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GROUP PERSONALITY PROFILE RELATED TO ASPECTS OF ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOR

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This study was based on a doctoral dissertation submitted by the author to the faculty of the Graduate School of Fordham University and was conducted under the mentorship of Fr. Joseph G. Keegan, S. J., Chairman of the Department of Psychology.
—EDITOR.

INTRODUCTION

This study set out to obtain an objective personality description of a male, adult prison population. It was held that such a description might serve several purposes one of them being that of an index to the personality make-up of criminal offenders as a group. Such an index could, for example, be employed in the preliminary screening of potential offenders in a military induction center.

That there was need of determining whether or not a discriminating personality description could be obtained is evidenced by the fact that there are those who seriously question that there are personality differences between offenders and non-offenders. A review of the literature revealed that the one test which gave the most promise of giving an objective and discriminating personality description of offenders was the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory. This test is composed of a number of scales or variables and the primary objective of this study was to determine if any of these variables correspond differentially to certain salient aspects of anti-social behavior. If they did, then the personality description might be said to contain indices of these aspects.

Based on the findings of investigators in the field of criminal behavior the following four aspects or factors of criminal behavior were selected for study:

1. History of repeated criminal offenses.
2. Addiction to alcohol or narcotics.
3. Poor work record in society.
4. Poor familial relationships.

PROCEDURE

The test used in this study is the Group Form of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, generally abbreviated to read MMPI. In brief, it consists of 14 scales. Three of these have to do with its validity; one, a non-clinical scale, aims to measure a tendency to social withdrawal; one acts as a suppressor variable; and nine are meant to show similarity of response of subjects taking the test to that of a sample of persons clinically diagnosed as belonging to certain psychiatric categories. The norms of the nine clinical scales are based on a cross-section of a non-psychiatric population. The test is available in card or individual form in which 550 statements

are printed on separate cards or in booklet or group form so that large groups can be tested. The booklet form contains 566 items, 16 being duplicated to facilitate scoring.

The following abbreviations are used in this study for the designated scales: L for Lie, F for Validity, Hs for Hypochondriasis, D for Depression, Hy for Hysteria, Pd for Psychopathic Deviate, Mf for Masculinity-Femininity, Pa for Paranoia, Pt for Psychasthenia, Sc for Schizophrenia, Ma for Hypomania and Si for Social Introversion. The nine scales from Hy to Ma are generally designated as the clinical scales.

The subjects used in this study were the first 100 white and 100 Negro native-born inmates received in Sing Sing prison on and after a specified date who met certain requisites. The requisites were that they be literate, attain on the Army General Classification Test (AGCT) a score of 70 or higher, and on whom valid MMPI profiles were obtained.

The Group Form of the MMPI was administered to these subjects within two weeks after their reception in prison. Test forms with raw scores of over 30 on the Question scale, 7 and over on the L scale and 17 and over on the F scale were discarded. Appropriate scales were corrected for K. A social history sheet containing all necessary data, including criminal record, was prepared on each subject used in the study.

In general, in comparing the various groups the following procedure was followed: Mean AGCT scores and mean raw scores on the scales of the MMPI were computed, as were standard deviations, standard errors of means, standard errors of differences between means, and t-ratios. T-scores on the MMPI scales were determined for all subjects as well as mean T-scores for the different groups studied.

RESULTS

Social Data

Altogether 298 inmates received in prison were tested and of these 104 valid MMPI profiles were obtained for whites and 105 for Negroes. In each group only the first 100 in order of reception in prison who met certain requisites were used as subjects. After a minor adjustment the white and Negro groups were reasonably equated on a socio-economic basis using the civil occupation of the subject as the criterion. Occupational categories recommended by Goodenough¹ were used as guides. The white and Negro groups were also found to be similar with respect to educational background as indicated by the highest school grade completed. A review of Table I will reveal how closely equated the white and Negro groups are in social background.

Of the total group of two hundred inmates, 102 are single, i.e., never married, and 61 are separated or divorced from their wives. Considering the mean age in years, which is 30.16, the number of men not living in a stable, marital relationship is obviously abnormally high. Many of the single men, as well as the separated and divorced men, were living before their arrest in illicit relationships. Although a broken home is not here being put forth as a factor associated with anti-social behavior it is note-

¹ GOODENOUGH, F. *The relations of the intelligence of pre-school children to the occupations of their fathers.* AMER. J. PSYCHOL., 1928, 40, 284-294.

TABLE I
SOCIAL DATA OF PRISON INMATES USED AS SUBJECTS IN THIS STUDY

Social Data	Total Group (200)	Whites (100)	Negroes (100)
Mean Age in Years.....	30.16	31.30	29.02
Mean School Grades Completed.....	8.37	8.32	8.42
Occupational Categories			
IV.....	42	22	20
V.....	93	44	49
VI.....	65	34	31
Home broken before 16th birthday.....	111	51	60
Marital Status			
Single (never married).....	102	47	55
Separated or divorced.....	61	33	28
Married or widowers.....	37	20	17
Presence of negative factors			
Second or more felony offender.....	97	55	42
Record of alcoholic addiction.....	55	35	20
Record of narcotic addiction.....	55	17	38
Record of addiction to both.....	3	2	1
Poor familial relationships.....	158	76	82
Poor work record.....	139	75	64
Absence of any negative factor.....	15	10	5

worthy that 55.5 percent of this prison group come from homes broken before the subject reached his sixteenth birthday.

Comparison of Negro and White Groups

Although the mean AGCT score of the white group was significantly higher at the 1 per cent level than that of the Negro group not one significant difference was found between the mean raw scores of any of the MMPI scales for the two groups. This latter finding bears out the results obtained in the study of Fry.² Since no significant differences were found on the MMPI scales between the groups of 100 whites and 100 Negroes the 200 inmates were put into one composite group. This group was hereafter treated as the group representative of the prison population.

Prison Group and Normal Group

The mean raw scores on all of the scales of the MMPI for the prison group were compared with those of the normal subjects used by the authors of the MMPI in standardizing the test. An inspection of Table II will reveal that there are group personality differences as measured by the MMPI between inmates of a state prison and the normal subjects on which the test was standardized. The prison inmates scored higher than the normal group on all of the scales of the test except L. In this study 44 profiles were discarded as invalid because of an L score of seven or higher and it is not surprising that the L score for the normal group is higher, since presumably in

² FRY, F. *A study of the personality traits of college students and of state prison inmates as measured by the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory*. J. PSYCHOL., 1949, 28, 439-449.

TABLE II
 MEAN MMPI RAW SCORES, STANDARD DEVIATIONS AND t-RATIOS OF DIFFERENCES
 BETWEEN NORMAL MALES AND 200 STATE PRISON INMATES

Scales on MMPI	Means		Standard Deviations		Number of Normals	t-Ratios
	Normals	Inmates	Normals	Inmates		
L	4.05	3.57	2.89	1.52	294	2.40*
F	3.88	5.66	4.24	3.76	111	2.79**
K	13.45	13.61	5.66	4.64	274	.35
Hs & .5K	11.34	13.28	3.90	4.62	274	4.73**
D	16.63	21.34	4.18	4.79	294	11.21**
Hy	16.49	19.94	5.51	5.00	345	7.50**
Pd & .4K	19.30	27.56	4.11	4.08	274	21.74**
Mf	20.44	23.72	5.13	4.80	117	5.56**
Pa	8.06	9.72	3.56	3.42	293	5.35**
Pt & 1K	22.95	27.26	4.88	5.68	274	8.62**
Sc & 1K	22.26	26.30	5.21	6.35	274	7.48**
Ma & .2K	17.00	21.56	3.87	4.11	274	12.32**
Si	25.00	26.87	9.58	8.75	193	1.99*

* Significant at the .05 level.

** Significant at the .01 level.

establishing the norms no profile was discarded because of a high L score. With respect to the higher F score of the inmates the literature indicates a tendency of F to rise with Sc and it would be expected that a deviant group, all of whose clinical scores are higher than the normal group, would also obtain a higher F score.

There was no reason for anticipating that K would be higher or lower for the inmates and the fact that no difference was found between the two groups on this scale needs no explanation. However, since the K score for the prison group is practically the same as that of the normal group the indication is that as a group the inmates were not overly defensive or excessively self-critical.

It is noteworthy that with the exception of K there are significant differences between the inmates and the normals on all of the scales of the MMPI and these differences are very significant on the nine clinical scales. The greatest t-Ratio by far is found on the Pd scale and the next greatest on the Ma scale. The basic hypothesis of this study, that there are group personality differences as measured by the MMPI between inmates of a state prison and the group on which the test was standardized, has been upheld. Associated with this first hypothesis was the one that at least two scales of the MMPI, viz., Pd and Ma, would be significantly elevated over the norms and that, too, has been sustained.

The question naturally arises here as to how similar the prison group is in socio-economic background to the normal group. Because published data on the MMPI give insufficient information on socio-economic background of subjects, personal communications were sent to one of the authors of the MMPI, Dr. Starke R. Hathaway, in order to obtain more. The data forwarded by Dr. Hathaway indicated that the normal group is similar to the prison group in age and in both occupational and educational background. However, the normal subjects were for the most part

natives of Minnesota with a rural background as compared with the subjects of this study who were mostly urbanites from the New York Metropolitan area. It is not conceivable that the minor differences in background which do exist could be responsible for the very significant differences found on the clinical scales of the MMPI between these two groups.

Effect of Intelligence on Test Results

From the entire group the 27 percent having the highest scores and the 27 percent having the lowest scores on the AGCT were selected for comparison using all the MMPI scales except the Question scale. This was done in order to determine if intelligence was operating as a factor. No significant difference was found on the Pd scale but the 27 percent with the highest AGCT scores were significantly higher at a 1 per cent level on the Mf and Hy scales than the lowest 27 percent. On the other hand the 27 percent with the lowest AGCT scores were significantly higher at a 5 percent level on the Sc and Ma scales than the highest 27 percent.

The finding that the highest in intelligence score higher on the scale Mf is in general accord with Fry's study mentioned earlier; he found that college males, presumably those in the higher intelligence levels, score higher than prison inmates on only one scale, viz., the Mf. Brown³ has also found that college males have the tendency to score high on the Mf scale as well as the Hy scale. Gilliland and Colgin⁴ in their study of college males, likewise found a mean Mf score as well as a Hy score higher than the norms and it was their conclusion that the norms of the test are too high for college students.

It is not known whether the high Mf score found among the highest 27 percent is related to higher intelligence and broader cultural interests as such, or whether it is an indicator of possible sexual maladjustment in this group. Suffice it to say that the difference found on the Mf scale as well as those on the three other scales should be investigated further to determine whether they are peculiar to a prison population or are common to other selected samples of the male population.

Responsiveness of Scales to Presence of Factors

In all of the following sub-group comparisons the MMPI scales used are the nine clinical scales and in none of the sub-group comparisons was there found a significant difference between mean AGCT scores.

First felony offenders were compared with those convicted of one or more felonies. The multiple felony offenders scored significantly higher at a 1 percent level than the first felony offenders on the scales Pd and Ma. The difference in composition between the above two groups is one of degree, that is, one group is composed of subjects who have been convicted of one felony whereas the other is composed of those convicted of two or more. Based on the rationale of the test and the findings of previous

³ BROWN, H. S. *Similarities and Differences in college populations on the Multiphasic*. J. APPL. PSYCHOL., 1948, 32, 541-549.

⁴ GILLILAND, A. and COLGIN, R. *Norms, reliability and forms of the MMPI*. J. CONSULT. PSYCHOL., 1951, 15, 435-438.

investigators, particularly those of Hathaway and Monachesi⁵, the two scales which should best differentiate these two groups are the Pd and the Ma. It was anticipated that recidivists as a group would be more psychopathic and hypomanic as defined in the manual of the test and the results here obtained confirm this. It is considered noteworthy that in this dichotomy the group having the negative factor of multiple offenses in its background is significantly differentiated from the group lacking it on the scales of the MMPI which the authors of the test indicate are responsive to the presence of antisocial tendencies. It is true that these two scales were set up to measure such tendencies and consequently the results obtained should have been anticipated. The results were anticipated, but this does not lessen the value of the test as a useful instrument in detecting anti-social tendencies.

The entire group was sub-divided into alcoholic addicts, narcotic addicts and non-addicts. Addiction to alcohol was determined by reference to a subject's criminal record, his social reputation as revealed in official reports, and his excessive use of alcohol during the period of time, usually one or more days, immediately preceding the offense for which he was convicted. There had to be present before a subject was classified as an alcoholic at least two of the three above-mentioned indicators, viz., criminal record of arrests for intoxication or arrests for other offenses while intoxicated, social reputation as an alcoholic, or excessive use of alcohol before commission of offense. Addiction to narcotics was generally determined by medical examination in the county where the offense occurred. A prior history of narcotic addiction for a short period of time and with absence of addiction at the time of the offense was not construed as narcotic addiction. Three inmates were excluded from all three above-mentioned groups because at the time of the offense they were addicted to both alcohol and narcotics.

Alcoholic addicts were compared with narcotic addicts and the alcoholics were found significantly higher on the Pd scale at the 5 percent level. Because of this difference the two groups were treated separately in comparing them with non-addicts. Alcoholics were compared with non-addicts and the former were found significantly higher at the 1 percent level than the latter on the Pd scale. Narcotic addicts were compared with non-addicts and no significant differences were found between them on any of the nine clinical scales. In the comparison of alcoholics with non-addicts it was noted on the Mf scale that the difference in scores between the two groups is slight and that the Mf scores for both groups are relatively low. Hewitt⁶ in his study on alcoholics, also found a low Mf score. He considered his finding not in accord with the theory that alcoholics are latent homosexuals and to him it seemed likely that neither latent nor overt homosexuality is in general characteristic of alcohol addicts.

The entire group was divided into those having a poor work record and those having a good work record at the time of the offense. Those employed nine months or more of the twelve months preceding their offense were considered to have a good work record. On the Sc and the Ma scales those with a poor work record scored

⁵ HATHAWAY, S. and MONACHESI, E. ANALYZING AND PREDICTING JUVENILE DELINQUENCY WITH THE MMPI. Minneapolis: Univ. Minnesota Press, 1953.

⁶ HEWITT, C. A *personality study of alcohol addiction*. QUART. J. STUD. ALCOHOL, 1943, 4, 368-386.

higher at the 5 percent level. This finding is believed to be consistent with the rationale of the test. With respect to the higher Sc score of those with a poor work record, if we may presume that the more withdrawn type of individual would be less successful in making certain inter-personal adjustments necessary in gainful employment, it would be expected that they would score more deviantly on this scale than those having a good work record.

The entire group was divided into those having a record of poor familial relationships and those having a record of good familial relationships. Single men were divided into those whose adjustment with close relatives before the offense was satisfactory and those whose adjustment was unsatisfactory. Living with close relatives and contributing to the support of the household indicated satisfactory adjustment whereas living in a furnished room apart from close relatives and leading an unstable type of existence indicated unsatisfactory adjustment. Married men were broken down into those living in a stable marital relationship and those who were not. Indicators of unsatisfactory marital adjustment included an unquestionably bad reputation as a husband or father, court order to support family and separation from wife or divorce. Those with a record of poor familial relationships were compared with those having adequate relationships. The former were found significantly higher at the 1 percent level on the Ma scale and at the 5 percent level on the Sc scale. Just as in the case of the poor work record group the presence of a higher Sc score in poor familial relationships is consistent with what is known of schizophrenia.

The entire group was divided into those having one or more of the four negative factors in their background and into those having none. These two groups were compared and the former scored significantly higher than the latter at the 1 percent level on the Pd and Sc scales and at the 5 percent level on the Pt and Ma scales as inspec-

TABLE III
MEAN AGGT AND RAW MMPI SCORES, STANDARD DEVIATIONS AND t-RATIOS OF THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN 15 INMATES WITH RECORD OF NO NEGATIVE FACTORS AND 185 INMATES WITH RECORD OF ONE OR MORE NEGATIVE FACTORS

Tests	Means		Standard Deviations		t-Ratios
	No Neg. Factor	One or More Neg. Factor	No Neg. Factor	One or More Neg. Factor	
AGCT	104.07	105.90	16.37	15.69	.40
Scales on MMPI					
Hs & .5K	13.80	13.23	5.17	4.83	.40
D	20.40	21.42	3.93	4.82	.92
Hy	21.20	19.84	4.20	5.17	1.15
Pd & .4K	24.87	27.78	3.00	4.07	3.42**
Mf	22.07	23.86	3.94	4.81	1.60
Pa	8.87	9.78	2.74	3.47	1.18
Pt & 1K	24.93	27.44	4.30	5.78	2.04*
Sc & 1K	22.93	26.58	4.27	6.38	2.97**
Ma & .2K	19.33	21.74	3.44	4.20	2.48*

* Significant at the .05 level.

** Significant at the .01 level.

tion of Table III will reveal. Thus in a relatively homogeneous population we find that four scales of the MMPI significantly differentiated those with a comparatively good social background from those lacking in one or more aspects of such a background. This finding is entirely in accord with the rationale of the test. The more socially deviant individuals are found to be more psychologically deviant as far as the MMPI is concerned, or to put it in another way, higher scores on four of the MMPI scales are found related to the presence of negative factors. Variables of the test have been found responsive to factors associated with anti-social behavior and may be used as indicators of potential anti-social behavior.

Individual Identification

The number of subjects of this study identified as psychopaths on the basis of a significantly high T-score on the Pd scale was determined. Of the prison population studied 62 percent had a Pd score of 69 or higher. There were 40.5 percent who had a 69 T-score or higher which was the highest score of the nine clinical scales. There were 90.5 percent who had a Pd score of 60 or higher. Forty-eight percent had a 60 T-score or higher which was the highest of the nine clinical scales. There were 53.5 percent whose highest score was a Pd score of 69 or more or a Ma score of 70 or more. Finally, there were 64.5 percent whose highest score was a Pd or Ma T-score of 60 or higher.

Depending on the criteria used the MMPI identified from 40.5 percent to 90.5 percent of the prison population as possibly belonging in the conduct disorders group, familiarly known as psychopaths. On an individual basis the test does not identify all those in the prison population as being psychopaths, and on the other hand there is no reason for believing that all those in the population studied are psychopaths. A note of caution is in order here and that is that the MMPI is not to be employed as the sole instrument in a diagnosis of any kind. It is meant to be a diagnostic aid and the final diagnosis of any particular case should only be made by the experienced clinician on an individualized basis.

T-Scores

For more convenient comparison with standardization norms in which the mean T-scores are approximately 50 and with other studies on the MMPI, mean T-scores were computed on all of the groups for the nine clinical scales. The Pd scale has the highest T-score in each group studied. In other words, no matter how the entire group was divided each group could be identified as being a prison group by reason of the fact that the Pd scale has the highest T-score. The second highest T-score in each group is that of the Ma scale with the exception of those having no negative factors, first felony offenders, good work record and good familial relationships groups. Exclusive of the no negative factors group, the groups which have D as the second highest scale have Ma as the third highest. The most deviant groups are those in which are found one or more of the negative factors being studied and the least deviant group is that in which none of the factors being studied is found. A graphic presentation of the T-score profile of the entire group studied may be found in Figure 1.

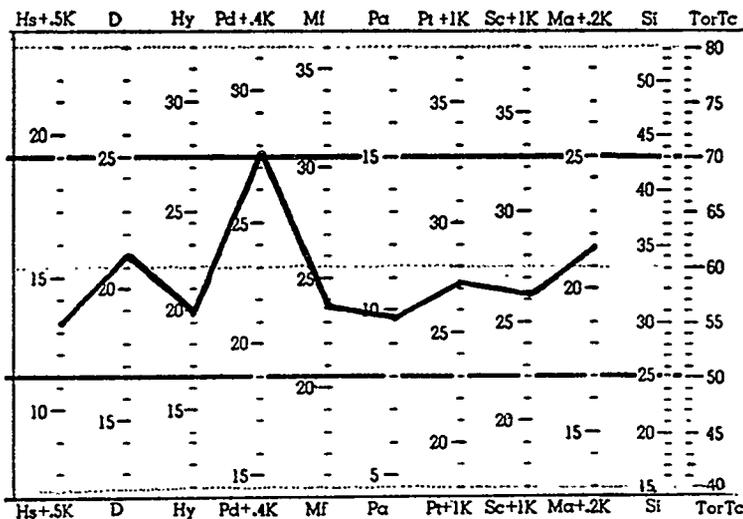


FIG. 1. Profile of 200 State Prison Inmates on MMPI Clinical Scales

The high D scores obtained throughout the different groups studied warrant some comment. Ordinarily a high D score would not be expected in the psychopathic type of profile. In the Manual⁷ of the test the authors have this to say of D: "A high D score indicates poor morale of the emotional type with a feeling of uselessness and inability to assume a normal optimism with regard to the future." This statement could be well said to describe the feelings of a group of men tested within two weeks after their reception in a state prison. It is felt that the high D scores obtained in such a situation are indicative more of a reactive depression than a true depression.

With the exception of D the four highest scales in the total population profile are Pd, Ma, Pt and Sc. These are the same scales which significantly differentiated between the group most unlike the rest of the prison population in background, the no negative factors group, and the rest of the population. These are the scales found most discriminatingly responsive to factors associated with criminal behavior. Stated differently, they measure more than the other scales the presence of factors associated with criminal behavior. Because of this it is believed that the profile presented in Figure 1 in which, with the exception of D, the highest scales are Pd, Ma, Pt and Sc is representative of a prison population. It is therefore suggested that this profile, with the exception of D whose elevation is more than likely due to situational circumstances, might be a useful guide in group testing.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The problem was to determine if the MMPI would give an objectively descriptive and discriminating profile of a state prison group and whether or not this profile contained variables which are responsive to factors associated with criminal behavior. Since the prison group was a mixed one of whites and Negroes an adjunctive problem

⁷ HATHAWAY, S. and MCKINLEY, J. MINNESOTA MULTIPHASIC PERSONALITY INVENTORY, MANUAL, (Revised) New York: Psychol. Corp., 1951.

was first to find out whether or not there were any differences in personality description according to the MMPI between the whites and Negroes. Although a difference in intelligence level was found between these two groups, no significant difference on any scale of the MMPI was found between them. The whites and Negroes were then put into one composite group which numbered two hundred prison inmates.

The prison group was then compared with the normal group on which the MMPI was standardized, and very significant differences on all of the clinical scales of the MMPI were found between the two groups. The greatest difference was found on the Pd scale and the next greatest on the Ma scale. The prison population profile obtained is therefore a discriminating one, and one in conformity with the rationale of the test. The basic hypothesis of this study that there are personality differences between a prison group and a normal group has been upheld as well as the associated hypothesis that the scales Pd and Ma would be the most responsive to a criminal population.

Part of the over-all problem was to find out whether certain factors observed as occurring in criminal behavior affected the personality description obtained. Stated differently and from the viewpoint of validating the results obtained, the problem was to determine whether or not the MMPI scales were discriminatingly responsive to the presence of certain factors found by many investigators to be associated with criminal behavior. The factors studied did affect the MMPI scores in a way consistent with the findings of investigators in the field of criminology. In each case, except for the factor of narcotic addiction, the group having the negative factor scored significantly higher on one or more of the clinical scales than the group lacking it. Complete absence of the negative factors resulted in the least deviant of any profile obtained, but even this least deviant profile had its highest score on the Pd scale.

The prison population MMPI profile obtained is considered a discriminating one and one that might be employed as a guide in group screening. It is suggested that the Group Form of the MMPI might be used in routinely screening all recruits for military service in order to pick out potential offenders for a more thorough psychological examination. Because of the limitations of group norms and of any personality test it is recommended that final diagnosis in any particular case be always left in the hands of the experienced clinician.

The following conclusions may be drawn from the findings of this study:

1. No significant difference on the MMPI scales was found between white and Negro prison inmates.
2. Very significant differences on all of the clinical scales of the MMPI were found between the prison inmates and the normals on whom the test was standardized.
3. Presence of factors generally found in the background of prison inmates did affect some of the scales of the MMPI in a way consistent with the rationale of the test.