

ACQUIESCENCE AND THE VANISHING VARIANCE COMPONENT¹

LEONARD G. RORER

AND

LEWIS R. GOLDBERG

Oregon Research Institute

University of Oregon and Oregon Research Institute

An experimental (reversal) group took both the MMPI and a reversed form of the MMPI. A control (reliability) group took the MMPI twice. All tests were scored on 67 scales, with keying reversed for the reversed MMPI. Only trivial proportions of the response variance were found to be attributable to acquiescence for any of the uniformly keyed scales employed. Included were the scales most often suggested as measures of acquiescence: A, R, B, Bn, Rb, Acq, At, Dy-3, Deviant True, Deviant False, and Total True. Conclusion: acquiescence is an unimportant determinant of MMPI responses, including responses to items on "acquiescence" scales.

The existence of acquiescence response style is today taken for granted. Recent studies have attempted to find its behavioral correlates and estimate its contribution to the total response variance of various personality, attitude, and interest inventories (e.g., Christie & Lindauer, 1963; Jackson & Messick, 1958; Jackson & Messick, 1961; Loevinger, 1959; McGee, 1962b; Messick, 1961a; Messick & Jackson, 1961; Wiggins, 1962). Findings to date have been interpreted as indicating that, although acquiescence response style has no known behavioral, that is, non-test, correlates (e.g., McGee, 1962b), it, nevertheless, accounts for a large proportion of test response variance. Four principal methods have been employed in arriving at this latter conclusion:

Acquiescence scales. The rationale of this method is analogous to that underlying the use of the MMPI *K* scale. A respondent's score on an "acquiescence" scale is used to partial the acquiescence component out of other scales to which he has responded (e.g., Webster, 1958; Webster, 1959). The problem lies in finding an acceptable acquiescence scale. If the acquiescence scale is composed of verbal items, then the acquiescence score itself inevitably confounds stylistic and content components. If, on the other hand, the scale is relatively content free, all the evidence to date indicates that it will correlate

neither with verbal acquiescence scales nor other nonverbal scales which might be proposed as alternative acquiescence measures (e.g., McGee, 1962b; Rorer, 1965).

Factor analyses. Investigators attempting to estimate stylistic components of variance on the basis of factor analytic results have tended to focus their attention on the MMPI (e.g., Jackson & Messick, 1961; Jackson & Messick, 1962; Messick & Jackson, 1961; Wiggins, 1962), though other inventories have also been used (e.g., Messick, 1962). If a factor could be clearly attributed to stylistic response tendencies, then the loadings of the various scales on that factor could be used to estimate the proportions of their variance attributable to style. However, the decision to relate a factor to a response style rather than other personality variables is necessarily an arbitrary one. The decision would be justified if a stylistic marker variable could be shown to have a high loading on the factor, but, as has been pointed out, no such scale exists today. While the results of factor analytic studies to date may be described as consistent with response style interpretations, they in no way provide evidence for the existence of such response styles.

Direct statistical estimation. Helmstadter (1957) has suggested a number of methods by which separate set and content scores may be estimated for any scale for which the correct answers to the items in the scale are known. While his models are applicable only to aptitude or achievement tests, they have been applied in other situations, apparently on the basis of the assumption that item keying on personality, interest, or attitude in-

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inventories is the same as item keying on aptitude or achievement tests (Clayton & Jackson, 1961; Fredericksen & Messick, 1959; Messick, 1961b; Messick, 1962). Such is obviously not the case. On aptitude and achievement tests a correct answer exists for all individuals, and that answer is known to the test administrator. On psychological inventories this condition does not hold. Even if an individual were, say, a pure "psychasthenic," it would not be expected that he would respond in the keyed direction to all of the items on the MMPI *Pt* scale. The keyed alternatives have only a probabilistic relationship to even an ideal criterion individual. It can never be known if a particular response is attributable to content or style. Admittedly, the same situation holds to some extent in the case of achievement examinations, where erroneous responses may be attributable to positive misinformation rather than stylistic tendencies. However, if it is assumed that a student's misinformation is randomly distributed with respect to item keying, then estimates of his stylistic tendencies may still be obtainable. The point to be made is that, while such procedures may or may not be applicable to examinations, they are most certainly not applicable to psychological inventories.

Item reversals. If an item and its logical contradictory are either both endorsed or both rejected by a respondent, then that respondent has given logically inconsistent responses to the item content, and it is inferred that this lack of consistency may be attributed to stylistic response tendencies. Chapman and Bock (1958) developed a model to provide an estimate of the proportion of response variance attributable to acquiescence and content, respectively, for any scale for which adequate item reversals are available. They applied their model to all studies in which both the California F Scale and a reversed F Scale had been administered to the same group of subjects. Their results were interpreted as indicating that in no case was acquiescence unimportant as compared to content, and that in some cases acquiescence appeared to be even more important than content in accounting for F Scale responses.

In summary, of the four techniques which

have been utilized, only the last, that based on item reversals, provides an estimate of stylistic variance which can be defended on logical grounds, and that only if the assumption of adequate item reversals is met. Rorer (1965) has challenged Chapman and Bock's results on the grounds that inadequate item reversals were utilized in the studies to which they applied their model. If Rorer is correct, there is no valid estimate of the importance of acquiescence in the literature today. Therefore, the present study utilized the reversed-content design and an extension of the Chapman and Bock model to estimate the contribution of acquiescence response style to response variance on the MMPI.

METHOD

An experimental (reversal) group composed of 96 male and 125 female sophomores, juniors, and seniors from four psychology classes at the University of Minnesota was given the original MMPI and a reversed form of the MMPI² 2 weeks apart. A control (reliability) group composed of 95 male and 108 female students from an introductory psychology class at the University of Oregon was given the regular MMPI twice under similar conditions.

All inventories were scored on 67 scales. Keying was reversed for the reversed MMPI. For the control group, correlations between scores on administrations one and two provided standard test-retest reliability coefficients for each of the scales. For the experimental group, correlations between scores on the original and reversed forms provided estimates of the extent to which individuals responded consistently to the item content on the two administrations. If the reversed form is equivalent to the original, and if the Ss responded consistently to item content (i.e., if stylistic variables are unimportant), then the correlations should, in the long run, be identical for the two groups. If acquiescence response style is important, then the correlations for the experimental group should be lower than those for the control group.

However, there are two factors which should tend to decrease the test-retest coefficient for the reversal group in relation to the reliability group, thereby artifactually inflating the estimates of the variance attributable to acquiescence. First, the item reversals are not perfect (Rorer & Goldberg, in

² A copy of the reversed form of the MMPI may be obtained from the authors without charge or from the American Documentation Institute. Order Document No. 8502 from ADI Auxiliary Publications Project, Photoduplication Service, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. 20540. Remit in advance \$2.00 for microfilm or \$3.75 for photocopies and make checks payable to: Chief, Photoduplication Service, Library of Congress.

TABLE 1
TEST-RETEST CORRELATIONS FOR STANDARD MMPI
SCALES FOR RELIABILITY AND REVERSAL GROUPS

Scale	Male			Female		
	Relia- bility group N=95	Re- versal group N=96	Differ- ence	Relia- bility group N=108	Re- versal group N=125	Differ- ence
<i>L</i>	79	63	16*	74	65	09
<i>F</i>	59	64	-05	79	61	18**
<i>K</i>	86	72	14**	77	78	-01
<i>Hs</i>	79	71	08	75	76	-01
<i>D</i>	81	75	06	77	76	01
<i>Hy</i>	70	59	11	73	70	03
<i>Pd</i>	74	73	01	66	67	-01
<i>Mf</i>	79	79	00	79	82	-03
<i>Pa</i>	55	59	-04	72	48	24**
<i>Pt</i>	88	78	10*	85	87	-02
<i>Sc</i>	76	75	01	87	80	07
<i>Ma</i>	76	65	11	80	66	14*
<i>Si</i>	91	84	07*	89	88	01

Note.—Decimal points omitted.

* $p \leq .05$.

** $p \leq .01$.

press). Second, the test-retest reliability of the reversed form is almost certainly lower than that of the original MMPI. This inference is derived from the facts that (a) the reversed items are longer and more confusing than the original items, and (b) responses to the 16 repeated items are less consistent on the reversed form than on the original MMPI.

RESULTS

The test-retest correlations for the 13 standard MMPI scales are presented in Table 1. If acquiescence has any effect whatsoever, it would be expected that the scale reliabilities would exceed the original-reversal correlations; therefore, difference scores have been obtained by subtracting the latter values from the former. Obviously, if the forms were equivalent, obtained differences would all be attributable to random error and, on the average, as many would be negative as would be positive. For no scale was there a statistically significant ($p \leq .05$) difference between the reliability and reversal coefficients for both males and females. Furthermore, 4 of the 7 statistically significant differences were matched by a negative difference in the other sex group. Overall, 7 of the 26 differences were negative; that is, in 7 cases out of 26 the correlations between the original and reversed scales exceeded the test-

retest correlations for the original MMPI scales. It seems safe to conclude from these results that acquiescence response style has no practical effect on the standard MMPI scales.

While proponents of stylistic interpretations of the MMPI might find these results somewhat disturbing, they would be quick to point out that they are inconclusive for at least four reasons, all based on the premise that items are not uniformly susceptible to acquiescence. First of all, obvious items are thought to be little affected by acquiescent tendencies (e.g., McGee, 1962a). Thus, their inclusion would tend to diminish the significance of the differences. Second, items of extreme desirability or undesirability are presumably little influenced by acquiescence (e.g., Jackson & Messick, 1962; Messick & Jackson, 1961; Wiggins, 1962), and their inclusion would also tend to diminish the significance of the differences. Third, acquiescence is purported to be found only on items of high controversiality (median difficulty) (e.g., Wiggins, 1962). Since mean desirability and probability of endorsement are highly correlated, the second and third reasons are nearly equivalent. Fourth, many, though not all, of the scales include items keyed in both directions; thus, stylistic effects on true-keyed

TABLE 2
TEST-RETEST CORRELATIONS FOR SUBTLE AND OBVIOUS
MMPI SCALES FOR RELIABILITY
AND REVERSAL GROUPS

Scale ^a	Male			Female		
	Relia- bility group N=95	Re- versal group N=96	Differ- ence	Relia- bility group N=108	Re- versal group N=125	Differ- ence
<i>D-S</i>	86	61	25**	77	64	13*
<i>D-O</i>	84	77	07	83	77	06
<i>Hy-S</i>	79	66	13	74	76	-02
<i>Hy-O</i>	84	76	08	81	73	08
<i>Pd-S</i>	74	48	26**	65	61	04
<i>Pd-O</i>	80	83	-03	66	68	-02
<i>Pa-S</i>	64	66	-02	71	64	07
<i>Pa-O</i>	62	63	-01	69	60	09
<i>Ma-S</i>	66	63	03	72	61	11
<i>Ma-O</i>	77	58	19*	75	64	11

Note.—Decimal points omitted.

* $p \leq .05$.

** $p \leq .01$.

^a Scale designation as given in Dahlstrom and Welsh (1960).

and false-keyed parts of the scale might cancel each other out. These objections will be considered in turn.

The results for the 10 subtle and obvious scales (Wiener, 1948) are presented in Table 2. In exactly half the cases the difference between the two groups was greater for the subtle than for the obvious portion of the scale. Obviously, subtlety alone is an insufficient requirement for the elicitation of stylistic response tendencies. However, it should be noted that in the case of *D-S* significant differences were found for both males and females.

The widely held belief, based on factor analytic studies, that acquiescence response style is moderated by item desirability (Jackson & Messick, 1962; Messick & Jackson, 1961; Wiggins, 1962) may be partially assessed by examining Table 3 and the last five scales in Table 4. The two significant differences in Table 3 involved a scale to measure the tendency to fake good (*Sd*) and a scale to measure the tendency to fake bad (+). The last five true scales in Table 4 were constructed so as to vary item desirability systematically (Jackson & Messick, 1961). *Dy-1* contains items of extreme desirability, *Dy-5* items of extreme undesirability, and *Dy-3* neutral items. The latter is presumably a measure of acquiescence. As can be seen, there were three significant differences out of five for males: one for extreme, one for moderate, and one for neutral items. For females, the one significant difference was associated with extreme items. If acquiescent response style is differentially measured by items of varying desirability, it is not apparent from these results.

Data are presented in Table 4 for true-keyed and false-keyed scales. A subscript indicates that a scale has been divided; for example, *F_t* is composed of those items from the *F* Scale which are normally keyed true; *F_f* is composed of those items from the *F* Scale which are normally keyed false, etc. When no subscript is employed, all the items in that scale are normally keyed in the direction indicated in the table. Significant differences were found in both groups for only one part of one standard MMPI scale: *Ma_t*. A

TABLE 3

TEST-RETEST CORRELATIONS FOR SOCIAL DESIRABILITY AND ROLE PLAYING MMPI SCALES FOR RELIABILITY AND REVERSAL GROUPS

Scale ^a	Male			Female		
	Reliability group	Reversal group	Difference	Reliability group	Reversal group	Difference
<i>So</i>	84	76	08	89	87	02
<i>So-r</i>	87	78	09	87	86	01
<i>Tt</i>	69	56	13	60	71	-11
<i>Sx^b</i>	60	47	13	57	62	-05
<i>ESD^b</i>	66	65	01	68	56	12
<i>Mp</i>	73	76	-03	74	78	-04
<i>Ds-r</i>	72	68	04	82	75	07
+	90	74	16**	82	84	-02
<i>Sd^b</i>	78	58	20**	65	58	07

Note.—Decimal points omitted.

* $p \leq .05$.

** $p \leq .01$.

^a Scale designation taken from Dahlstrom and Welsh (1960) unless otherwise indicated.

^b Scale designation taken from Wiggins (1962).

significant difference was also found for both males and females for *Es_f*.

With the exception of *G* and *ESD*, the remaining scales in Table 4 are those which have been specifically constructed as acquiescence scales. In his influential review, Wiggins (1962) lists *B*, *B_n*, *R_b*, *Acq*, and *At* as acquiescence scales. These five scales are all composed of items of high controversiality, that is, 40% to 60% endorsement percentages, and have been further screened on the basis of either desirability ratings (*B_n*, *R_b*, *At*) or nondiscriminability between adjusted and maladjusted *S_s* (*Acq*). Five other scales, each of which has been designated a measure of acquiescence by other writers, have been added to Wiggins' list: *A* (Welsh's first factor scale), *Dev_t* and *Dev_f* (those items for which a true or false response, respectively, is in the deviant direction), *AT* (the total number of items out of 566 that are answered true by a subject taking the MMPI), and *Dy-3*, which has already been discussed. Wiggins (1962) argues that the Deviant True Scale is a joint function of acquiescence and non-communality, and says of *AT* that it "is not proposed as a meaningful acquiescence measure [p. 235]." *R*, Welsh's second factor scale, which has frequently been proposed as a measure of naysaying, orthogonal to that of

yeasaying, is also included at the end of Table 4.

For these acquiescence scales there seems to be an inverse relationship between the significance of the differences found and the care with which the scale was constructed. Only for the Deviant True, Deviant False, and All True scales were significant results found for both males and females. Particularly striking were the findings for *Bn* and *Rb*, both of which include only items of high controversiality and median desirability. The practical significance of those differences which were statistically significant will be further considered in the next section.

A COMPONENTS OF VARIANCE MODEL FOR MEASURING ACQUIESCENCE

The following model is similar to one proposed by Chapman and Bock (1958), but is more general in that it eliminates some of their assumptions. For a test with a true-false format, stylistic responding can range from yeasaying (acquiescence) to naysaying (criticalness, cautiousness). It may be represented by a variable having positive values for acquiescence, negative values for criticalness, and zero value for no response style whatsoever. The problem is simplified if only scales composed of items keyed in but one direction are considered (Chapman & Bock, 1958; Jackson & Messick, 1961). Obviously, for scales whose items are keyed "true," acquiescence, as here defined, can only add to the score; for scales whose items are keyed "false," acquiescence can only subtract from the score. This is an analytical result. No assumptions concerning the relationship of acquiescence to scale content are involved. That relationship will be estimated by the model, which assumes only the existence of adequate item reversals. Let X_{ij} = the score of the I^{th} respondent on the J^{th} replication of the true-keyed form of the scale; Y_{ij} = the score of the I^{th} respondent on the J^{th} replication of the false-keyed form of the scale; α_i = the component of score for acquiescence; γ_i = the component of score for content; and δ_{ij} and ϵ_{ij} = components of error, with zero mean, random over replications and individuals, independent of each other and the other

components, and similarly distributed for all individuals. (This replication error cannot be directly measured for any present personality, attitude, or interest inventories. It can be estimated for any given form by the test-retest reliability, which will be somewhat high because it does not include a component of variance for test form, or by KR-20, which will be low because it includes a component for item heterogeneity.)

From the above definitions,

$$X_{ij} = \gamma_i + \alpha_i + \delta_{ij}, \quad [1]$$

and

$$Y_{ij} = \gamma_i - \alpha_i + \epsilon_{ij}. \quad [2]$$

Note that α can be either positive or negative, so that an individual with a yeasaying tendency would increase his score on the true-keyed form, whereas one with a naysaying tendency would increase his score on the false-keyed form. The score variances are

$$\sigma_x^2 = \sigma_\gamma^2 + \sigma_\alpha^2 + 2\sigma_{\gamma\alpha} + \sigma_\delta^2, \quad [3]$$

and

$$\sigma_y^2 = \sigma_\gamma^2 + \sigma_\alpha^2 - 2\sigma_{\gamma\alpha} + \sigma_\epsilon^2. \quad [4]$$

Subtracting [3] from [4],

$$\sigma_{\gamma\alpha} = \frac{1}{4}(\sigma_x^2 - \sigma_y^2 - \sigma_\delta^2 + \sigma_\epsilon^2).$$

From the identities, $\sigma_\delta^2 = (1 - \rho_{xx})\sigma_x^2$ and $\sigma_\epsilon^2 = (1 - \rho_{yy})\sigma_y^2$, it may be shown that an estimate of $\sigma_{\gamma\alpha}$, the covariance between content and acquiescence, is given by

$$\hat{\sigma}_{\gamma\alpha} = \frac{1}{4}(r_{xx}S_x^2 - r_{yy}S_y^2). \quad [5]$$

The covariance of the true- and false-keyed forms is given by

$$\sigma_{xy} = \sigma_\gamma^2 - \sigma_\alpha^2. \quad [6]$$

If [6] is subtracted from either [3] or [4], and appropriate substitutions are made, an estimate of σ_α^2 , the variance attributable to acquiescence, can be obtained:

$$\hat{\sigma}_\alpha^2 = \frac{1}{4}(r_{xx}S_x^2 + r_{yy}S_y^2 - 2r_{xy}S_xS_y). \quad [7]$$

Finally, if either [3] or [4] is added to [6], and appropriate substitutions are made, an estimate of σ_γ^2 , the variance attributable to content, is obtained:

$$\hat{\sigma}_\gamma^2 = \frac{1}{4}(r_{xx}S_x^2 + r_{yy}S_y^2 + 2r_{xy}S_xS_y). \quad [8]$$

TABLE 5
PERCENTAGE OF VARIANCE ATTRIBUTABLE TO ACQUIESCENCE AND CONTENT FOR SELECTED MMPI SCALES

Scale ^a	True scales				Scale ^a	False scales			
	Male		Female			Male		Female	
	Acq. %	Con. %	Acq. %	Con. %		Acq. %	Con. %	Acq. %	Con. %
<i>F_t</i>	13	66	19	102	<i>F_f</i>	08	89	05	61
<i>Hs_t</i>	02	54	00	61	<i>Hs_f</i>	05	67	01	66
<i>D_t</i>	04	79	04	73	<i>D_f</i>	12	75	04	72
<i>Hy_t</i>	01	70	04	69	<i>Hy_f</i>	08	54	00	88
<i>Pd_t</i>	02	79	01	69	<i>Pd_f</i>	11	70	00	62
<i>Pa_t</i>	04	66	05	72	<i>Pa_f</i>	00	77	01	72
<i>Pl_t</i>	05	78	01	79	<i>Pl_f</i>	09	66	01	65
<i>Sc_t</i>	02	83	03	81	<i>Sc_f</i>	03	63	00	54
<i>Ma_t</i>	09	61	05	70	<i>Ma_f</i>	04	79	00	76
<i>Si_t</i>	04	84	01	83	<i>Si_f</i>	05	87	03	81
<i>Es_t</i>	12	60	03	57	<i>Es_f</i>	08	67	07	79
<i>G_t</i>	06	84	01	80	<i>G_f</i>	01	64	00	70
<i>ESD_t^b</i>	08	78	10	66	<i>ESD_f^b</i>	06	72	08	86
<i>Dev_t^c</i>	06	86	04	84	<i>Dev_f^c</i>	03	47	00	40
<i>AT^b</i>	08	77	06	76	<i>L</i>	07	63	04	60
<i>A^e</i>	04	85	01	85	<i>K^d</i>	06	76	00	81
<i>B</i>	07	71	06	61	<i>R</i>	05	69	06	80
<i>Bn^b</i>	02	78	03	64					
<i>Rb^b</i>	01	73	05	69					
<i>Acq^b</i>	08	72	02	71					
<i>A^b</i>	07	56	03	55					
<i>Dy-1^e</i>	08	79	04	78					
<i>Dy-2^e</i>	02	70	03	71					
<i>Dy-3^e</i>	10	75	02	69					
<i>Dy-4^e</i>	05	83	03	87					
<i>Dy-5^e</i>	04	86	05	79					

^a Scale designation from Dahlstrom and Welsh (1960) unless otherwise indicated.

^b Scale designation from Wiggins (1962).

^c Scale designation as indicated in text.

^d Contains one true-keyed item.

^e Contains one false-keyed item.

These two estimates of variance³ were computed for all of the scales in Table 4. The test-retest reliabilities obtained for the original MMPI scales were also used as estimates of the reversed form reliabilities. While some question may be raised concerning the appropriateness of these analyses for those cases where the reliability and reversal correlations were insignificantly different, the exercise should prove a salutary antidote to those reckless estimates that have been derived on the basis of other procedures.

The results, expressed as a percentage of the variance of the original MMPI scale, are

³ When $S_x^2 = S_y^2$ and $r_{xx} = r_{yy}$, these estimates are the same as those of Chapman and Bock (1958). When these equalities do not hold, the present estimates should be more accurate.

presented in Table 5. In general, the scale variances for the two control and two experimental administrations were very similar.⁴ In order to eliminate between-group differences, the variances for the experimental group were used in both the numerator and denominator in computing the percentages in Table 5. In one case, that of F_t for females, this resulted in the use of an atypical estimate of the true scale variance, and the ac-

⁴ A list of the standard deviations of all scales in Table 5 may be obtained from the authors without charge, or from the American Documentation Institute. Order Document No. 8502 from ADI Auxiliary Publications Project, Photoduplication Service, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. 20540. Remit in advance \$2.00 for microfilm or \$3.75 for photocopies and make checks payable to: Chief, Photoduplication Service, Library of Congress.

quiescence and content percentages for this group for this scale are inflated. (For control administrations one and two and experimental administrations one and two, the standard deviations of the F_t Scale were, respectively, 2.25, 2.27, 1.67, 2.34. It is the use of the 1.67 estimate that results in the inflated percentages for this scale for females in Table 5.)

The results in Table 5 are consistent and straightforward. Even for those scales that are presumably pure measures of acquiescence it can be seen that no more than 7% of the total scale variance is so attributable. Bearing in mind that there are a number of factors inherent in the experimental design which combine to inflate the acquiescence estimates, it seems doubtful that acquiescence accounts for even a trivial proportion of the response variance on the MMPI.

DISCUSSION

On the basis of an extensive review, Rorer (1965) has previously concluded that the literature contains no evidence unequivocally showing acquiescence response style to be of importance in any personality, interest, or attitude inventory. However, in spite of this lack of evidence, the importance of acquiescence is so widely accepted today that it has become necessary to demonstrate its non-existence (rather than its existence, as would more appropriately be the case). Rorer and Goldberg (in press) utilized an item by item response tabulation to show that the proportion of content inconsistent responses was not significantly greater for the experimental than for the control groups described here. However, these findings left open the possibility that the small discrepancies that they found might be accounted for by a concentration of items on some one scale, in particular, some acquiescence scale. The results presented here effectively discount that possibility.

In estimating the generality of the present results, it should be noted that almost all studies of acquiescence have utilized college student samples, as did the present study. Investigators who have addressed themselves to the question of the generality of acquiescence (e.g., Jackson & Messick, 1962) have argued strongly for the similarity of results

among psychiatric, prison, and normal samples. While it would not be appropriate to contend that the present results demonstrate the unimportance of acquiescence response style in other groups, it does seem appropriate to argue that the results do shift the burden of proof to those who wish to argue for the importance of acquiescence in other groups or other situations.

The finding that none of the MMPI acquiescence scales measures acquiescence has a number of ramifications. First, use of these scales for this purpose should be discontinued. Second, all studies in which it has been concluded on the basis of correlations with these scales that acquiescence is important in some other scale or some other instrument should be discounted. Third, inferences derived from factor analytic results which have used these scales as marker variables for identifying acquiescence factors should be similarly discounted. Fourth, the contention that present psychological inventories may be improved by controlling for or correcting for stylistic variables must be questioned.

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