

EMPIRICAL DERIVATION OF A NEW MMPI-2 SCALE FOR IDENTIFYING PROBABLE MALINGERING IN PERSONAL INJURY LITIGANTS AND DISABILITY CLAIMANTS: THE 15-ITEM MALINGERED MOOD DISORDER SCALE (MMDS)

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A new 15-item MMPI-2 subscale, the Malingered Mood Disorder Scale (MMDS), was empirically derived from the original 32-item Malingered Depression Scale (MDS) of Steffan, Clopton, and Morgan (2003). The MMDS was superior to the original MDS in identification of symptom exaggeration in personal injury litigants and disability claimants compared to non-litigating head-injured controls. Logistic regression revealed that a cut score of ≥ 7 on the MMDS produced good specificity (93.4%) with an associated sensitivity of 54.8%. An MMDS score of ≥ 8 was associated with 100% positive predictive power, i.e., no false positive errors. These results suggest that the MMDS may be useful in identifying personal injury litigants and disability claimants who exaggerate emotional disturbance on the MMPI-2.

Keywords: Malingered mood disorder; Probable malingering; Symptom validity

INTRODUCTION

In recent years forensic neuropsychology has witnessed a proliferation of malingering research in the area of personal injury litigation. While most research efforts have focused primarily on cognitive malingering and symptom validity testing, there has also been considerable interest in the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 (MMPI-2) as a tool in clinical decision making. The MMPI-2 is the psychological instrument most widely used by psychologists for the assessment of psychopathology (Butcher, Dahlstrom, Graham, Telliger & Kaemmer, 1989). Meta-analytic studies of the MMPI (Berry, Baer & Harris, 1991), and MMPI-2 (Rogers, Sewell & Salekin, 1994; Rogers, Sewell, Marting, &

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