

Mental Disorder and Social Behavior

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Abstract

For decades, the subject of how mental disorders and crime interplay has received scholarly interest. This trend comes at a time when most of the mentally disordered individuals are no longer living in asylum. Rather, they live in the community. As such, this research area is significant, whereby it informs about proper resource spending and crime reduction as societal aims. In this study, the main aim was to examine whether persons who are mentally ill exhibit similar rates of detection like other persons, as well as whether mentally ill persons are likely to receive a treatment different from others serving in criminal justice systems.

Introduction

For most of the previous studies, the focus has been on the degree to which psychosis might predict violence [1, 2]. However, in these investigations, variations in the findings have been observed [3, 4]. Indeed, it is worth noting that a common pattern holds and sees most of the scholarly reports in concurrence that mental disorder and offending exhibit a consistent association [5]. The association is also documented to be stronger when it comes to violent crimes, compared to other forms of crime [6]. Similarly, some studies vow that this relationship is likely to be stronger when female participants are examined, compared to their male counterparts [6-8]. Additionally, there is a consistent pattern in relation to this association when scholarly studies concentrate on the subject of offense commitment among persons who are mentally disordered in general populations [9, 10].

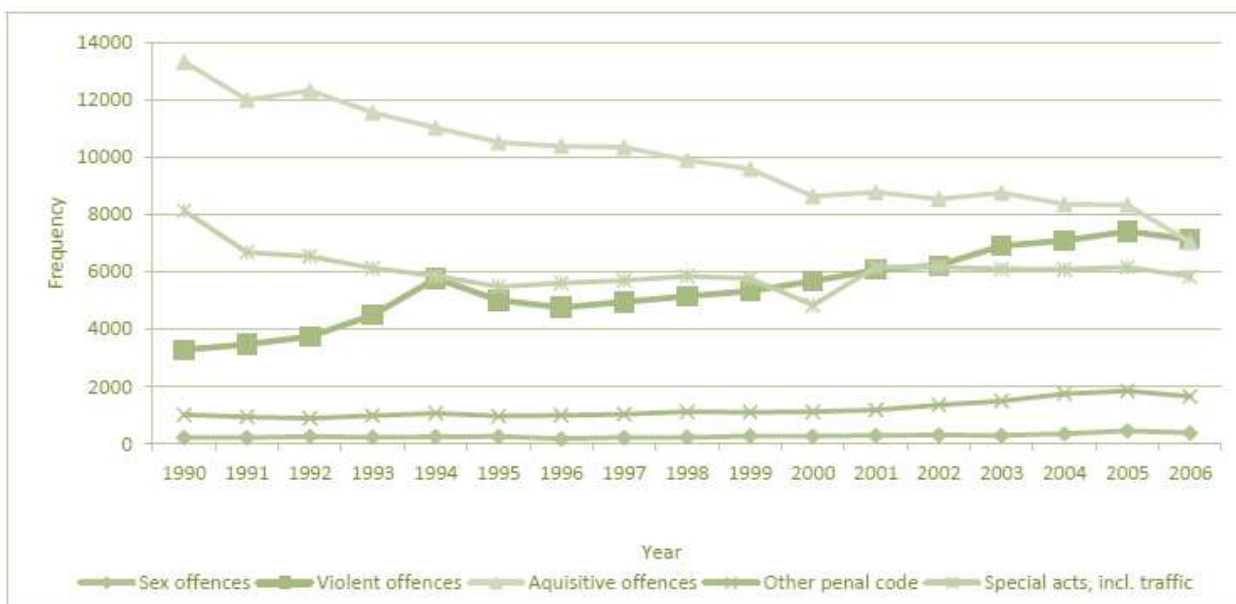
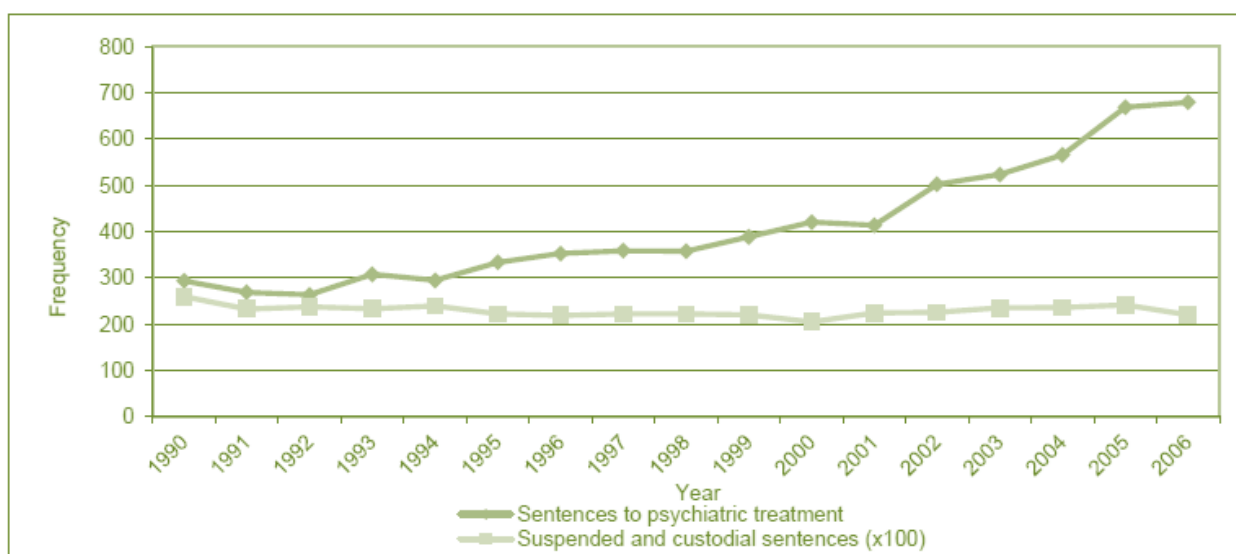
The observations made above demonstrate that a significant amount of research has been conducted relative to the selected topic of mental disorder versus crime. However, a few issues remain unaddressed and form gaps that are worth filling by conducting more research. For instance, information about non-violent offending in persons with mental disorders is dire. Also, similarities and differences in offending patterns across different diagnostic groups are yet to be documented comprehensively. It is also notable that most of the previous studies do not give insight into the timing of offending, failing to highlight whether illness onset plays a moderating role, if any. Lastly, the relationship between mental disorder treatment and the risk of offending is yet to receive in-depth examination. This study strived to respond to the aforementioned gaps by examining the inconclusive debate of whether, in mental disorders, the level of offending tends to be predicted by the presence of mental disorders. The motivation of the study lay in the need to give insight into the issue of whether improvements in mental disorders' treatment regimes might reduce offending levels.

Methods

This secondary study relied on national registers as the main sources of data. The sources of data had their design and analytical methods differ significantly, an attribute that sought to add to the study's outcome validity and reliability. In particular, the selected secondary sources of data were prospective cohort studies, randomized controlled trials, nested case-control studies, and ecological studies. Indeed, the inclusion/exclusion criterion was set in such a way that the selected studies were expected to have been conducted in multicultural contexts and that vulnerable informed consent had been secured from the participants or their representatives. Similarly, the selected studies were expected to have endured participant

anonymity and data privacy and confidentiality by using codes, rather than the participants actual details such as physical addressed, their names, and positions held in their workplaces (if any); besides securing the electronic data obtained by using strong passwords that would bar any unauthorized access. Some of the data analysis processes that the selected sources had embraced included inferential and descriptive statistics, conditional logistic regression (in which separate stratum would be formed by the matched controls and each case), and a Cox's proportional hazards regression model.

Results



Based on the results above, this study established a consistent relationship between the existence of mental disorders and the likelihood of offending. Compared to other crimes, violent crimes saw this association prove even stronger. Also, the association was found to be stronger when the investigation focused on the case of female participants with mental disorders, compared to their mental counterparts. Also, a similar pattern depicting a stronger association was observed when the study concentrated on situations involving

populations linked to more severe violence, rather than less severe violence. In previous scholarly studies, it has been observed that most of the focus is on the correlation between the existence or presence of psychotic disorders and the likelihood of committing violence. As such, these studies falter in such a way that they do emphasize the temporal ordering of committing offenses at the mental disorder onset stage. To address this gap, this secondary study was conducted, focusing on data sources that had collected primary data from different populations and conducted in different research settings. The motivation of the investigation was to determine whether, in mentally disordered persons, there is an increase in the levels of offending, as well as the nature of the correlation between mental disorder and crime during the period before and the period after mental health service implementation in various diagnostic categories.

Of importance to note is that the study was conducted from the perspective of an ecological examination. Findings were obtained and reported for the period stretching from 1990 to 2006. In the results, this study established that there is an increasing trend in the rates of violent offending among mentally disordered persons. These findings were informed by an observation in which the study indicated that in the 17 years under examination, when $p=0.2375$, there was an increase from 3.2% to 3.9% regarding period sentences to psychiatric treatment. Also, it was observed that there was a steeper increase in violent crimes committed against public servants, with mentally disordered offenders examined when $p=0.0047$.

For the case of the case-control investigation that was considered in this study, its main aim lay in the examination of the degree to which criminality exists as a risk factor in individuals experiencing mental disorders. In the findings, it was established that offending, whether violent or non-violent, exhibited a stronger relationship with situations where individuals had undergone several convictions, rather than those scenarios where single convictions had been reported. However, this study's findings deviated from the ecological study, whereby there was no statistically significant difference in the patterns that were observed in males, compared to their female counterparts.

Despite the difference in the studies' findings as documented above, however, both investigations revealed an association between being mentally disordered and the likelihood of committing crime. These assertions can be seen in Figures 1 and 2 in such a way that there is an increasing trend in these variables and that most of the patterns observed for each year of the 17-year period were consistent.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is worth inferring that among individuals experiencing mental disorders, a general observation is that there is an increase in the prevalence of offending. However, whereas the aforementioned observations were evident both in situations involving less severe and those involving more severe disorders, it is worth contending that they exhibited some degree of similarity to those associated with the general population's patterns. Of importance to note is that an opposite direction is evident in the association that this study reported, whereby it was established that persons who tend to offend also stand a higher likelihood of developing mental disorders.

Overall, this study established a dose-response trend in such a way that there tends to be an increase in offending risks with an increase in the frequency or number of psychiatric contacts. Also, this study indicates that with an increase in the number of convictions, there tends to be a similar trend of increased risk of psychiatric contacts. When it comes to the aspect of whether or not treatment could possibly reduce offending, this study made similar observations as those documented in the literature in such a way that the debate of the possibility of psychotic disorder symptom alleviation (via treatment) and reductions in the incidence and prevalence of offending remained inconclusive. In the future, then, the study recommends that scholarly investigations concentrate on the subject of whether the relationship between crime and mental

disorders might vary or exhibit uniform patterns when individuals of different ages and disease severities are considered.

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