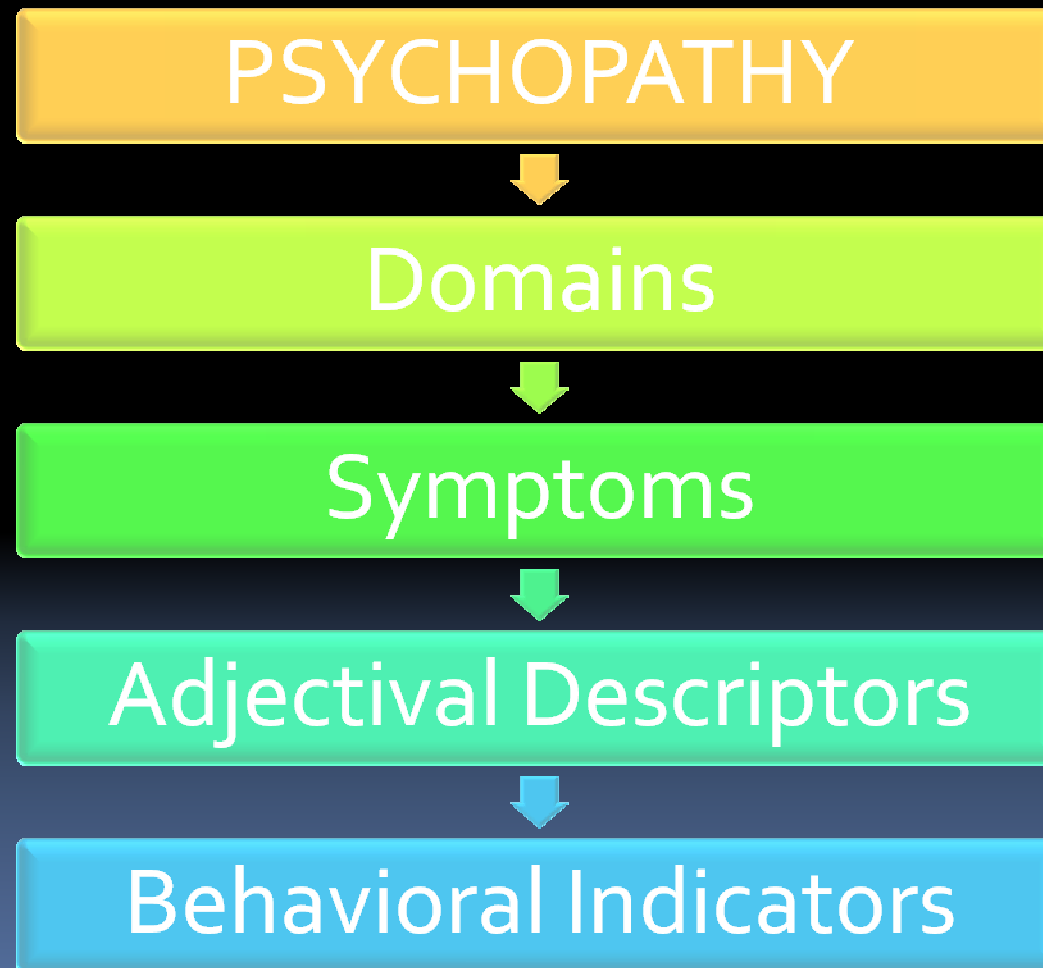
Step 3: Rational Explication

- Identification and definition of symptoms using a lexical approach
 - List of symptoms compiled from Steps 1 and 2
 - Retained even if their association with psychopathy might be considered uncertain, unclear, or controversial
 - Original symptoms translated into new trait-descriptive adjectives
 - Each new “symptom” defined in terms of adjectival descriptors – synonyms with more specific meanings

Rational Explication (cont.)

- New symptoms grouped into six fundamental domains of personality
- Adjectival descriptors may be further translated into representative behavioral indicators
 - Expected to vary depending on context of assessment

Hierarchical Structure



Psychopathic Personality Disorder

Self Domain

- + Self-Centered
- + Self-Agrandizing
- + Sense of Uniqueness
- + Sense of Entitlement
- + Sense of Invulnerability
- + Self-Justifying
- + Unstable Self-Concept

Attachment Domain

- + Detached
- + Uncommitted
- + Unempathic
- + Uncaring

Behavioural Domain

- + Lacks Perseverance
- + Unreliable
- + Reckless
- + Restless
- + Disruptive
- + Aggressive

Emotional Domain

- + Lacks Anxiety
- + Lacks Pleasure
- + Lacks Emotional Depth
- + Lacks Emotional Stability
- + Lacks Remorse

Cognitive Domain

- + Suspicious
- + Lacks Concentration
- + Intolerant
- + Inflexible
- + Lacks Planfulness

Dominance Domain

- + Antagonistic
- + Domineering
- + Deceitful
- + Manipulative
- + Insincere
- + Garrulous

Item 7: Shallow Affect

Description:

Item 7 describes an individual who appears unable to experience a normal range and depth of emotion. At times, he may impress as cold and unemotional. Displays of emotion generally are dramatic, shallow, short-lived; they leave careful observers with the impression that he is playacting and that little of real significance is going on below the surface. He may admit that he is unemotional or that he shams emotions.

Sometimes the individual claims to experience strong emotions, yet he seems unable to describe the subtleties of various affective states. He may equate love with sexual arousal, sadness with frustration, and anger with irritability. Also, his emotions may not be consistent with his actions or with his situation.

Item 7 (cont.)

Sources of Information:

In the interview, look for inconsistencies between verbal expressions of emotion and behavior. For example, if the individual expresses love for family or friends, can he provide details about their current whereabouts, health, financial condition, and general well-being? If a family member or friend has become seriously ill or has died, what effect did this have on him? Did he visit the hospital or attend the funeral? Are strong verbal expressions of emotion accompanied by nonverbal behaviors consistent with that emotion? (Try to take into account the fact that incarceration may have an effect on the individual's general level of emotional expression and on his willingness to reveal his feelings to those whom he thinks may be associated with the institution.)

Item 7 (cont.)

File information should be used to assess the validity of reports made during the interview. For example, the individual may state that he is close to his family, whereas his files indicate that he does not write or phone them and has had no visits from them. Also, files may contain interviews with friends and relatives indicating that his behavior towards them has usually been incompatible with his verbal expressions of affection.

CAPP-IRS

- Based on interview and file review
- Flexible timeframe
 - 6 month, lifetime
- Semi-structured interview schedule
 - Symptomatic, thematic

Ratings

- Symptoms
 - 7-point rating of severity
 - 4-point rating of trait intensity
 - 4-point rating of functional impairment
- Adjectival descriptors
 - 4-point rating scale based on trait intensity
- Behavioral indicators
 - 2-point rating based on presence

CAPP-IRS: Symptoms

Domain 1: ATTACHMENT

Symptom	Global Rating 0-5	Trait Strength 0-5	Functional Impairment 0-5
18. Detached Remote, Distant, Cold			
8. Uncommitted Unfaithful, Undevoted, Disloyal			
25. Unempathic Uncompassionate, Cruel, Callous			
24. Uncaring Inconsiderate, Thoughtless, Neglectful			

CAPP-IRS: Staff Ratings

A1) Detached

Global Rating of Symptom Severity:

Not Present	Very Mild	Mild	Moderate	Moderately Severe	Severe	Very Severe
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Adjectival Descriptor Ratings:

	Not At All Descriptive	Somewhat Descriptive	Moderately Descriptive	Very Descriptive
Remote	0	1	2	3
Distant	0	1	2	3
Cold	0	1	2	3

Illustrative Indicators:

	YES	NO
➤ Unattached to others	—	—
➤ Uncaring towards others	—	—
➤ Does not keep friends for long	—	—
➤ Does not have any friends	—	—
➤ Does not report even superficial warmth or affection for another person	—	—
➤ Describes self as a loner who does not value the company of others	—	—
➤ The company of others is described in negative Terms	—	—
➤ Other indicators of this symptom? Describe ...	—	—

Step 4: Translation

- All levels of model being translated into other languages
 - Fundamental test of lexical structure
 - Translation process already has yielded important insights

Step 5: Evaluation

- Observer ratings
 - Canada: Lifetime ratings of 149 young offenders
 - Denmark: Lifetime ratings of 96 adult offenders
 - UK: 6-month ratings (T₁) in 80 adult offenders
- Self ratings
 - UK: 221 community residence
- Prototypicality ratings
 - Norway: 567 community residents, 211 experts
 - UK: 142 experts

Attachment Domain

- Detached
- Uncommitted
- Unempathic
- Uncaring

Prototypicality

- o bad items

CFA

- o bad items

IRT

- o bad items

Behavioral Domain

- Lacks Perseverance
- Unreliable
- Reckless
- Restless
- Disruptive
- Aggressive

Prototypicality

- 1 bad item

CFA

- 1 bad item

IRT

- 1 bad item

Cognitive Domain

- Suspicious
- Intolerant
- Inflexible
- ~~Lacks~~ Concentration
- Lacks Planfulness

Prototypicality

- 1 bad item

CFA

- 1 bad item

IRT

- 2 bad items

Dominance Domain

- Antagonistic
- Domineering
- Deceitful
- Manipulative
- Insincere
- Garrulous

Prototypicality

- 0 bad items


CFA

- 2 bad items

IRT

- 0 bad items

Emotional Domain

- Lacks Anxiety
- Lacks  Pleasure
- Lacks Remorse
- Lacks Emotional Depth
- Lacks Emotional Stability

Prototypicality

- 1 bad item

CFA

- 1 bad item

IRT

- 2 bad items

Self Domain

- Self-Centered
- Self-Aggrandizing
- Self-Justifying
- Sense of Uniqueness
- Sense of Entitlement
- Sense of Invulnerability
- ~~Unstable~~ Self-Concept

Prototypicality

- 1 bad item

CFA

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IRT

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Interrater Reliability

	Adults	Adolescents
CAPP	.65	.91
Attachment	.87	.83
Behavioral	.77	.86
Cognitive	.67	.86
Dominance	.52	.86
Emotional	.81	.83
Self	.55	.86

Correlations with PCL:YV

PCL:YV Facets	CAPP Domains					
	Att	Beh	Cog	Dom	Emo	Sel
Interpersonal	.45	.46	.40	.69	.37	.66
Affective	.71	.43	.21	.44	.71	.54
Behavioral	.38	.40	.33	.23	.44	.29
Antisocial	.51	.46	.31	.42	.56	.34

Prediction of Recidivism

	Non-Violent	Violent
CAPP	.71	.70
Attachment	.68	.68
Behavioral	.71	.73
Cognitive	.68	.62
Dominance	.70	.68
Emotional	.70	.67
Self	.66	.60
PCL:SV	.69	.73
Part 1	.68	.71
Part 2	.65	.72

Discriminant Validity

Rating	Cluster B	Other	<i>p</i>
Total	3.13	1.95	.001
Attachment	2.75	1.77	.017
Behavioral	3.34	1.56	.001
Cognitive	3.23	2.45	.016
Dominance	2.96	1.61	.003
Emotional	3.21	2.34	.009
Self	3.27	1.98	.002
Foil	2.18	2.88	n.s.

Conclusion

- The CAPP already has demonstrated its utility as a conceptual model of psychopathy
 - Avoids sole reliance on PCL-R
 - Reinvigorates research on cultural, construct validity
 - Facilitates development of new measures
- Key test remains: Can it reliably assess change in symptoms of psychopathic personality disorder?

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