

Do black and white youths differ in level of psychopathic traits? a meta-analysis of the psychopathy checklist measures

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Abstrak

Putative ethnic group differences in various forms of psychopathology may have important theoretical, clinical, and policy implications. Recently, it has been argued that individuals of African descent are more likely to be psychopathic than those of European descent (R. Lynn, 2002). Preliminary evidence from the Psychopathy Checklist: Youth Version (A. Forth, D. Kosson, & R. Hare, 2003) offers some support for this contention, with Black youths rated as moderately higher (Cohen's $d = .61$) than White youths in a large institutional sample ($n = 945$). To examine this issue more exhaustively, the authors meta-analyzed adolescent psychopathy data from several studies (combined $N = 2,199$) and obtained a much smaller mean difference ($dw = .20$, $p = .03$), although considerable heterogeneity was evident among the effect sizes.