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# Profiling acquired pedophilia: retrospective analysis of 66 Italian forensic cases of pedophilia

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**Abstract:**

**Objective:** Neurological disorders can be mis-diagnosed as psychiatric ones when the psychiatric symptoms are the predominant. This is often the case of pedophilia emerging as a symptom of brain insult (i.e. acquired pedophilia). The aim of this research is to identify a behavioral profile that might help clinicians and psychiatric consultants to identify defendants whose pedophilia is more likely to be the consequence of a neurological disorder.

**Methods:** Cluster hierarchical analysis on variables identified through a systematic review of the literature on cases of acquired pedophilia was applied to a new dataset including 66 Italian closed cases of pedophilia. Stepwise regression analyses were carried out to further analyze the differences between the clusters identified in the cluster analysis.

**Results:** The sample was partitioned into two large clusters. Individuals with ascertained acquired pedophilia were grouped together. The two clusters widely differed for the prevalence of red flags ( $2.14 \pm 0.79$  vs  $4.96 \pm 0.93$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Regression analysis provided a robust model that included the three most significant red flags that, together, explain over 64.5% of the variance (absence of masking, spontaneous confession and offenders older age).

**Conclusions:** An organic origin for pedophilia should be suspected if the red flags are present in a defendant charged with pedophilia: an in depth trans-disciplinary neuroscientific investigation is advocated. The behavioral profile identified might help to provide a proper assessment of defendants and might help judges to reach an informed decision on the defendant *mens rea*, reducing controversies and avoiding to punish people who need medical treatment.

**Keywords:** Pedophilic behavior, sexual preferences, child sexual offender, profiling, acquired pedophilia, cluster analysis, criminal justice.

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2  
3 "If I were to order a general to fly from one flower to another like a butterfly, or to write a  
4 tragedy, or to change himself into a sea-bird, and if the general did not carry out the order, which  
5 one of us would be at fault?"  
6

7 The Little Prince  
8  
9

## 10 Introduction

11  
12 Despite it is now widely known that neurological disorders are commonly associated with  
13 psychiatric symptoms, it is more difficult to accept that a number of neurological disorders,  
14 because of their predominantly behavioral and sometimes bizarre presentation, are often  
15 mistakenly diagnosed as psychiatric(1, 2). This is often the case of acquired pedophilia, a medical  
16 condition known by many years(3) that recently gained a lot of attention for its medical and legal  
17 consequences(4-7).

18  
19 Acquired pedophilia differs from developmental pedophilic disorder in many aspects:  
20 etiology, underlying neural correlates, possible therapies, *modus operandi* and legal  
21 consequences.  
22

23 While developmental pedophilic disorder is considered to be a psychiatric disorder included  
24 within the paraphilias in the DSM 5(8), present throughout the individual's life and without a clear  
25 etiology, acquired pedophilia emerges later in life as a consequence of a neurological condition  
26 with clear etiology (e.g. frontotemporal dementia(9), brain tumor(10), clivus chordoma(5), surgical  
27 lesions(11), hippocampal sclerosis(12)), thereby causing a "*behavioral fracture*" in the overt  
28 behavior manifested prior and after the brain disease insurgence (6, 13).  
29

30  
31 The neural basis of the two forms of pedophilic disorders are different as well.  
32 Developmental pedophilia is characterized by brain functional alterations without evident structural  
33 correlates(14). These alterations seem to be congenital or to emerge very early during life,  
34 encompassing brain regions involved in sexual arousal(15), such as the amygdale and the  
35 hypothalamus. On the contrary, evident structural brain alterations emerging later in life are pivotal  
36 for the diagnosis of acquired pedophilia. The neural network involved in the onset of this  
37 pathological behavior is still not fully understood, as it includes the right orbitofrontal cortex(10, 16),  
38 the right amygdale(11), the right globus pallidus(12), the hypothalamus(3, 5, 17), the hippocampus  
39 bilaterally(12, 18), the basal ganglia bilaterally(12). These regions seems to be associated with a  
40 network involved in diminished behavioral control(14).  
41

42  
43 Regarding possible treatments, there is no evidence to suggest that developmental  
44 pedophilia can be changed. Instead, interventions are designed to increase voluntary control over  
45 sexual arousal, reduce sex drive, or teach self-management skills to individuals who are motivated  
46 to avoid acting upon their sexual interests(19). Contrarily, acquired pedophilia can theoretically be  
47 treated by treating the underlying medical condition. For instance, pedophilia can recede after  
48 surgical resection of the tumor causing it(5, 10).  
49

50  
51 Furthermore, the *modus operandi* widely differs between developmental and acquired  
52 pedophilia. While individuals suffering with developmental pedophilia try to mask their sexually  
53 abusing behavior, enforcing victim's silence and using psychological and physical violence(20, 21),  
54 individuals with acquired pedophilia usually do not attempt to disguise their criminal behavior(5, 6,  
55 10, 12, 13). Another critical differences between the two is that developmental pedophiles actively  
56 search for victims, organize their action and, if caught, might deny their behavior(20, 22).  
57 Contrarily, individuals with acquired pedophilia usually lack of premeditation (5, 7). These  
58 behavioral differences probably reflect the impulse dis-control that characterize patients with  
59 acquired pedophilia(14).  
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3 Crucially, both the ability to understand the moral and social value of one's own action and  
4 the ability to exert control over impulses are pivotal to the capacity for self-determination. As  
5 individual with acquired pedophilia usually lack of these abilities, insanity becomes a relevant issue  
6 in these cases. For these reasons, individuals with acquired pedophilia are usually considered not  
7 fully liable for their pedophilic behavior, contrarily to developmental pedophilic individuals, whose  
8 legal consequences are severe.  
9

10 Although the distinction between developmental and acquired pedophilic behavior seems to  
11 be easy basing on the description provided so far, the identification of an underlying medical or  
12 iatrogenic cause in a defendant presenting with pedophilia can be diagnostically challenging,  
13 thereby the importance of a trans-disciplinary approach has been advocated(13). Indeed, the  
14 neurological impairment causing pedophilia may pass unobserved without a neurological  
15 examination, as pedophilia might be the first overt symptom of a serious disease (e.g.(5, 10, 23)).  
16

17 The aim of the current research is thus to identify a behavioral profile that might help  
18 clinicians and psychiatric consultants to identify defendants whose pedophilia is more likely to be  
19 the consequence of a neurological insult. In the cases identified as possible acquired pedophiles,  
20 an in-depth neuroscientific investigation, for instance including a brain magnetic resonance images  
21 (MRI), is advocated. To this aim, we systematically review the literature on acquired pedophilia in  
22 order to identify possible behavioral predictors of acquired pedophilia with the aim to create an a  
23 *priori* hypothesis on acquired pedophilia profiling. Using a falsificationist approach, the profile will  
24 be tested through additional analysis conducted using unsupervised methods on a new dataset of  
25 individuals convicted for pedophilia.  
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## 31 **Methods**

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33 **Systematic Review:** A systematic review of cases of acquired pedophilia was conducted  
34 with the aim to identify possible behavioral, clinical and demographic red flags of acquired  
35 pedophilia. The systematic review was conducted in accordance with the PRISMA guidelines(24).  
36 Papers were included in the subsequent analysis if they described new cases of late onset  
37 pedophilia emerging as a symptom of a neurological condition. The papers screening procedure is  
38 reported in the PRISMA flow chart available within the Supplementary Materials (A).  
39

40 For each case of pedophilia identified in the literature, data regarding the demographic  
41 information, the clinical status, the modus operandi and the victimology have been extracted from  
42 the source literature. In particular, the demographic characteristics of the offender are recorded:  
43 gender, age, education, marital status, profession in contact with children. Regarding the clinical  
44 status, the presence of previous psychiatric symptoms (excluding the paraphilia) and the  
45 underlying neurological disorder responsible for acquired pedophilia have been recorded.  
46 Regarding the modus operandi, we included the following information: premeditation, attempt of  
47 masking, sense of guilt, confession, previous criminal sex offense, severity of the abuse, length of  
48 the abuse, place of the abuse. Finally, regarding the victimology, the number and gender of the  
49 victims and the relationship between the offender and the victim were recorded. The variables that  
50 emerged as consistently reported in the literature are hereafter referred as "red flags", as our a  
51 *priori* hypothesis is that these variables will help in discriminating acquired from developmental  
52 pedophilia.  
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57 **New Subjects:** This study involves a retrospective cross-sectional study based on the re-  
58 analysis of closed criminal cases of pedophilia. As in Italy there is no archive for crimes and  
59 criminals such as the Violent Crime Linkage Analysis System (<http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/to-ot/cpcmec-ccpede/bs-sc/viclas-salvac-eng.htm>), the authors asked the authorities the access to  
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3 access the criminal registry of four regional court archives in the North of Italy (i.e. Verona, Ferrara,  
4 Reggio Emilia and Padova). The access was granted to examine the court documentation related  
5 to closed cases of pedophilia. The authors signed a declaration agreeing to respect the privacy of  
6 the defendants and to not disclose any individual personal data. This research is conform with the  
7 Declaration of Helsinki and its later amendments, and was approved by the Ethical Committee of  
8 the Department of General Psychology, Padova, Italy.

9  
10 Documentation regarding 76 closed cases of pedophilia occurred between 2005 and 2015  
11 were collected. Five cases were subsequently excluded as the information available were not  
12 complete enough. Five additional cases were excluded as the offense was disconfirmed and the  
13 defendants were not charged with pedophilia. The final database thus included 66 cases of  
14 pedophilia involving a sexual offense against at least one victim aging 13 or younger, according  
15 with the most restrictive definition of pedophilia(15, 25). All the offenders were pursued by the law  
16 and convicted for pedophilia. For all the cases included, the same information regarding the  
17 demographic variables, clinical status, modus operandi and victimology collected for the systematic  
18 review were recorded as well and stored in a centralized dataset, available within the  
19 Supplementary Material (B).

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23  
24 **Statistical analyses:** In order to investigate whether acquired pedophilia can be identified  
25 basing on the data included in the centralized dataset, a hierarchical cluster analysis was  
26 performed using all the 17 variables listed in the “systematic review” paragraph. Cluster analysis is  
27 an unsupervised way of classification that requires no predefined classes and that is used to find  
28 hidden patterns within the data. Cluster analysis generates classes basing on the correlation of  
29 relevant variables and it is considered to be the most adequate bottom-up method to find  
30 similarities between cases. Using cluster analysis, squared Euclidian distances were obtained  
31 using the Ward method(26). These Euclidian distances are subsequently used to identify relevant  
32 clusters based on minimal Euclidean distances between the selected variables.

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34  
35 In order to investigate possible differences between cluster differences in the red flags and variables  
36 prevalence, chi squared tests have been performed for each variable, using Cluster (1 or 2) as  
37 independent variable. Furthermore, correlation analyses for dichotomous variables were performed  
38 using the phi coefficient to investigate the association between all red flags and variables that  
39 significantly differs between the two clusters. Correlations were considered significant if they  
40 survived the Bonferroni multiple comparison correction.

41  
42 Finally, to further explore the differences between the two resulting clusters, a multiple  
43 regression analysis (stepwise method) was performed using the 17 variables. Because the model  
44 involves a step-by-step method, only the variables or predictors that increase variance explanation  
45 are included in the final model, and highly correlated variables are ignored.

## 46 47 48 **Results**

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51 **Systematic Review:** The systematic review identified 15 papers reporting original cases of  
52 acquired pedophilia(3, 5, 10-13, 16-18, 23, 27-31), including a total of 22 cases from 1972 to 2018.  
53 The cases included are summarized in the table available within the Supplementary Information  
54 (C).

55  
56 All the offenders suffering with acquired pedophilia reported in the literature are men. They  
57 are >50 age in 17 out of 22 cases (77.27%), reflecting the insurgence of the neurological disorder  
58 during the senescence. The other demographic information are not completely reported, but 6 out  
59 of 9 (66.66%) patients have >8 years of education and 11 out of 14 (78%) are married.  
60 Interestingly, only 2 out of 9 (22.2%) have a profession that put them in contact with children.



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3 Regarding the clinical status, 13 out of 16 (81.2%) of them have a negative history for  
4 previous psychiatric conditions, while 3 out of 16 previously suffered with major depression.  
5 Tautologically, all of them presented with a neurological condition that account for the insurgence  
6 of pedophilia (n=8 neoplasm; n=4 behavioral variant of the frontotemporal dementia; n=2 traumatic  
7 brain injury; n=1 bilateral hippocampal sclerosis; n=1 multiple sclerosis involving the orbitofrontal  
8 cortex; n=3 Parkinson's disease; n=1 frontal variant of Alzheimer's disorder; n=1 vascular  
9 dementia involving the globus pallidus; n=1 Huntington's disease).

10  
11 Critically, the *modus operandi* is characterized by the absence of premeditation in all cases  
12 (10 out of 10), by the absence of tentative to mask the sexual assault (11 out of 12, 91.6%), by an  
13 immediate confession upon arrest (8 out of 8), by the presence of sense of guilt (6 out of 8, 75%)  
14 and by the absence of previous criminal sex offense (18 out of 18). The severity of the abuse  
15 ranged from no abuse at all (only pornography) to severe abuse with a complete sexual  
16 intercourse. The places where the sexual assault took place were heterogeneous as well as they  
17 ranges from the offender's house to open spaces.

18  
19 The victimology is highly inconsistent between different cases as the number of victims  
20 range from 0 (pornography only) to many; the gender of the victim varies across cases. Finally, the  
21 sexual offenders could be relatives or stranger to the victims (n=9 strangers, n=8 relatives, n=1  
22 neighbour; n=1 pediatrician).

23  
24 Thus, the systematic review of the literature suggest a profile of acquired pedophilia  
25 characterized by old age, absence of previous psychiatric disorders and sex related crimes,  
26 absence of premeditation and masking, presence of spontaneous confession and sense of guilt.  
27 These seven out of 17 variables are hereafter referred as "red flags". We do not consider the  
28 presence of a neurological disorder as a way to profile acquired pedophilia because it would have  
29 been a circular reasoning.

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33 **New Subjects.** Although we included cases of pedophilia involving a sexual offense  
34 against at least one victim aging 13 or younger, six of the individuals included in the study offended  
35 also pubescent victims aging 14 to 17 years.

36  
37 Critically, out of 66 cases included in the new analysis, 7 refers to cases of ascertained  
38 acquired pedophilia and the juridical documentation was complete enough to identify the  
39 underlying neurological disorder and to assess the causal link between the neurological disorder  
40 and the pedophilia onset. These brain disorders included: 2 cases of behavioral variant of fronto-  
41 temporal dementia; 1 case of fronto-parietal meningioma; 1 case of neoplasm of the notochord; 1  
42 case of ischemic stroke involving the left temporal lobe; 1 case of advanced dementia and 1 case  
43 of right temporal lobe atrophy. The neurological origin of pedophilia was recognized during the trial  
44 in these cases. For these 7 cases, the variable "presence of a neurological disorder" was positive,  
45 while for all the other cases included in the database (n=59), the same variable was negative as  
46 these offenders never received a neurological diagnosis because they were never tested for that.

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50 **Clusters analysis:** The cluster analysis partitioned the sample in two large clusters,  
51 graphically represented in *Figure 1*, including a bigger cluster of 41 subjects (Cluster 1) and a  
52 smaller cluster of 25 subjects (Cluster 2). Notably, the seven offenders with ascertained acquired  
53 pedophilia clustered together in Cluster 2. Even more interestingly, the same seven offenders are  
54 not grouped together in a small, distinguishable cluster, but are homogeneously widespread across  
55 Cluster 2.

56  
57 A t-test on the number of red flag in each cluster revealed that the two cluster widely differs  
58 for the number of red flags: Cluster 1 mean number of red flags = 2.14 (dev standard 0.79); Cluster  
59 2 = 4.96 ± 0.93, two independent sample t-test=13.06, p<0.001.

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5 **Between Cluster differences:** *Table 1* reported the prevalence of each variable in each  
6 cluster. The mean age in the two cluster is  $40.7 \pm 10.6$  and  $55.3 \pm 13.8$  for Cluster 1 and 2,  
7 respectively (two independent sample t-test= -4.92,  $p < 0.001$ ). Of note, six out of seven of the red  
8 flags identified throughout the systematic review were statistically more represented in the smaller  
9 cluster compared to the largest one. The only red flag whose prevalence did not differ between the  
10 two cluster relates to the absence of previous psychiatric disorders. This is likely to be due to the  
11 low prevalence of psychiatric disorders in the general population. Unexpectedly, a higher  
12 percentage of individuals classified in the second cluster rather than the first cluster is married.  
13 This is likely due to the lower prevalence of married individuals within the developmental group,  
14 reflecting their inherent paraphilia(15).  
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18 **Correlations between variables and red flags:** Correlation analyses were conducted  
19 between 7 red flags and one variable (being married). Thus, 28 correlations were performed  
20 setting the new statistical threshold to  $p = 0.0017$  ( $0.05/28$ ). The results are reported in *Table 2*.  
21 Three correlations only resulted statistically significant: older defendant are characterized by lower  
22 premeditation ( $p = 0.001$ ); defendant who lack of premeditation are those who did not try to disguise  
23 their own acts ( $p = 0.001$ ); defendant who spontaneously confess their criminal acts are those who  
24 feel guilty ( $p < 0.001$ ).  
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28 **Regression analysis:** The multiple regression output presents a final model including the  
29 three most significant red flags and explaining 64.5% of the variance in the case distribution  
30 between Clusters 1 and 2. The first and most significant red flag is the Absence of masking, which  
31 explains 42.3% of the variance in the case cluster distribution. The second predictor is  
32 spontaneous confession, which explains the 13.1% of the variance. The last significant predictor in  
33 the model is age older than 50, which contributes to 9.1% of the variance. Results are reported in  
34 *Table 3*. The regression analysis did not include premeditation and sense of guilt. These red flags  
35 are however highly correlated with absence of masking and spontaneous confession, respectively,  
36 as reported in *Table 2*. The final interpretative model is represented in *Figure 2*.  
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## 42 Discussion

43  
44 Results from the systematic review on acquired pedophilia cases led to suggest that  
45 individuals whose paraphilia emerged as a results of neurological disorders behave differently from  
46 individuals with developmental pedophilia. These observations are supported by the main analysis  
47 on a dataset of 66 juridical cases of pedophilia. Using an innovative combination of statistical  
48 methodologies, we have been able to draw a profile of individuals with acquired pedophilia based  
49 on information derived from previous medical evidences, offender's history and *modus operandi*. In  
50 particular, we identified six red flags of acquired pedophilia that can be summarized as follow: i) no  
51 evidence of masking or ii) no premeditation, and iii) no previous sexual criminal records, iv)  
52 spontaneous confession and a v) sense of guilt with an vi) age older than 50.  
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55 The following results are of particular relevance: first, the cluster analysis classified the  
56 offenders into two big clusters that widely differs in the number of red flags for each offenders;  
57 second, the offenders with ascertained acquired pedophilia are homogeneously widespread across  
58 the smaller cluster and no difference is evident between offenders included in this cluster besides  
59 the presence of a neurological disorder in offenders with acquired pedophilia and the absence of  
60 neurological disorder in offenders classified in the same cluster, who were never tested for the



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3 presence of neurological disorders. This let us to speculate that those offenders had an  
4 unrecognized acquired origin for their pedophilic behavior.

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6 Furthermore, the regression analysis provides a robust model that included the three most  
7 significant red flags that, together, explain over 64% of the variance (absence of masking,  
8 offenders older age > 50 and spontaneous confession). Finally, the correlation analysis highlights  
9 that different red flags are strongly correlated with the three main red flags emerged by the  
10 regression analysis. For instance, premeditation strongly correlates with absence of masking, both  
11 of which are the behavioral expression of impulse control disorder(7). In addition, Spontaneous  
12 confession strongly correlates with sense of guilt, as both of them pertain to the moral aspect of  
13 behavior and reflect a preserved moral judgment(7).

14  
15 Expanding the functional meaning of the six red flags, two out of the six red flags are  
16 indicative of the acquired nature of the altered sexual interests: older age, absence of previous  
17 criminal sex offence. Older age, which is considered one of the most significant predictors, reflects  
18 the relative high prevalence of patients with late onset dementia in the acquired pedophilia group.  
19 Age is also an high risk factor for other neurological disorders, as brain tumors(32) and stroke(33).  
20 On the contrary, developmental pedophilia is characterized by an early onset(8, 34) and by a  
21 significant criminal comorbidities(34, 35).

22  
23 Two out of the six red flags reflects the impulse discontrol that characterized acquired  
24 pedophiles(3, 5, 10, 11, 13): absence of premeditation and of tentative to disguise the criminal  
25 behavior. This explains their strong correlation. Indeed, if a behaviors is driven by the *hic and nunc*  
26 sexual impulse, it should appear dis-organized. For instance, these offenders assault the victim at  
27 hand in open spaces, occasionally even in front of possible witnesses. In contrast, the *modus*  
28 *operandi* of developmental pedophiles is usually characterized by a predatory, fully organized and  
29 premeditated behavior, for instance they lure the victim out of sight of parental control. In addition,  
30 a lot of effort is put on tentative to mask the sexual abuses enforcing victim's silence and using  
31 psychological and physical violence(20, 21).

32  
33 The last two predictors, confession and sense of guilt, are slightly more difficult to interpret.  
34 Both of them might be explained by a spared moral judgment that would make the pedophilic  
35 behavior ego-dystonic(10, 11, 17, 31). In contrast, in developmental pedophilic disorder, the sexual  
36 attraction to children is perceived as ego-syntonic(36). However, at least in some cases, the  
37 juridical "ability to understand" is impaired as well(5, 13, 18, 29) and the defendants are not able to  
38 understand what is morally wrong. In this case they tend to easily confess their crime as they  
39 cannot see anything wrong in them, but the sense of guilt is absent. In one peculiar case(5, 6)  
40 upon arrest the defendant was completely incapable to understand the moral disvalue of his acts,  
41 but a strong sense of guilt emerged after the surgical resection of the tumor.

42  
43 It is here important to underline that the presence of these red flags cannot lead to a clinical  
44 diagnosis of acquired pedophilia. Rather, their presence should prompt a rapid neuro-scientific  
45 evaluation including at least a brain imaging scan and a comprehensive neurological  
46 examination(6, 13). The adoption of this behavioral red flags as a way to profile acquired  
47 pedophilia might be extremely useful to better inform sentencing and to reduce controversies in  
48 forensic setting.

### 49 50 51 52 53 54 **Study limitations**

55  
56 Despite the innovative approach adopted, this study is not devoid of drawbacks, first of all  
57 its cross-sectional retrospective nature due to the restrictions to data access that prevents the  
58 inclusion of the follow up data in the analysis. Thus, it is not possible to ensure whether the  
59 offenders classified in the same cluster as the acquired pedophilic individuals received a  
60 neurological diagnosis or not. Interestingly, these cases shared the same red flags of acquired

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3 pedophilia, suggesting that their impulse control brain network is somehow disrupted. Despite the  
4 absence of follow up data is an insurmountable limitation, this makes the aim of the current paper  
5 even more important as it suggest that the prevalence of acquired pedophilia might be higher than  
6 expected. Future longitudinal studies should use the profile of acquired pedophilia described in this  
7 study to gradually improve knowledge on acquired pedophilia and integrate defendant's  
8 assessment and evaluation.  
9

### 10 11 **Conclusion** 12

13 Identification of an underlying medical or iatrogenic cause in a defendant presenting with  
14 pedophilia can be diagnostically challenging(1). In the current paper we identified six red flags that  
15 could suggest an organic origin of pedophilia in a sexual offender. We therefore here suggest that  
16 any pedophilic cases presenting with i) no evidence of masking or ii) no premeditation, and iii) no  
17 previous sexual criminal records, iv) showing a confession and a v) sense of guilt with an vi) age  
18 older than 50, should receive further neurological investigation to assess the acquired rather than  
19 developmental nature of pedophilia. Four of these profiling elements are related to the crime (i.e.  
20 premeditation, absence of masking, sense of guilt and confession), one is demographic (i.e.  
21 offender's age over 50) and one is clinical (i.e. absence of previous sex offenses). As the current  
22 study is based on 66 cases, including only 7 cases of confirmed acquired pedophilia, the results  
23 should not be considered as conclusive. Clinical vigilance, meticulous observations of clinical  
24 progression and legally irrelevant symptoms (6) are of utmost importance for the diagnosis,  
25 management and legal implication of acquired pedophilia.  
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3 **Authors Contributions:** Prof. Andrea Camperio Ciani have full access to all the data in the  
4 study and take responsibility for the integrity of the data and the accuracy of the data analysis.  
5 *Study concept and design:* Andrea Camperio Ciani, Umberto Battaglia. *Acquisition, analysis, or*  
6 *interpretation of data:* All the authors. *Drafting of the manuscript:* Andrea Camperio Ciani, Cristina  
7 Scarpazza. *Critical revision of the manuscript for important intellectual content:* Umberto Battaglia,  
8 Valeria Covelli. *Statistical analysis:* All the authors. *Final approval of the version to be published:*  
9 All the authors.  
10  
11

12  
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14

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**Figures Caption:**

**Figure 1. Cluster Analysis results.** The image represent the results of the cluster analysis: subjects were partitioned into two large clusters.

The higher row on the x axis denotes each case identification number. The numbers (ranging from 1 to 6) on the lower row on the x axis refers to the number of red flags that are present for each offender. Asterisk (\*) denotes a offender's with confirmed acquired pedophilia as evidence of a neurological disorder was provided and a causal link between the neurological disorder and the pedophilic behavior has been assessed in each of them.

**Figure 2. Final Interpretative Model.** Diagram showing the link between the functional domains affected in acquired pedophilia and the red flags suggesting the suspect acquired pedophile profile.

On the middle column, the three predictors emerged from the stepwise multiple regression are represented; number denotes the percentage of individual contribution to regression variance. On the left side column the functional meaning of these red flags is highlighted. On the right side column, the red flags significantly correlated (after Bonferroni correction) with the three main ones are reported. On the horizontal lines the Phi correlation coefficients between the main red flags and the other one is reported.

Variable	Cluster1 n=41	Cluster2 n=25	Chi squared	p
<i>Demographic features</i>				
Older age (> 50 years)	8 (19.51%)	16 (64%)	13.28	<0.001
Low Educational level (<8 years)	39 (35.1%)	23 (92%)	0.226	0.606
Marital Status (Married)	13 (31.7%)	22 (88%)	19.75	<0.001
Profession in contact with children (yes)	5 (12.19%)	3 (12%)	0.002	0.981
<i>Clinical Status</i>				
Absence of previous psychiatric disorders	39 (95.12%)	24 (96%)	0.028	0.868
Ascertained neurological disorder	0	7 (28%)	13.28	<0.001
<i>Modus Operandi</i>				
Premeditation (no)	12 (29.26%)	20 (80%)	16.003	<0.001
Masking (no)	7 (17.07%)	21 (84%)	28.47	<0.001
Spontaneous Confession (yes)	1 (2.43%)	10 (40%)	15.77	<0.001
Sense of Guilt (yes)	0	8 (32%)	14.93	<0.001
Previous Criminal sex offenses (no)	21 (51.21%)	25 (100%)	17.49	<0.001
Abuse mild (yes)	14 (34.14%)	5 (20%)	1.51	0.218
Repeated Abuse (no)	24 (58.53%)	14 (56%)	0.41	0.840
Place of the abuses (public spaces)	11	9	0.618	0.432
<i>Victimology</i>				
Number of victims (>1)	12 (29.26%)	10 (40%)	0.805	0.370
Sex of the victims (assault to both genders)	10 (24.39%)	6 (24%)	0.001	0.971
Relationship with the victims (stranger)	5 (12.19)	5 (20%)	0.736	0.391

**Table 1. Between Clusters Differences.** Numbers represent the raw number (percentages). Red Flags (i.e. variables emerged from the systematic review of the literature as potentially useful to discriminate developmental from acquired pedophilic) are highlighted in grey.

	Older age	Marital Status	Absence of previous psychiatric disorders	Premeditation	Masking	Confession	Sense of Guilt	Previous Criminal sex offenses
Older age	1							
Marital Status	0.234	1						
Absence of previous psychiatric disorders	-0.014	-0.086	1					
Premeditation	-0.401	-0.245	-0.225	1				
Masking	0.013	0.316	0.254	-0.394	1			
Confession	0.085	0.258	0.098	-0.217	0.192	1		
Sense of Guilt	0.105	0.257	-0.081	-0.197	0.245	0.457	1	
Previous Criminal sex offenses	0.019	-0.172	0.144	0.310	-0.366	-0.206	-0.245	1

**Table 2. Correlation analyses.** Number denotes phi coefficient for dichotomous correlations. The colors denote the following: Blue = Correlation not statistically significant; Light red = statistically significant correlation at  $p < 0.05$ ; Dark Red = statistically significant correlation after multiple comparison correction.



Independent Variable	B	R <sup>2</sup> adj.	B stand.	t	Sig.
<i>Masking Absent</i>	.490	.423	.499	6.394	<0.001
<i>Confession</i>	.478	.554	.367	4.875	<0.001
<i>Age</i>	.233	.645	.318	4.140	<0.001

**Table 3.** Stepwise multiple regression analysis, final model, dependent variable *Cluster*, n. cases 66, 17 variables and predictors entered and removed from the resulting final model.

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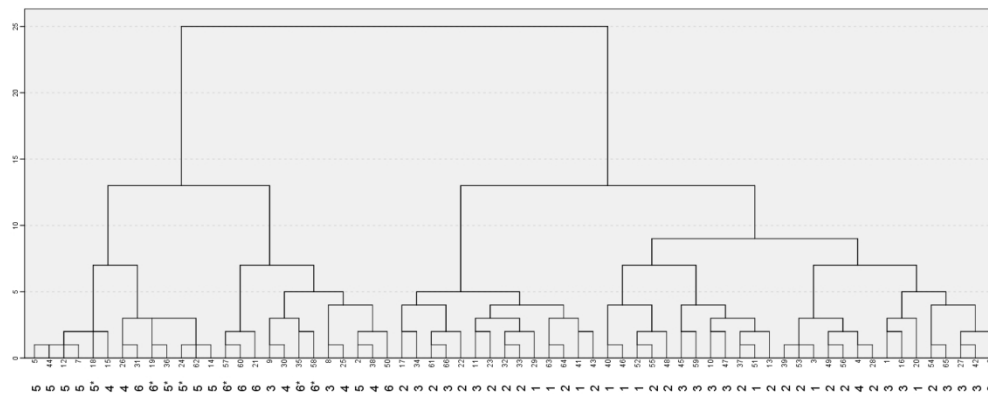


Figure 1. Cluster Analysis results. The image represent the results of the cluster analysis: subjects were partitioned into two large clusters. The higher row on the x axis denotes each case identification number. The numbers (ranging from 1 to 6) on the lower row on the x axis refers to the number of red flags that are present for each offender. Asterisk (\*) denotes a offender's with confirmed acquired pedophilia as evidence of a neurological disorder was provided and a causal link between the neurological disorder and the pedophilic behavior has been assessed in each of them.

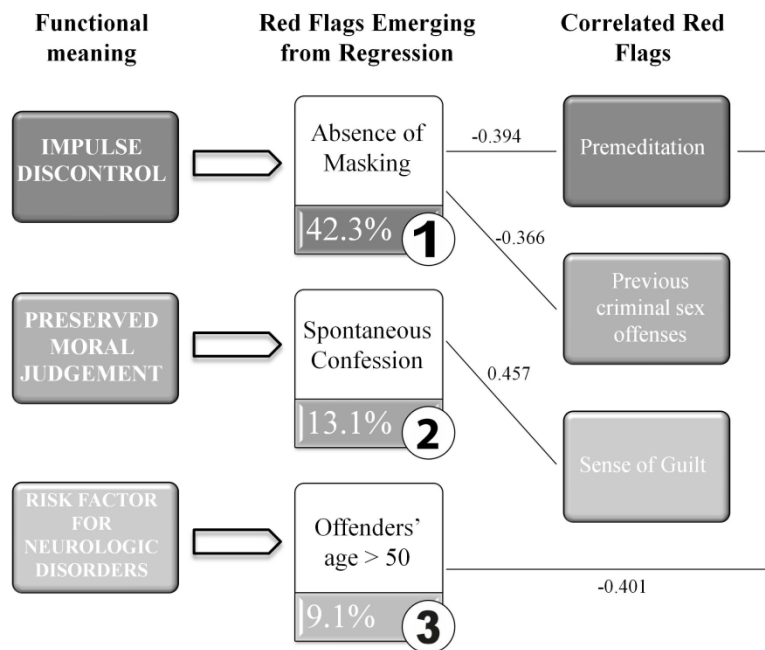


Figure 2. Final Interpretative Model. Diagram showing the link between the functional domains affected in acquired pedophilia and the red flags suggesting the suspect acquired pedophile profile.

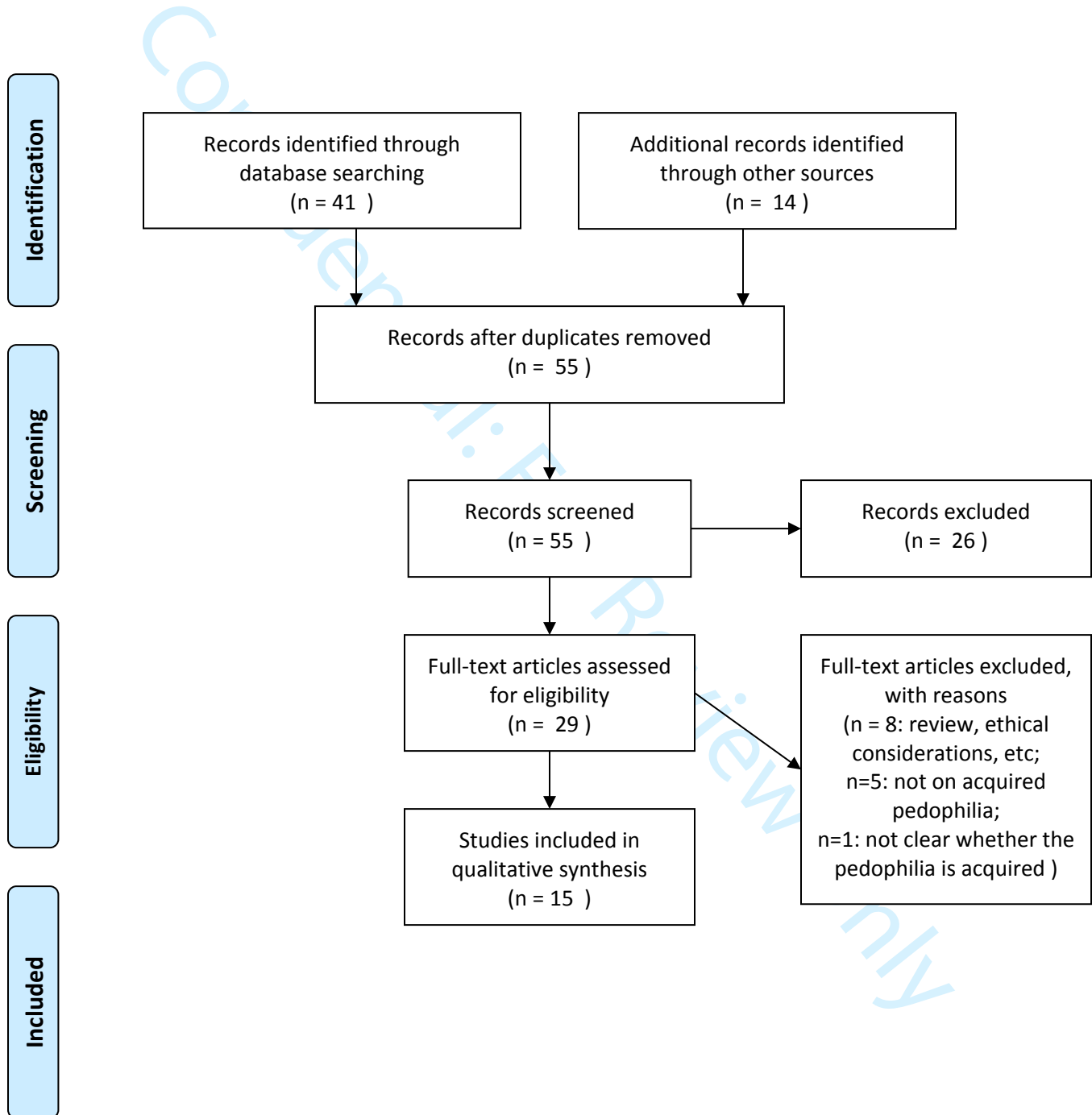
On the middle column, the three predictors emerged from the stepwise multiple regression are represented; number denotes the percentage of individual contribution to regression variance. On the left side column the functional meaning of these red flags is highlighted. On the right side column, the red flags significantly correlated (after Bonferroni correction) with the three main ones are reported. On the horizontal lines the Phi correlation coefficients between the main red flags and the other one is reported.

254x190mm (300 x 300 DPI)



## PRISMA 2009 Flow Diagram

### Profiling acquired pedophilia: retrospective analysis of 66 Italian forensic cases of pedophilia



From: Moher D, Liberati A, Tetzlaff J, Altman DG, The PRISMA Group (2009). Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses: The PRISMA Statement. PLoS Med 6(7): e1000097. doi:10.1371/journal.pmed1000097

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## SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

## Profiling acquired pedophilia: retrospective analysis of 66 Italian forensic cases of pedophilia

**Table 1.** The table summarizes the demographic and the clinical data of the acquired pedophiles described in the literature, their modus operandi and victimology.

MS = Multiple Sclerosis; FTD = Fronto-Temporal Dementia; TBI = Traumatic Brain Injury; OFC = Orbitofrontal Cortex; n/a = not available.

In light grey are highlighted the variables that we included in our profile of acquired pedophilia. In dark grey are highlighted deviations from the profile. Despite highly consistent across subjects, we did not include some variables in the profile for the following reason:

- Gender: all pedophiles are male. Thus, gender is not predictive of acquired pedophilia;
- Education: there is a slight prevalence of individuals with high education within the cases described. However, education is not causally linked with neurological disorders, thus we exclude any functional meaning of education;
- Marital Status: the majority of the cases described are married. As the majority of middle age/senescent man are married, being married could not be considered as predictive of acquired pedophilia;
- Ascertained neurological disorder: tautologically, all the patients included have an ascertained neurological disorder. Including this variable in our profile would have made the analysis circular, and would have been useless as we aimed to create a profile of acquired pedophilia to be useful when a neurological disorder has not been suspected yet.

**Notes:**

- Two cases out of eight described in Miller et al. 1986(1) were excluded as the patients presented with sexual alterations other than pedophilia;
- Three cases described in Regestein et al. 1978(2) were excluded as the etiology of the pedophilia is not clear;
- Cases 1 and 8 described in Mendez & Shapira, 2011(3) are the same already reported in Mendez et al. 2000(4);
- the case described in Mendez et al. 2010 (5) was already described in Mendez et al. 2000(4).

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	Miller et al. 1986(1)	Mendez et al. 2000 case 1(4);	Mendez et al. 2000 case 2(4)	Frohman et al. 2002(6)	Burns & Swerdlow, 2003(7)	Solla et al. 2006(8)	Devinsky et al. 2010(9)	Rainero et al. 2011(10)	Fumagalli et al. 2014(11)	Alnemari et al. 2016(12)	Sartori et al. 2016(13)	Scarpazza et al. 2018 case 1(14)	Scarpazza et al. 2018 case 2(14)
<b>Demographic features</b>													
Gender	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male
Age of the offender	50	60	67	36	40	62	51	49	63	Early 20	64	70+	60+
Education	n/a	>8	n/a	>8	>8	n/a	>8	n/a	n/a	n/a	>8 Medical degree	<8 years	<8 years
Marital Status	Married	Divorced	n/a	Unmarried	Married	Widower	Married	Married	n/a	n/a	Married	Married	Married
Profession in contact with children	n/a	No (college professor)	No (artist)	n/a	Yes (Schoolteacher)	n/a	No (pharmaceutical researcher)	n/a	n/a	n/a	Yes (pediatrician)	No (tradesman)	No (unemployed)
<b>Clinical Status</b>													
Previous psychiatric disorders	No	n/a	Yes: major depression; drug abuse	n/a	No	n/a	No	No	n/a	n/a	No	No	Yes: major depression
Ascertained neurological disorder	Neoplasm involving the pons, hypothalamus and thalamus	Behavioral variant FTD	Bilateral Hippocampal sclerosis	MS involving OFC	Right OFC tumor	Parkinson's disease	Gangoglioma ; amygdalotomy for surgical removal	Behavioral variant FTD	Ventromedial frontal TBI	Temporal TBI	Clivus Chordoma	FTD	Brain Tumor
<b>Modus Operandi</b>													
Premeditation	No	No	n/a	n/a	No	No	No	n/a	n/a	n/a	No	No	No
Masking	No	No	n/a	No	Yes	No	No	n/a	n/a	n/a	No	No	No
Confession	n/a	Yes	n/a	n/a	Yes	Yes	Yes	n/a	n/a	n/a	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sense of Guilt	n/a	No	n/a	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	n/a	n/a	n/a	No	Yes	No
Previous criminal sex offense	No	n/a	n/a	No	No	No	No	n/a	n/a	n/a	No	No	No
Severity of the abuse	Mild	Mild	Moderate	n/a	n/a	Mild	Mild	n/a	n/a	n/a	Mild	Mild	Mild
Length of the abuse	Not prolonged	Last 18 months	Last 24 months	Not prolonged	n/a	Not prolonged	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Not prolonged	Not prolonged	Not prolonged
Place of the abuse	Open space	Open spaces	n/a	Movie theater	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	School	Movie theater	Open space
<b>Victimology</b>													
Number of victims	>2	>2	2	2	n/a	1	n/a	1	2	n/a	7	2	>2
Sex of the victims	female	Both genders	Males	female	n/a	Female	n/a	Female	Males	n/a	Females	Males	Both genders
Relationship with the victims	Familiar and stranger	Familiar and stranger	Stranger	Stranger	Familiar	Granddaughter	n/a	Father	n/a	n/a	Professional	Stranger	Stranger
Notes	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Pedophilia receded after surgical removal	Side effect of drugs to treat Parkinson's	n/a	n/a	n/a	Increased sexual interest with NO acts	Pedophilia receded after surgical removal	n/a	n/a

	Lesniak et al. 1972(15)	Regestein et al. 1978 Case 1(2)	Mendez & Shapira, 2011 Case 2(3)	Mendez & Shapira, 2011 Case 3(3)	Mendez & Shapira, 2011 Case 4(3)	Mendez & Shapira, 2011 Case 5(3)	Mendez & Shapira, 2011 Case 6(3)	Mendez & Shapira, 2011 Case 7(3)	Gilbert & Vranic, 2015(16)
<b><i>Demographic features</i></b>									
Gender	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male
Age of the offender	60	56	67	76	82	59	32	59	48
Education	3 years	>8	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Marital Status	Married	Married	Married	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Married	n/a
Profession in contact with children	No (farmer)	No (musician)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b><i>Clinical Status</i></b>									
Previous psychiatric disorders	No	No	No	No	No	Yes: depression	No	No	No
Ascertained neurological disorder	Neoplasm in the right OFC	Meningioma involving the right frontal lobe	Behavioral variant of FTD	Frontal variant of Alzheimer's	Vascular Dementia involving the globus pallidus	Parkinson's disease (addition of pramipaxole)	Huntington's disease (atrophy of the striatum)	Pallidotomy for Parkinson's disease	Tumor in the left frontal lobe
<b><i>Modus Operandi</i></b>									
Premeditation	n/a	n/a	n/a	No	n/a	n/a	No	n/a	n/a
Masking	No	n/a	n/a	No	n/a	n/a	No	n/a	n/a
Confession	No	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Yes	n/a	n/a	n/a
Sense of Guilt	No	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Yes	n/a	Yes	n/a
Previous criminal sex offense	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	n/a
Severity of the abuse	Severe (complete sexual intercourse)	Not Clear	Mild (sexual advances)	Mild (touching; inappropriate comments)	n/a	Mild (only pornography)	Mild (inappropriate touch)	Mild (inappropriate touch)	n/a
Length of the abuse	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Not prolonged	Not prolonged	n/a
Place of the abuse	n/a	n/a	n/a	Open spaces	n/a	n/a	House	n/a	n/a
<b><i>Victimology</i></b>									
Number of victims	>2	>2	>1	>2	n/a	noone	1	1	1
Sex of the victims	Both genders	Both genders	Females	Both genders	n/a	n/a	Female	Female	Female
Relationship with the victims	Father and stranger	Familiar and stranger	Grandfather	Neighbors	Grandfather	n/a	Stranger	Grandfather	Stepfather
Notes	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Pedophilia resolved after discontinuation of pramipaxole	n/a	n/a	Pedophilia receded after surgical removal

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