

9-16-2009

An Investigation of Suspect Effort, Postconcussive Symptoms, and Litigation in Neuropsychological Evaluations

Hey-Mi M. Ahn

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Follow this and additional works at: <http://knowledge.library.iup.edu/etd>

Recommended Citation

Ahn, Hey-Mi M., "An Investigation of Suspect Effort, Postconcussive Symptoms, and Litigation in Neuropsychological Evaluations" (2009). *Theses and Dissertations (All)*. 227.
<http://knowledge.library.iup.edu/etd/227>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by Knowledge Repository @ IUP. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations (All) by an authorized administrator of Knowledge Repository @ IUP. For more information, please contact cclouser@iup.edu, sara.parme@iup.edu.

STUDENT HAS RESTRICTED ACCESS TO FULL TEXT OF THE DISSERTATION.

ONLY COVER PAGES AND ABSTRACT ARE AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME

AN INVESTIGATION OF SUSPECT EFFORT, POSTCONCUSSIVE SYMPTOMS,
AND LITIGATION IN NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATIONS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Psychology

Hey-Mi M. Ahn

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

August 2009

Indiana University of Pennsylvania
The School of Graduate Studies and Research
Department of Psychology

We hereby approve the dissertation of

Hey-Mi M. Ahn

Candidate for the degree of Doctor of Psychology

7/9/09

Signature on File

William Meil, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Psychology, Advisor

7/9/09

Signature on File

Dasen Luo, Ph.D.

Professor of Psychology

7/9/09

Signature on File

Michael D. Franzen, Ph.D.

Chief: Section on Psychology and Neuropsychology
Allegheny General Hospital

ACCEPTED

Michele S. Schwietz, Ph.D.

Assistant Dean for Research

The School of Graduate Studies and Research

Title: An Investigation of Suspect Effort, Postconcussive Symptoms, and Litigation in Neuropsychological Evaluations

Author: Hey-Mi M. Ahn

Dissertation Chair: Dr. William Meil

Dissertation Committee Members: Dr. Dasen Luo
Dr. Michael D. Franzen

The present study was proposed to examine the potential connections between litigation, performance on neuropsychological measures, individual factors, suspect motivation, and postconcussive symptoms, as well as the patterns in test selection and administration across this sample. A total of 318 cases met the inclusion criteria of individuals who received evaluations as a result of sustaining a traumatic brain injury. The following variables were examined: individual characteristics such as age, education level, injury severity, and injury cause, and scores on memory, attention/concentration, executive functioning, and psychiatric functioning measures. The cases were categorized as workers' compensation litigators, civil suit litigators, or non-litigators. There was a substantial amount of missing data for this sample, which was statistically addressed through the Expectation-Maximum imputation method. The results of the present study found differences in terms of test administration across the litigation groups. For example, those involved in litigation were more likely to be administered suspect motivation measures than the non-litigation sample. No statistically significant differences between the litigation groups on measures of memory, attention, executive dysfunction, or psychiatric symptoms. This may have been due to a number of factors such as the unequal sample sizes across the litigation samples, the small sample size of the worker's compensations group, and the more stringent alpha levels that were set to address the

multiple comparisons and violations of the homogeneity of variance assumption. One significant difference was found between the litigation groups on the FrSBe Family Report measure which indicated that families reported significantly more negative change in executive functioning pre- and post-injury for the workers' compensation group than for the civil suit or non-litigation groups. This has implications regarding the impact of families' perceptions of cognitive changes on individuals' decision to litigate in workers' compensation cases. Specifically, it suggests that families' perception of cognitive deficits attributed to the injury may have a greater influence on the individuals' decisions to litigate than injury severity or actual degree of impairment.