**THE SOCIO-SEXUAL KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES ASSESSMENT TOOL- REVISED: THE NEED FOR UPDATES IN ASSESSMENT FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES**

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**Objective:** Like all human beings, individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID) have human rights, which include sexual rights; however, persons with ID often face resistance in their direct surroundings when they seek to exercise these sexual rights. As sexuality is also a health issue, individuals with ID have a *Right to Health* (Article 25, United Nation, 2006) which includes being informed of their rights as sexual beings, how to consent, and to develop knowledge for being sexually responsible. However, research demonstrates that sex education is often not always available for individuals with ID; as a result, these persons become more vulnerable targets for sexual abuse. This vulnerability may be due to a lack of understanding of appropriate sexual behaviour and recognition of what constitutes inappropriate sexual behaviour. The Socio-Sexual Knowledge and Attitudes Assessment Tool – Revised (SSKAAT-R: Griffiths & Lunsky, 2003) was developed to provide a comprehensive assessment of areas of socio-sexual knowledge and attitudes for people with ID. In the current study, the efficacy of the SSKAAT-R in assessing current sexual issues for individuals with ID is addressed.

**Methods**: The current study proposes to replicate a 1999 study by Griffiths and Lunsky, which examined the aspects of socio-sexual assessment and education that were considered important for people with ID. As did Griffiths and Lunsky, current users of the SSKAAT-R, including psychologists, clinicians, and staff members who work with individuals with ID, will be invited to complete a questionnaire with respect to their current use of the SSKAAT-R, plus participate in focus groups. Although a replication, the current study differs from that of Griffiths and Lunsky because current users will also be invited to participate in focus groups as well as semi-structured interviews in order to ascertain what aspects of the measure they would like to see changed in an updated version (SSKAAT-3). For instance, given that it is a measure that includes pictures, participants will be asked if particular pictures are problematic and need updating or, relatedly, if subject areas such as advances in contraception need to be addressed and included. Furthermore, given developments in technology and social media, questions regarding the impact of online content on individuals with ID will be looked at for the new measure.

**Results**: Data collection has not yet started; therefore, there are no results to report at this time. We are looking forward to speaking with potential participants at the 27th annual RSIG conference as we are looking for professionals in the field of intellectual disabilities who would be interested in providing their input on this research and the SSKAAT-R. We are also eager for feedback on the research design and recruitment methods for this study.

**Discussion**: This research will aid in better assessing the sexual needs of this population and, therefore, will help to create more efficient sex education programs for these individuals. If we are able to improve understanding of the specific needs of individuals with ID, as measured by the SSKAAT-R, we will be better able to modify sex education approaches. Once these programs are individually adapted, they increase the ability of individuals with ID to make informed decisions about their sexual relationships. As a result, individuals with ID will be better equipped to consent to sexual relationships, to make informed choices with respect to birth control, and thus reduce vulnerability to sexual abuse.

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