CADOW

THE MMPI AND CPI AS MEASURES OF A PRISON TREATMENT PROGRAM

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THE MMPI AND CPI AS MEASURES OF A PRISON TREATMENT PROGRAM[1] [2]

BARBARA CADOW

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[2]Based on a thesis submitted to the Department of Psychology, Florida State University in partial fulfillment of the Master of Science degree.

EDITOR'S FOREWORD

Few issues are more controversial than the effectiveness of prison rehabilitation programs. The issue has became so heated that the National Academy of Sciences through its Committee on Research in Criminal Justice has recently established a panel charged with determining the current state of knowledge on the rehabilitation of criminal offenders.

The present study makes a contribution to that body of knowledge. Cadow points out that one of the problems obscuring the question of the effects of prison programs has been an overreliance on recidivism as the criterion by which all programs should be assessed. However, recidivism is determined not only by the personality characteristics and abilities of the discharged offender, but also by myriad social and situational factors beyond the control of correctional authorities. She argues that multiple criteria should be used. For example, reading programs first should be evaluated on the basis of whether the inmates learned to read and only secondarily on the basis of recidivism.

In this study, Cadow explores the use of two personality assessment inventories in evaluating the nature of change over the course of incarceration at the Federal Correctional Institution, Tallahassee, Florida. In collaboration with Edwin Megargee, whose behavior research program at Tallahassee has been described in previous issues of *FCI Research Reports,* Cadow compared the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) and California Personality Inventory (CPI) profiles obtained on intake with those obtained just prior to departure from the institution.

Despite the claims of some extremists, no institution or program has uniformly positive or negative results, and prisons are no exception. Comparison of the overall test profiles showed that some inmates improved, others became worse, and still others showed no discernible change; comparison of mean scores showed overall improvement in some areas and deterioration in others. By and large, positive changes were the most frequent.

As Cadow points out, the present study is only the first step. Future research is necessary to determine the generality of these results and to identify, if possible, the factors associated with positive and negative change. Nevertheless, the present study represents an important step toward bringing empirical data to bear on the issue of the effectiveness of correctional rehabilitation programs.

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BARBARA CADOW
Florida State University

INTRODUCTION

Prison rehabilitation is a controversial issue. Opponents of prison treatment programs claim that they are ineffective (Martinson, 1974), damage psychological health (Menninger, 1968) and create more criminal activity (Clark, 1970). Proponents of rehabilitation claim that most offenders do not return to prison (Glaser, 1969) and that prison rehabilitation must be improved, as prisons will be around for a long time (Morris, 1974).

Evaluation of treatment programs is no simple task. First, different criteria are often used - recidivism, psychological improvement, vocational goals. Recidivism, probably the most widely used and most socially relevant criteria, has special problems. Definitions of recidivism vary, ranging from technical parole violations to return to prison for new offenses. Also, ex-offenders are more closely watched than other suspects and are consequently more likely to be arrrested. Moreover, recidivism is a function of many social factors outside the control of prison authorities, so the evaluation of treatment solely by reference to recidivism is misleading.

Methodological problems pervade this area of research. First, inmate change must be adequately defined. Definitions should coincide with the goals of the institution, which could be rehabilitation, deterrence, retribution, incapacitation or punishment. Secondly, reliable measures and correct statistics must be used. Other relevant factors, such as staff attitudes toward research and idiosyncracies of particular institutions must be recognized.

The present study was designed to determine change in personality as a function of incarceration of offenders in a treatment-oriented prison.

Background

Data for the present research study were collected as part of a larger program of research being conducted at the Federal Correctional Institution, Tallahassee, Florida (FCI), a medium security prison for approximately 550 young adult males. In the project, a

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[2]Based on a thesis submitted to the Department of Psychology, Florida State University in partial fulfillment of the Master of Science degree.

battery of psychological tests were administered during the initial admissions and orientation period and again prior to each inmate's release.

Subjects

The total population for this larger study is a group of 1344 consecutive admissions to the FCI from November, 1970 to November, 1972. At the time of committment, the average age of the residents was 22.5 years, ranging from 17 to 30 years. Sixty-four percent of the population was White, 35 percent was Black. The group's average length of stay was 11.6 months, with a standard deviation of 7.4 months.

Treatment

Individual treatment programs were developed by a team consisting of a caseworker, educational specialist, psychologist and correctional counselor. Inmates participated in developing their own plan, which could include education, vocational training, on-the-job training, group and individual psychotherapy or counseling, religious resources, medical care and recreation.

Personality Measures

The Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) was used as one measure of change in the treatment program. Originally designed as an aid in psychiatric diagnosis, it measures factors associated with psychological and social maladjustment. It has become the most widely used objective personality test ever developed.

The California Psychological Inventory (CPI), consisting of questions relating to typical behavior patterns, feelings, and opinions, as well as attitudes concerning social, ethnical and family matters (Megargee, 1972), was also used to measure change.

Purpose

The primary research question was: What is the nature and extent of personality change as measured by the MMPI and CPI form entry to exit?

Procedure

From the overall population all newly admitted inmates (as opposed to those transferred from other institutions) who had valid MMPIs and CPIs were selected. The MMPI sample included 292 White inmates and 190 Black inmates; the CPI sample included 157 Whites and 78 Blacks.

Two procedures were used in order to answer the primary question. First, intake and exit MMPI and CPI profiles were generated in order to be examined globally. An experienced clinical psychologist compared the two profiles blindly and judged whether there was a difference between the two. If it turned out that the healthier profile was the exit profile, improvement was evident. If the better profile was the intake, it was concluded that the inmate worsened. MMPIs and CPIs were examined separately.

The present investigator rated 5 percent of the profiles to check for reliability of the previous judgement; 91 percent agreement was found for the MMPI and 90 percent for the CPI.

The next step was to compare pre- and post-test scores on a scale-by-scale basis. Those profiles judged invalid by the global profile comparison were not

included in any scale-by-scale comparisons.

Each scale-by-scale analysis was carried out on Blacks and Whites separately because it has been established that Blacks score differently than Whites on the MMPI (Stanton, 1956; Caldwell, 1959; Murphree *et al.*, 1962; Gynther, 1972; Costello, *et al.*, 1973; Elion and Megargee, 1975 and Davis, 1975), although the manner in which they differ is not consistent.

A secondary study was also conducted in order to explore the question: Is change a function of length of stay at FCI?

For the purpose of this study the inmates were subdivided into three categories according to their length of incarceration: short (3-9 months), average (9-15 months) and long (more than 15 months).

This ancilliary procedure was exploratory only, as it was confounded from the begining by non-random selection for groups and other influences such as parole board decisions, sentencing, transfer and institutional behavior.

The same two methods mentioned earlier, global and scale-by-scale, were used to answer the second question.

RESULTS

Nature and Extent of Change

Global ratings. On the MMPI, 53 percent of the total population improved 37 percent got worse and 10 percent showed no change. On the CPI, 43 percent of total population improved, 32 percent got worse and 24 percent showed no change.

When the MMPI results were broken down into group on the basis of race, the results were similar for Blacks and Whites (See Figure 1).

Scale-by-scale. Using the repeated measures analysis of variance, determining whether inmates improved from pre-to post-testing by scales was accomplished (See Tables 1 and 2). On the MMPI, Whites improved their scores collectively on all of the scales that were significantly different from the pre-test. Among these scores were: *D* (Depression), *Hy* (Hysteria), *Pd* (Psychopathic deviate), *Pt* (Psychasthenia), and *Si* (Social introversion). They increased on *K* (Correction) which denotes improvement.[3]

Blacks decreased (improved) on these MMPI scales: *D*, *Pd* and *Pt*. The Black sample increased on *K*, *Mf* and *L*. Decreases on *L* and *Mf* mean that scores were more deviant from the norms, but these increases were not within the abnormal range.

The White's scores increased (improved) on the following CPI scales: *Do* (Dominance), *Sy* (Sociability), *Sp* (Social presence), *Ie* (Intellectual efficiency) and *Py* (Psychological mindedness). Their scores decreased on four scales: *Re* (Responsibility), *So* (Socialization), *Cm* (Communality), and *Fe* (Femininity).

On the CPI, Blacks increased their scores significantly on five scales: *Sp*, *To* (Tolerance), *Ai* (Achievement via

[3]See Sweetland and Quay (1953) and Dahlstrom, Welsh and Dahlstrom (1972) for details.

FIGURE 1

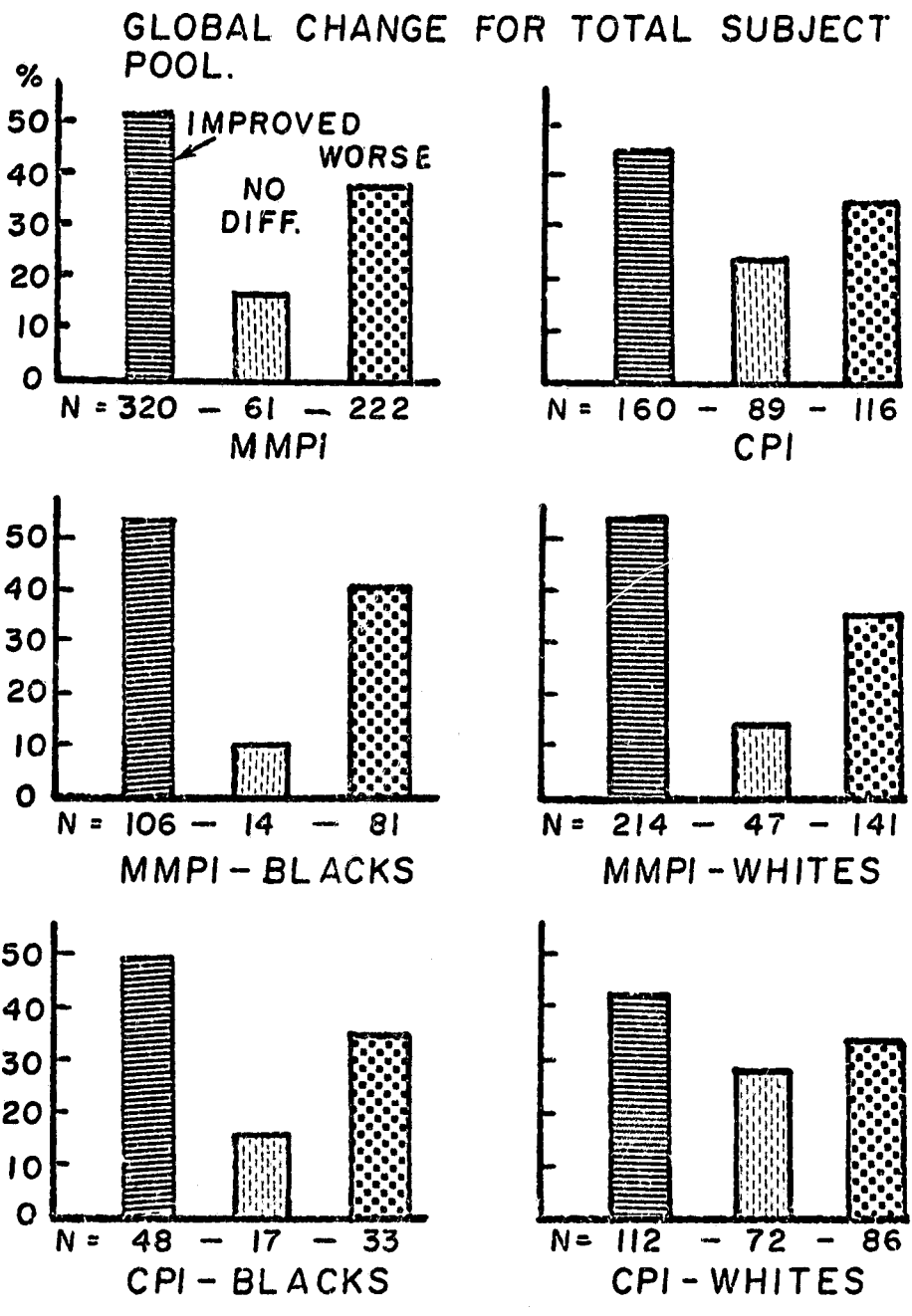
GLOBAL CHANGE FOR TOTAL SUBJECT POOL.
%
50
40
30
20
10
0
IMPROVED
WORSE
NO DIFF.
N = 320 — 61 — 222
MMPI
N = 160 — 89 — 116
CPI
N = 106 — 14 — 81
MMPI - BLACKS
N = 214 — 47 — 141
MMPI - WHITES
N = 48 — 17 — 33
CPI - BLACKS
N = 112 — 72 — 86
CPI - WHITES

TABLE 1

Means and Standard Deviations of MMPI Test Scores upon Entering and Leaving Prison for Whites and Blacks (T-Scores)

Scale		Whites (N = 292)		Blacks (N = 157)	
		Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit
L	*X*	52.54	53.28	54.77	57.05**
	SD	8.89	7.96	8.58	8.94
F		62.54	63.97	70.18	71.16
		16.58	17.91	19.66	20.63
K		54.56	56.00**	53.73	56.22*
		9.55	9.42	9.09	8.98
Hs		56.14	55.04	61.84	61.41
		11.89	11.02	12.79	13.91
D		61.54	57.53**	66.32	63.72*
		12.23	10.45	11.41	11.55
Hy		59.29	57.49*	60.79	59.73
		9.67	8.88	9.77	10.12
Pd		72.49	70.36*	73.07	71.72*
		10.83	9.62	10.32	10.37
Mf		58.83	58.19	58.32	60.09**
		10.27	10.55	8.96	8.38
Pa		60.49	59.42	64.26	63.36
		12.09	10.82	14.58	14.19
Pt		61.88	57.96**	65.49	62.28*
		12.43	10.98	12.47	11.91
Sc		64.92	64.27	73.32	72.19
		17.03	16.75	18.23	19.57
Ma		65.97	65.98	69.49	69.62
		11.20	10.95	10.96	10.29
Si		51.89	50.97**	52.72	52.45
		9.48	8.31	7.48	6.74

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

TABLE 2

Means and Standards Deviations of CPI Test Scores upon Entering and Leaving Prison for Whites and Blacks (T-Scores)

Scale		Whites (N = 190)		Blacks (N = 78)	
		Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit
Do	*X*	44.99	46.41*	44.89	46.00
	SD	12.65	12.05	10.05	9.63
Cs		45.63	46.48	44.07	45.07
		11.98	10.56	10.08	9.28
Sy		47.72	48.38*	47.26	48.06
		11.24	10.62	10.03	10.02
Sp		50.89	53.63**	46.15	48.18*
		11.38	11.08	10.85	9.29
Sa		52.31	53.94**	52.31	52.36
		10.24	10.15	10.14	9.30
Wb		42.56	41.74	32.83	35.84
		16.75	17.23	18.84	17.32
Re		35.08	33.27**	32.54	32.81
		13.16	11.69	11.13	9.93
So		35.46	35.09*	37.22	38.17
		11.50	10.17	10.17	9.40
Sc		48.41	48.10	47.11	48.59
		11.23	10.87	10.15	9.73
To		41.35	42.51	33.15	37.07*
		13.51	12.44	10.94	10.90
Gi		49.94	49.70	50.94	52.27
		11.49	10.86	9.66	10.10
Cm		45.19	38.31**	33.86	31.51
		16.65	20.45	21.74	22.29
Ac		42.41	43.03	41.13	42.86
		13.63	12.82	12.09	11.99

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

TABLE 2

Means and Standards Deviations of CPI Test Scores upon Entering and Leaving Prison for Whites and Blacks (T - Scores)

Scale	Whites (N = 190)		Blacks (N = 78)	
	Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit
Ai	46.75	48.52	41.23	43.93*
	12.06	12.24	10.28	10.94
Ie	40.31	41.94*	33.21	36.89*
	15.04	14.75	12.28	13.16
Py	49.80	52.89**	47.59	49.63*
	9.95	9.04	9.92	8.54
Fx	50.93	51.83	46.89	49.67
	11.25	11.79	12.08	12.26
Fe	49.71	48.57*	55.34	54.36
	9.42	8.86	8.21	8.53

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

independence), *Ie* and *Py*. There were no decreases.

From the scale-by-scale analysis, changes were noted on several scales, the majority of them in a favorable direction. Out of 26 significantly altered scales, 20 denoted improvement.

Relationship of Changes to Length of Stay

Global ratings. Chi-square was used to determine if there was a significant change according to the length of stay at FCI. When the total population was broken down into short (1), average (2), and long (3) groups, there were no significant differences found. When the three groups were compared separately by race, the chi-square still revealed no significant differences.

Scale-by-scale comparisons. Analysis of covariance was used to compare the three groups on each of the 31 scales. Duncan's multiple range test was used to determine which groups were different from each other (See Tables 3 and 4 for adjusted means).

For Whites, *Hy* differentiated among the three groups on the MMPI. Group 2 improved significantly more than Group 3, which deteriorated.

For Blacks, scales *Hs* (Hypochondriasis), *D*, *Hy* and *K* revealed differences among groups. Group 2 improved more than Groups 1 and 3, which deteriorated.

TABLE 3

Difference between MMPI Intake and Exit Adjusted Mean Scores for Length of Stay Groups (Analysis of Covariance)

	Whites (N = 292)			Blacks (N = 157)		
Scale	Short	Average	Long	Short	Average	Long
L	.69	− .36	− .17	− .81	.96	− .14
F	.69	.07	− .59	2.23	− .50	−1.38
K	.30	−1.19	.95	−1.61	2.41	− .67*
Hs	− .16	− .35	.47	−2.23	4.61	−1.98**
D	1.57	−1.01	− .20	−1.06	3.47	−1.99*
Hy	− .20	−1.43	1.57*	−2.15	3.84	−1.42**
Pd	− .03	− .83	.84	−2.16	1.96	.13
Mf	.52	− .38	− .02	1.49	− .78	− .56
Pa	1.22	− .67	− .27	− .14	− .18	.26
Pt	1.08	− .94	.11	.23	2.09	−1.89
Sc	1.79	−1.09	− .28	1.55	1.50	−2.47
Ma	.44	− .34	− .01	.55	− .62	.07
Si	.12	1.02	−1.10	1.41	− .49	− .73

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Only two CPI scales differed among groups for the Whites - *To* and *Ai*. Group 3 improved significantly more than Groups 1 and 2 - both became worse.

Black groups differed on seven CPI scales. On scales *Sy*, *Sc*, *Gi*, *Ac* and *Ie*, Group 2 improved significantly more than Group 1 or 3, which deteriorated somewhat. On scale *Wb*, Group 2 improved significantly more than 1, which deteriorated. Scale *Py* differentiated Groups 2 and 3 -- 2 improved, 3 deteriorated.

The scale-by-scale comparison reveals that no consistent trend for change among groups exist. Black and Whites differences were evident.

Generally, the results of the study were encouraging for proponents of prison rehabilitation. By the global analysis, more men improved than deteriorated. The majority of scales that were significantly changed were improved.

This research does not support the theories of Menninger, Clark and Martinson, as prison is evidently not always harmful to the inmate, and

treatment may be working in some cases.

Blacks and Whites became less depressed, less anxious, less socially deviant and they gained in ego strength, according to the MMPI. Whites also became more insightful and less socially isolated, while Blacks were trying to portray a healthier psychological make-up than they had.

According to the CPI, Whites improved with regard to social poise, independent thought and intellectual efficiency, but became worse with regard to general adjustment, conformity and values. These findings create an

TABLE 4

Difference between CPI Intake and Exit Adjusted Mean Score for Length of Stay Groups (Analysis of Covariance)

	Whites (N = 190)			Blacks (N = 78)		
Scale	Short	Average	Long	Short	Average	Long
Do	−1.68	.36	1.49	− .12	1.53	−1.50
Cs	.42	− .65	.41	−1.49	.85	.24
Sy	− .36	− .15	.63	−1.99	2.77	−1.38*
Sp	− .67	− .48	1.46	−2.14	2.08	− .54
Sa	− .25	− .50	.99	−1.81	2.08	− .80
Wb	− .27	− .18	.57	−3.48	3.64	−1.16
Re	.16	.55	− .97	− .13	1.89	−1.87
So	.31	− .26	− .01	.27	1.33	−1.58
Sc	.78	−1.10	.61	−1.10	2.95	−2.23**
To	− .62	−1.10	2.27*	−1.43	2.52	−1.54
Gi	.26	− .84	.86	−1.86	2.97	−1.68*
Cm	2.20	− .55	−1.84	.41	3.00	−3.42
Ac	− .83	− .00	1.00	−3.14	3.67	−1.44**
Ai	− .26	−1.63	2.58**	− .92	1.04	− .39
Ie	.43	− .52	.22	−5.33	5.15	−1.34***
Py	− .36	− .54	1.33	− .93	2.91	−2.32*
Fx	.34	−1.25	1.34	.62	1.89	−2.43
Fe	.99	0.83	− .02	1.43	−2.14	1.14

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

inconsistency; Whites improved on the MMPI socially deviant scale, *Pd*, but became worse in the CPI deviant scales, *Re* and *So*. Upon further examination, it was found that *Re* and *So* are reflecting cynicism concerning the government, distrust in others and a need for excitment, while *Pd* does not. Improvement on *Pd* reflects a more mature outlook on the world.

On the CPI, Blacks scored better on factors measuring adjustment, conformity and values, social poise, and capacity for independent thought.

Inconsistent results were reported for the length of stay variable. For Whites, Group 2 became more aware of their problems, but Group 3 developed more tolerance and creative thought. Blacks in the average group became more neurotic, yet improved on the CPI factors named above. Conclusions regarding optimal sentences could not be construed from the data.

The absence of a control group was a methodological problem which invites speculation on whether or not the treatment was responsible for favorable changes. This problem, along with the statistical phenomenon common to the MMPI, regression towards the mean, are alternative hypotheses for change.

For example, maturation could be the reason for improvement on the two psychological tests, or scores regressing towards the normal range by virtue of statistics alone could explain the changes. However, Warman and Hannum (1965) found that untreated offenders' MMPI scores do not change after incarceration for several months, suggesting that regression towards the mean and lack of a control group may not be responsible for the changes noted.

It must be pointed out that the changes, improved or deteriorated, were not great (see Table 2). Improved scores, however small in magnitude, went from poor to average or bad to poor. Worsened scores went from bad to worse or average to low average, never good to bad. How much the altered scores would be reflected in behavior is unknown, depending on the combination of psychological states and environmental influences.

Implications for Further Research

Results reported in the study are generalizable to young, adult, male inmates in medium-security treatment-oriented federal prisons. Future studies using other offender populations are needed. When enough support for rehabilitation is documented, then it will be possible to claim that rehabilitation can be effective.

An interesting avenue of research would be to compare the characteristics of inmates who improved with inmates who did not, to determine who is most likely to benefit from treatment. Also, the different programs in the prison could be examined to determine which ones contributed the most to effective rehabilitation.

Further research should try to work out methodological problems, by using adequate control groups (as similar to the experimental population as possible, except in treatment) and incarceration periods controlled for sentencing, parole board decisions and punishment within the institution (if possible).

CONCLUSION

Although the present study cannot answer definitively whether prison rehabilitation is sucessful, it can define the changes, the majority of them positive, that can take place in a young adult, male, medium security treatment-oriented federal prison. In the past, proponents of both sides of the rehabilitation issue have made oversimplified generalizations, when the reality of the situation is that nothing is good or bad for everyone. It is likely that prison is beneficial for some, but detrimental for others. The criminal justice system's goal should be to discover and adopt practices that have the greatest value for society as a whole. It will take much more research to determine under what conditions and with what individuals correctional rehabilitation is effective.

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