

The Lived Experiences of Stigma in Non-offending Pedophiles

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Abstract : Non-offending pedophiles are an under-researched, hard to reach population. This group of individuals are often hesitant to come forward and fail to seek help ongoing stigma experienced in society. In order to better understand non-offending pedophiles experiences of their identity and the stigma they face, semi-structured qualitative interviews were conducted with 10 non-offending pedophiles, who were recruited through online support groups for individuals who have sexual attractions towards children. Participants were interviewed over skype, and the data was analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach, and a number of themes were generated from the rich data set produced. Four main themes emerged, providing insight into how non-offending pedophiles experience stigma. The themes included 'stigma in relation to themselves', 'others', 'the media portrayal' and 'impact of the stigma of MAP's seeking treatment'. Findings are discussed in relation to existing literature, and practical recommendations are proposed to hopefully allow this population to feel more comfortable sharing their sexual interests, which will allow them to seek help resulting in them not offending and, ultimately, the prevention of sexual abuse. This study fills the void in terms of lack of research with this population, especially when it comes to qualitative in depth studies, including not just male minor attracted persons but female minor attracted persons as well.

Keywords : pedophilia, stigma, non-offending pedophiles, minor attracted persons, prevention

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