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Formation of the Proclivity for Sexual Abuse Against Children

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Given the lack of knowledge on child sexual abuse in Taiwan and the limited investigation of child sexual abuse proclivity in both Taiwan and Western countries, this study proposes and examines a theoretical model of child sexual abuse proclivity from the perspectives of early experiences, psychological and behavioral characteristics, and sociocultural perception. The proposed model indicates that deviant sexual arousal, distorted cognitions (child sexual abuse myths), and an antisocial personality directly affect the formation of child sexual abuse proclivity; sociocultural perception directly affects the formation of deviant sexual arousal and distorted cognitions; childhood sexual abuse experiences directly influence the formation of deviant sexual arousal; and childhood sexual abuse experience, primary caretaker's physical abuse, rejection, and neglect directly affect the formation of an antisocial personality. We used an anonymous self-report questionnaire to collect data. The research sample comprised 915 male inmates and 559 male college students. Structural equation modeling was employed to verify the proposed model. The results show that the measurement model attained acceptable reliability and validity. Furthermore, the structural model was supported by observable data and most fit indices in both samples, accounting for 77% of the variance in child sexual abuse proclivity in the male inmates and 73% of the variance in the college students. Finally, this paper discusses the theoretical implications of the research results, as well as the practical applications, research limitations, and future research directions.

Keywords: *child, sexual abuse, deviant sexual arousal, distorted cognition*