

MMPI-2-RF Interest Scale Scores for Forensic Inpatients with Mood Disorders

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Introduction

Mood Disorders

- Many mood disorders present with reduced engagement in hobbies and other pleasurable activities.¹
- Mood disorder groups trend toward solitary hobbies but experience reduced engagement and enjoyment.²
- MDD lowers the rate of participation in leisure activities.²
- The inability to experience positive emotion is most specifically characteristic of major depression.³
- Other disorders such as social phobia are characterized by reduced positive affect, but this is to a lesser degree than MDD and other mood disorders.⁴

MMPI Scales

- The MMPI Scale 5 was originally created to distinguish between gay and straight examinees.⁵
- Once it was recognized that homosexuality is not a psychiatric condition, Scale 5 had little clinical utility.⁵
- In the development of the Restructured Clinical Scales, Scale 5 was excluded and content was instead used to create two distinct scales of “primarily occupational and leisure activities.”⁶
- Aesthetic/Literary Interests (AES) and Mechanical/Physical Interests (MEC) demonstrate modest negative correlations with depression-related variables (e.g., depression diagnosis, antidepressant use) in outpatient and inpatient samples.⁷
- Very few studies examine AES and MEC scores and none have examined their association with mood disorders broadly.

Aims & Hypothesis

- This study examines whether AES and MEC have clinical utility, such as being potential markers of experiencing mood disorders (e.g., limited engagement in hobbies due to anhedonia) in a forensic inpatient setting.

Hypothesis

- Patients diagnosed with mood disorders would score lower on AES and MEC scales than patients without mood disorders (after excluding those with other behavior-restricting diagnoses).

Table 1: Independent samples *t*-tests comparing MMPI-2-RF Interest Scale scores for forensic inpatients with and without mood disorder diagnoses

	Mood Diagnosis Group (n = 327)		Comparison Group (n = 389)		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	Hedges' <i>g</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>				
AES	50.76	10.38	49.96	11.28	0.99	714	.32	0.07
MEC	54.35	10.81	55.59	10.54	-1.55	714	.12	0.12

Note: AES = Aesthetic/Literary Interests. MEC = Mechanical/Physical Interests.

Method

Participants

- Starting with an initial sample of 1,110 forensic inpatients, we excluded individuals with invalid MMPI-2-RF protocols, malingering V codes, as well as individuals with non-mood diagnoses we deemed conceptually related to restricted engagement in hobbies (e.g., Dementia, Anxiety Disorders, Obsessive-Compulsive Personality Disorder, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Adjustment Disorder)
- The final Mood Disorders Group consisted of 327 inpatients.
- The Comparison Group consisted of 389 inpatients.

Measures

- We used psychiatric diagnoses of record on the day of testing to create the mood diagnosis and comparison groups.
- We examined the MMPI-2-RF Aesthetic/Literary Interests (AES) and Mechanical/Physical Interests (MEC) scales.

Procedure

- We conducted two independent samples *t*-tests to compare mean AES and MEC scores for the Mood Disorder and Comparison Groups.

Results & Discussion

Findings

- Independent samples *t*-tests indicated no statistically significant mean score differences between the Mood and Comparison Groups on AES or MEC.
- Effects were negligible in size.

Limitations

- In our psychiatric inpatient setting, patients are highly activity-restricted, which may have impacted results.

Discussion

- AES and MEC do not appear to be strong markers of anhedonia or other mood-related behavior restrictions, at least within a forensic inpatient setting.

Future Directions

- Replication in outpatient samples could further examine whether AES and MEC scales would be related to mood disorders in unrestricted samples. Exploration in gender groups is also needed.

References

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