

FIFTY HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

IN

USING THE MMPI/MMPI-A

WITH ADOLESCENTS

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Five years after the MMPI was published in 1940 research on the test was initiated with adolescents. Even though the MMPI was originally developed for adults and the content focused upon predominantly adult problems the MMPI came to be widely researched and used with adolescents. This Highlight File notes some of the special contributions that were made showing that the MMPI scales are appropriate, reliable, and valid in predicting behavior pertinent to understanding symptoms and behavior problems of adolescents. A number of the major research contributions and their findings/implications are noted here. Topics include: validity research, scale development, behavioral prediction in adolescents, and generalization across different populations/cultures.

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1945 After Hathaway and McKinley began publishing the MMPI scales in 1940 Dora Capwell conducted the first study using the MMPI inventory with adolescents. Her classic study demonstrated the utility of the test in assessing personality problems of adolescent female delinquents.
- 1953 Hathaway, Hastings, Capwell & Bell provided a detailed evaluation on the utility of the MMPI in assessing adolescent girls who were delinquent.
- 1960 Ball & Carroll studied adolescents, mostly 9th-grade public school students, with the full booklet of the MMPI. They reported that the "cannot say" scores on the MMPI were associated with sex, intelligence, and academic achievement. The girls tended to answer all or almost all of the items. It was also found that students

- with low IQs and below average grades received significantly higher "cannot say" scores.
- 1953 Hathaway and Monachesi published a summary of their classic research project demonstrating the value of the MMPI scales at assessing delinquent adolescents' behavior.
- 1961 Hathaway & Monachesi published their book *An atlas of juvenile MMPI profiles* that provided extensive case examples illustrating the utility of the MMPI scales in assessing adolescents.
- 1962 Rowley & Stone conducted an investigation to determine the ability of the MMPI to discriminate between adolescents diagnosed with psychiatric problems and those judged to be delinquent. The delinquent group scored higher on Pd and L. The profile patterning of both groups was similar with the emotionally disturbed group appearing more grossly maladjusted as reflected in higher K, Hs, Hy, Mf, and Sc scores.
- 1962 Ball demonstrated that the MMPI was a useful instrument in the study of the personality patterns of nonconforming and conforming groups of adolescents. His studies provided considerable substantiation of the validity of the MMPI with respect to the measurement of personality in a nonclinical adolescent population.
- 1963 Hathaway & Monachesi published the book "*Adolescent personality and behavior: MMPI patterns of normal, delinquent, drop-out and other outcomes* that provided an overview of their extensive empirical evaluation of adolescent performance on the MMPI.
- 1965 Butcher validated the measurement of MMPI personality characteristics of adolescent boys in a general population. Teacher and peer ratings were used to form 4 groups of Ss who differed on degree of expressed aggression. Aggression groups consisted of High Aggression, High Middle Aggression, Low Middle Aggression, and Low Aggression. High-Aggression boys (although not actually delinquent) were found to be similar to delinquent boys in personality—generally rebellious, schizoid, and excitable.
- 1966 Stone, Rowley and Macqueen studied MMPI scores of adolescents who came to a general hospital with somatic symptoms and who were found to have an organic disease compared with the scores of adolescents who came with similar symptoms for which no organic basis could be found and who were ultimately diagnosed as having a functional or psychogenic disorder. Both boys and girls in the functional group had significantly higher mean scores on the 1st 3 scales of the MMPI (Hs, D and Hy), and the girls had a higher mean score on Scale 7.
- 1968 Heilbrun studied the degree of interference produced by simulated maternal censure and control with the cognitive performance of late adolescents who

- perceived their mothers as controlling and hostile. These views were used to identify Ss who had adapted to these aversive maternal cues and those who had not. Ss with low-control-high nurturance mothers served as controls. Comparison of disrupted and nondisrupted males on the MMPI found disrupted Ss higher on Ma and nondisrupted Ss higher on D. Inner- directedness (high D) was associated with adaptation to aversive maternal cues, outer-directedness (high Ma), with nonadaptation.
- 1969 Hafner, and colleagues provided an overview and evaluation of parent personality problems (as assessed by the MMPI) and childhood disorder.
- 1972 Marks & Briggs developed a set of adolescent norm tables for the MMPI in an effort to provide more interpretable norms for use of the test with adolescents.
- 1974 Marks, Seeman & Haller developed an actuarial interpretation system for the MMPI with adolescents using adolescent clinical and normal populations.
- 1978 Harper & Richman, using the MMPI with disabled adolescents, found that the type of disability has differential effects on adolescent personality characteristics.
- 1984 Wolfson & Erbaugh conducted a study describing the utility of using the MacAndrew substance abuse scale with adolescents.
- 1984 Archer provided a valuable review of the use of the MMPI with adolescents and the issues surrounding using this instrument with adolescents.
- 1986 Williams described how to use the MMPI with adolescents, including a description of how to provide feedback to young people and their families.
- 1989 Williams and Butcher demonstrated the utility and validity of the MMPI clinical scales in assessing adolescents in an empirical validity study. Surprisingly, the validity of code type descriptors was not demonstrated. Butcher and Williams recommended a scale interpretation approach and provided the basis for developing a separate adolescent form of the MMPI in the MMPI Restandardization Project.
- 1989 Colligan & Offord empirically demonstrated the need for contemporary adolescent norms.
- 1992 Butcher, Williams, et al. developed the MMPI-A for assessing adolescents and published the *MMPI-A manual for administration, scoring, and interpretation*. The developers added adolescent-specific items to the revised MMPI-2 inventory pool and reduced the number of items to be more acceptable to adolescents.
- 1992 Williams et al. developed a set of adolescent specific content scales to supplement the traditional MMPI clinical scales.

- 1992 Butcher and Williams developed an empirically-based computer interpretation system (Minnesota Reports) for assessing adolescents with the MMPI-A.
- 1994 Weed, Butcher & Williams developed the MMPI-A alcohol and drug problem scales: Alcohol and Drug Problem Acknowledgments Scale (ACK) and Alcohol and Drug Problem Proneness Scale (PRO).
- 1996 Pena, Megargee & Brody conducted an extensive empirical validation study of the use of the MMPI-A with delinquent adolescent populations.
- 1997 Cheung & Ho translated, normed and standardized the Chinese version of the MMPI-A for Hong Kong.
- 1997 Sherwood, Ben-Porath and Williams developed the MMPI-A Content Component scales to provide valuable information that the adolescent has acknowledged in the test.
- 1997 Gallucci evaluated the correlates of 16 scales for the identification of substance abuse (SA) with the adolescent form of the MMPI-A with therapists ratings. Point-biserial correlations were made between each scale and therapists' ratings of anticipation, ambivalence, impulsivity, sensation seeking, aggression, and substance abuse. As predicted, the scales that were previously validated on MMPI-A with adolescents in the treatment for substance abuse were reliably and positively correlated with ratings of behavioral undercontrol and substance abuse, and negatively correlated with therapist ratings of behavioral overcontrol.
- 1997 Baer and colleagues conducted evaluations of the MMPI-A validity scales in detecting random responding (1997) and underreporting of symptoms (1998).
- 1997 McNulty, Harkness, Ben-Porath, and Williams developed the PSY-5 scales for adolescents.
- 1997 Negy et al. conducted an evaluation of Mexican Americans compared with the US. Norms on MMPI-A. They found that the sample of Mexican American adolescents' performance on the Validity, Clinical, and Content scales differed minimally from the national norming group's performance, and their performance varied as a function of their levels of acculturation and socioeconomic status.
- 1998 Cashel, Rogers et al. provided a validation of the MMPI-A in assessment of adolescent delinquents.
- 1998 Kopper, Osman, et al. found that, in the assessment of suicidal risk factors in psychiatric adolescents for boys, the Depression, Psychopathic Deviate, and Hypomania scales; Alienation and Anxiety content scales; and Subjective

- Depression, Self Alienation, Imperturbability, and Amorality Harris-Lingoes subscales contributed significantly to the prediction of suicide probability.
- 1998 Arita and Baer demonstrated further the validity of a number MMPI-A Content Scales.
- 1999 Lucio-Gomez, Ampudia-Rueda and colleagues published the Mexican version of the MMPI-A.
- 1999 Cumella, Wall & Kerr-Almeida conducted an empirical evaluation of an inpatient sample of eating disordered adolescents with the MMPI-A demonstrating its utility in assessing clients in this setting.
- 2000 Sirigatti translated, normed and developed the Italian version of the MMPI-A.
- 2002 McGrath, Pogge & Stokes provided further evidence of the incremental validity of several MMPI-A content scales in an inpatient setting.
- 2002 Micucci conducted an evaluation of the accuracy of various indices involving the MMPI-A scales, Alcohol/Drug Problems Acknowledgment scale (ACK), MacAndrew's Alcoholism Scale (MAC-R, 1965), and Alcohol/Drug Problems Proneness scale for detecting substance abuse problems. In the sample, 89.9% of the cases were accurately classified by at least one of the three scales. The overall accuracy of classification was similar among males, females, Caucasians, and African Americans.
- 2002 Morton, Farris and Brenowitz found that low scores on the Mf Scale were the most frequent deviation, followed by elevations on Scales 6 (Paranoia) and 4 (Psychopathic Deviate) in a large sample of delinquents. This is consistent with previous research, although the importance of Scale 5 deviations has been little noted because of the traditional focus on scale elevations only. Classification analysis indicated that a combination of MMPI-A scales discriminated between this delinquent sample and the normative sample, with a sensitivity of 90%-95% and a specificity of 80%-95%.
- 2002 Scott and colleagues conducted a cross-cultural evaluation of the Hispanic version of the MMPI-A across five countries (Colombia, Mexico, Peru, Spain, and the US) and found a high degree of similarity across the 5 countries on the basic content and supplementary scales. This study suggests that the Hispanic MMPI-A with its established norms, is appropriate for adaptation in Spanish-speaking countries other than the US.
- 2003 Derksen, Ven Dijk and Cornelissen translated and developed the Dutch version of the MMPI-A for use in the Netherlands.
- 2003 Fariás, et al. conducted a cross-cultural validation of the MMPI-A in Mexico.

- 2003 Rinaldo & Baer conducted an empirical validity study of the MMPI-A content scales with adolescents.
- 2003 Vinet & Alarcon provided psychometric evidence for the MMPI-A's utility in assessment in Chilean samples.
- 2007 Butcher, Cabiya, Lucio and Garrido published an interpretive guide for the MMPI-2 and MMPI-A with Hispanic clients (*Assessing Hispanic clients using the MMPI-2 and MMPI-A*) that highlights the use of these instruments with minority clients.
- 2008 Peterson and Robbins studied the assessment of recidivism in adolescent delinquents. They found that both A-Conduct Problems and Scale 4 successfully predicted recidivism with the strongest relationship between A-Con and re-offense. In the regression analysis, A-Con explained 29.8% of the variance, and Scale 4 increased the predictive utility by 2.7% accounting for 32% of the variance in recidivism. Results suggest that the content of the A-Con scale may capture some of the attitudes and behaviors that characterize these high-risk adolescents.
- 2009 Cumella and O'Connor provided an up-to-date overview of the MMPI-A application with adolescent populations and illustrated its use in assessment.
- 2011 Williams & Butcher published an introductory interpretive guide for the MMPI-A, *A beginner's guide to the MMPI-A*, for introducing psychologists to the interpretation of the test.
- 2018 Butcher published an updated overview of the MMPI-A and a critique of the MMPI-A-RF

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