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A COMPARISON OF AMERICAN INDIAN HOMICIDERS AND NON-INDIAN HOMICIDERS BASED ON THE MINNESOTA MULTIPHASIC PERSONALITY INVENTORY

Federal Prison System  
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In April of 1975, the Bureau of Prisons received a request from the Canadian Penitentiary Services for data related to American Indian homiciders in Federal custody.

Using the Bureau of Prisons Master File, updated as of May 7, 1975, all individuals in Federal custody who were convicted of homicide (as reflected in the IIS offense code) were identified. Four hundred-one homiciders were identified of whom 96 were American Indians, and 305 non-Indian. The American Indian, therefore, represents 23.9% of the population convicted of homicide in federal custody. In contrast, American Indians represent 1.75% of the total Bureau of Prisons population. Therefore, American Indians are over represented on the offense of homicide in that; federal law only pertains to murders of a federal agent on duty and murders occurring on a government reservation, territory, in the District of Columbia, or under military jurisdiction. American Indians, while living on government reservations are therefore more susceptible than the general population to federal prosecution for homicides.

The measures used for comparing the samples were the twelve scales of the MMPI (Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory), as recorded in the IIS Master File. Of the original 401 homiciders, 32.9% (132) had recorded MMPI scores. For interpretation of the MMPI Scales, W. G. Dahlstrom and G. S. Welsh's An MMPI Handbook: A Guide to Use in Clinical Practice and Research was used.

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As a total group, homiciders, like the general Bureau of Prisons population, scored significantly higher than the national norm on the psychopathic deviate scale. The major features of this personality pattern included, "repeated and flagrant disregard for social customs and mores, an inability to profit from punishing experiences as shown in repeated difficulties of the same kind, and an emotional shallowness in relations to others, particularly in sexual and affectional display". (p. 60)

The non-Indian population exceeded the national norm and the Indian population achieved a level which was near significant. A standardized score of 70 is theoretically viewed as pathological. Numerous studies have associated high scores on this scale with several criminal populations.

Indian homiciders differed significantly from other homiciders on the L, K, and Hy scales. Indians scored higher on the measures of:

L scale -- "aggressive feelings, bad thoughts, temptations, and lack of control or conformity. These attributes are clear, unambiguous, and generally socially unfavorable." (p. 49)

K scale -- denial of "personal inadequacies", tendency "toward mental disorders", and "trouble in controlling himself, particularly in regard to temper, but also withholds criticism of others!" (pp. 51 - 52)

Non-Indian homiciders scored higher on the measure of:

Hy scale -- "neurotic defenses of the conversion form of hysteria". There is general tendency toward using "physical symptoms as a means of solving difficult conflicts or avoiding mature responsibilities". (p. 57)

Dahlstrom, W. G. and G. S. Welsh. An MMPI Handbook: A Guide to Use in Clinical Practice and Research. (Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press) 1965.

MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATION, AND T-TEST COMPARING AMERICAN INDIAN HOMICIDERS WITH NON-INDIAN HOMICIDERS IN THE BUREAU OF PRISONS POPULATION BASED ON 12 MMPI SCALES.<sup>1</sup>

MMPI SCALE	Sample 1: Indian Homiciders N=36 (37.5%)		Sample 2: Non-Indian Homiciders N=96 (31.5%)		T-TEST <sup>2</sup>	COMBINED MEAN
	MEAN	S.D.	MEAN	S.D.		
L (Lie)	57.278	9.876	51.427	10.962	2.783**	53.023
F (Conformity)	67.556	15.023	65.625	16.611	0.605	66.151
K (Test Attitude)	53.444	9.926	49.469	9.833	2.048*	50.553
1 (HS)	56.389	11.193	59.448	13.953	-1.172	58.614
2 (D)	62.389	10.256	65.583	13.172	-1.303	64.712
3 (Hy)	54.361	9.621	59.719	10.133	-2.722**	58.258
4 (Pd)	69.139	11.373	71.208@	13.409	-0.815	70.644@
5 (MF)	53.250	9.290	56.823	11.577	-1.649	55.848
6 (Pa)	59.278	12.747	64.708	16.164	-1.801	63.227
7 (Pt)	60.028	12.086	62.990	14.821	-1.065	62.182
8 (Sc)	66.472	15.305	70.115@	16.694	-1.133	69.121
9 (Ma)	62.778	13.227	66.823	13.742	-1.510	65.720

<sup>1</sup> Data reported as Standard Score, with Mean = 50, and Standard Deviation = 10.

<sup>2</sup> Two-tailed t-test for samples with unequal N's.

@ - Reflects significant difference from national norm.

\* p = .05

\*\* p = .01

\*\*\* p = .001

**END**