



Hennepin County

Department of Community Corrections and Rehabilitation

Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation

LSI-R Norming Report
February 2010

About this Report

Case assignment of felony level offenders within Adult Field Services is based upon scores on the Hennepin County Pre-Screener and Level of Service Inventory—Revised (LSI-R).

The Pre-Screener is used with post-sentence offenders processed by Central Intake. These offenders include those sentenced in Property/Drug Court with monitorable conditions, post-sentence offenders with monitorable conditions for whom a pre-sentence or pre-plea investigation was not completed, and intra/inter-state referrals for transfer. Offenders rated 14 or above on the Pre-Screener are referred to traditional probation where a LSI-R is completed.

Offenders under investigation for a new felony offense and for whom a Pre-Plea or Pre-Sentence Investigation has been ordered by the Hennepin County District Court are interviewed and rated for risk and need using the LSI-R. Most of these assessments are conducted by the Felony Investigation Unit, but some may be completed by traditional agents for offenders who are charged with a new felony offense.

This report is based upon LSI-R data collected between January 1 to June 30, 2009 (n=873). Only validated LSI-R data for initial assessments was included in the norming analysis.

LSI-R Scores by Demographic Category

Sixteen percent of the assessments were for female offenders. Females scored lower on average (mean score=24) than did male offenders (mean score=27). Hispanic offenders scored significantly lower on average (mean score=17) than did non-Hispanic offenders (mean score=29).

Figure 1 displays the mean LSI-R scores by race. Mean LSI-R scores for American Indians were the highest (mean score=33) and scores for Asian offenders were the lowest (mean score=19).

Mean LSI-R total scores by age category are shown in Figure 2. Mean scores across age categories are generally consistent until offenders reach age 50 and older (mean score=23).

Figure 1. Mean LSI-R Total Scores by Offender Race.

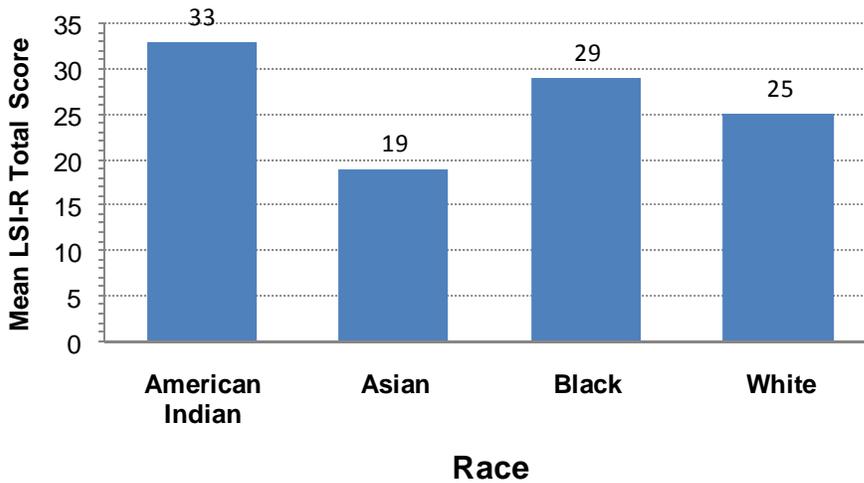
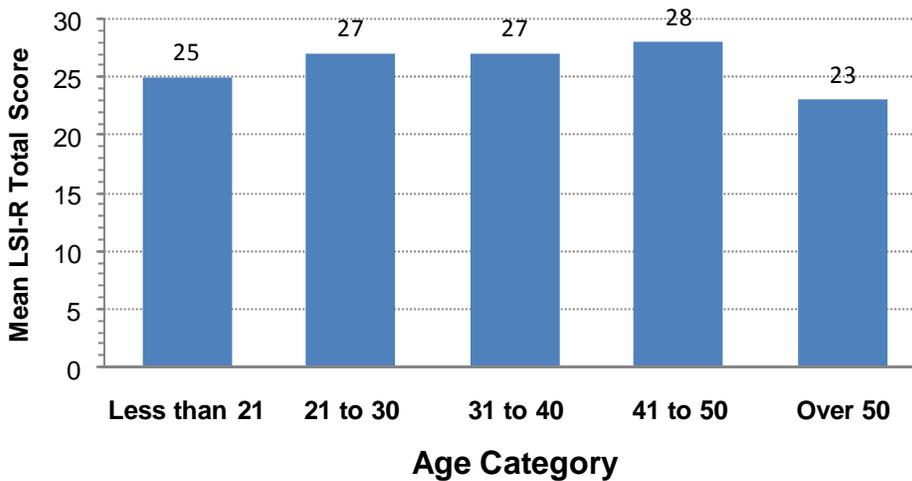
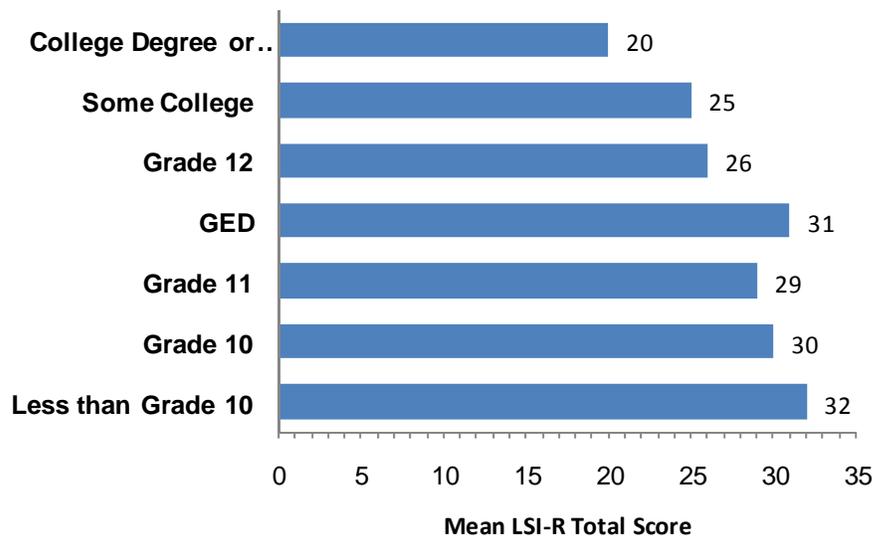


Figure 2. Mean LSI-R Total Scores by Age Category.



Offenders with higher levels of education scored lower on the LSI-R than did those offenders with lower levels of education (see Figure 3). The mean LSI-score for offenders with a college degree or higher was 20 and that for offenders with less than a grade 10 education was 32. Offenders with GED education (mean score=31) scored similarly to those with less than a grade 10 education.

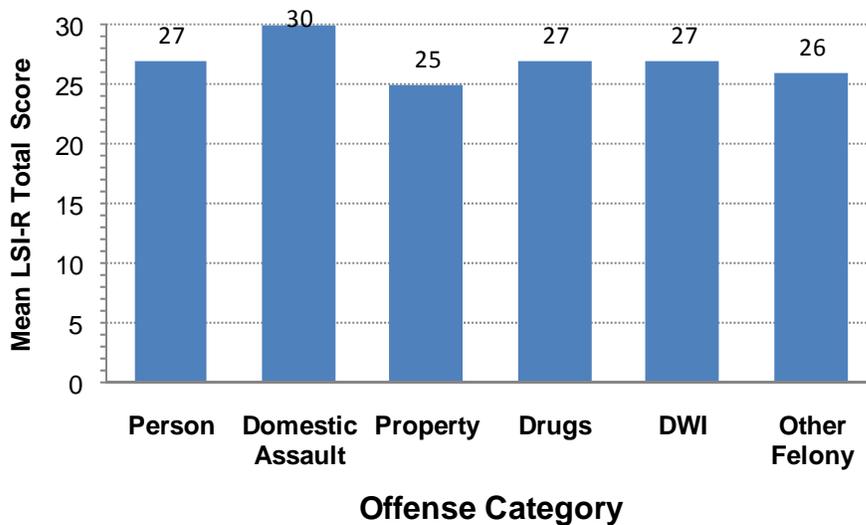
Figure 3. Mean LSI-R Total Scores by Education Level.



LSI-R Scores by Offense Category

Mean LSI-R scores by offense category were very consistent (see Figure 4). Property and other felony offenders scored lowest (mean scores=25 and 26, respectively). The average LSI-R score for domestic assault offenders was higher (mean score=30) than those for other offense types.

Figure 4. Mean LSI-R Total Scores by Offense Category.



Norming Analysis

The current cutoff score for the LSI-R is 24. Offenders with scores 24 or greater are assigned to traditional supervision.¹ The mean score across all offenders was 27. Figure 5 displays the distribution of LSI-R scores for the overall group. 34 percent of the offenders scored lower than the cutoff score. There is an increase in the number of offenders with scores 24 or greater.

Figure 5. LSI-R Total Score Distribution (n=875).

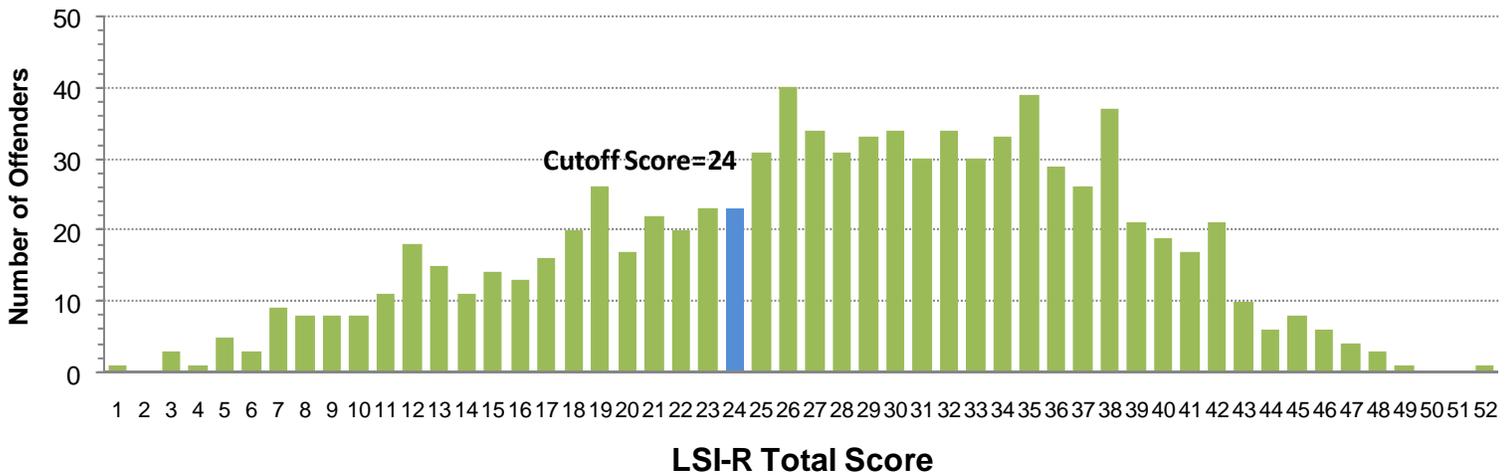
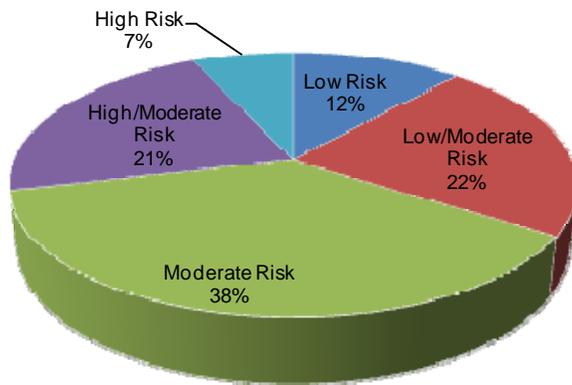


Figure 6 displays the risk assessment of offenders based on LSI-R total scores. According to the LSI-R Scoring Guide, offender risk to reoffend is assigned as follows, offenders with scores: 1) less than or equal to 13 are Low Risk, 2) 14 through 23 are Low/Moderate Risk, 3) 24 through 33 are Moderate Risk, 4) 34 through 40 are High/Moderate Risk, and 5) 41 or greater are High Risk.

Figure 6. Percent of Offenders by Risk Category.



¹ Offenders who are assessed with LSI-R scores less than 24 can be assigned to traditional probation with an override.

Seven percent of the offenders assessed were rated as high risk and 21 percent were rated as high/moderate risk. The largest category was moderate risk (38%).

Discussion and Recommendation

Based on the analysis of data collected during the first six months of 2009, it is recommended that the cutoff score of 24 be retained. Determination of cutoff scores is an art as well as a science. Other administrative concerns should be considered when setting the cutoff score. Perhaps the most critical concern is staff resources and the ability to provide traditional supervision to approximately 66 percent of offenders assessed with the LSI-R.

Another factor which should be considered in setting the cutoff score is the recidivism level of offenders who score are various levels on the LSI-R. This is called predictive validation. Data is being collected for a validation study of the LSI-R. A preliminary 1-year validation study report is scheduled for the end of 2010.

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