

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN IMPULSIVENESS SCALE: PSYCHOMETRIC PROPERTIES AND RELATION TO ANTISOCIAL PERSONALITY DISORDER

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The purposes of this study are: (1) to develop an impulsiveness scale composed of motor, cognitive, and non-planning impulsiveness dimensions based on Barratt's hypothesis of impulsiveness, (2) to analyze the psychometric properties of this new scale, (3) to examine Barratt's hypothesis, and (4) to examine the relationship between impulsiveness and antisocial personality disorder (ASPD) diagnosed according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-fourth edition (DSM-IV). An item pool was first constructed to consist of 11 items of motor impulsiveness, 8 of cognitive impulsiveness, and 11 of non-planning. Then through exploratory factor analysis carried out in 201 male adults (168 prisoners and 33 normal controls), we selected 21 items, which were divided into motor and non-planning subscales. We examined internal consistency and test-retest reliability in 120 college students and the 201 subjects (which included male prisoners and normal controls). We found that this newly

developed scale and two of its subscales showed acceptable internal consistency and test-retest reliability. Finally, we examined the relationship of the scale and subscale scores of impulsiveness to: disinhibition scores, frequencies of being sentenced, going to jail, and ASPD in 161 prisoners, including 79 prisoners with ASPD and 82 without ASPD, and 33 normal controls. We found that the total scale score and two subscale scores were positively correlated with disinhibition scores but only the subscale score of motor impulsiveness was positively correlated to both frequencies of being sentenced and going to jail. We also found that two subscales of impulsiveness could distinguish prisoners with ASPD from those without ASPD and normal controls. Moreover, only the subscale of motor impulsiveness showed a significant difference between prisoners without ASPD and normal controls.

Keywords: Impulsiveness, Antisocial personality disorder