PERSONALITY PROFILES OF DISABILITY CLAIMANTS WITH AND WITHOUT BRAIN DAMAGE

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Personality profiles of individuals with chronic medical impairments, including brain damage, have been well-documented. A particular segment of that population which has been largely ignored is the disability claimant. In this study, 36 ambulatory, outpatient individuals who had applied for Social Security Disability were administered Form R of the MMPI. Of these 18 (m = 11; f = 7) were diagnosed as having brain-damaged and 18 (m = 7; f = 11) were diagnosed as having a chronic medical impairment but not brain-damage (e.g., arthritis). Diagnoses were made using history and medical evaluations by independent raters. The results indicate that the following scales exceeded a T of 70 for both groups; F, 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, and 10. Of the scales exceeding T of 70, only scales 7 and 10 were significantly different (p < .05) between groups. In each case, the brain-damaged sample scored approximately 10 T points above the control group. The increased predisposition to exhibit psychasthenia and withdrawal is attributed to increased limitation placed on these individuals. It is interesting to note, nevertheless, that the only scale not to exceed a T of 70 (excluding Mf) was 9. These finding support the notion that chronic medical impairments especially brain damage are associated with or result in significant psychological disability and that disability applicants with these problems, regardless of their etiology, exhibit a relatively high degree of psychopathology.