



Domestic Violence Inventory



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Scale Interpretation Domestic Violence Inventory

Scale Description

Scale Interpretation

Test Features

Applications

- Assessment of individuals accused or convicted of domestic violence.
- Domestic violence assessment in clinics, court settings, probation departments and service provider offices.
- Adult courts and pre-sentence investigation.
- Adult evaluation, counseling and treatment agencies.

The Domestic Violence Inventory (DVI) is designed specifically for domestic violence offender assessment. The DVI evaluates violence (**lethality**) potential, assesses control issues, quantifies substance (alcohol and other drugs) abuse and measures stress coping abilities. The DVI has 155 items and takes 30 minutes to complete. The DVI has six measures (scales): **1.** Truthfulness Scale, **2.** Violence (**Lethality**) Scale, **3.** Control Scale, **4.** Alcohol Scale, **5.** Drugs Scale and **6.** Stress Coping Abilities Scale.

Six Scales (measures)

The six Domestic Violence Inventory (DVI) scales are described as follows:

- 1. Truthfulness Scale:** measures how truthful the client was while completing the test. It identifies denial, guardedness, problem minimization and faking. It identifies “faking good.”
- 2. Violence (Lethality) Scale:** measures the use of force to injure, damage or destroy. This scale identifies people that are a danger to self and others.
- 3. Control Scale:** measures a person’s need to control others. In social psychology, control is often a synonym for power and influence. Control refers to the process of regulating, restraining or controlling others. Controlling behaviors include swearing, intimidation, pushing, hitting and battering.
- 4. Alcohol Scale:** measures the **severity** of alcohol use and abuse. Alcohol refers to beer, wine and other liquors. Alcohol is all too often involved in domestic violence.
- 5. Drugs Scale:** measures drug use and the **severity** of abuse. Drugs refer to marijuana, crack, cocaine, ecstasy, amphetamines, barbiturates and heroin. Illicit drugs are often involved in domestic violence-related substance abuse.
- 6. Stress Coping Abilities Scale:** measures a person’s ability to cope with stress, anxiety and pressure. Stress exacerbates mental health symptomatology. This scale is a non-introversive screen for established (diagnosable) emotional and mental health problems.

The DVI assesses attitudes and behaviors yielding a domestic violence offender profile. Paper-pencil test administration takes on average 30 minutes and tests are computer scored on-site. Reports are printed within 2½ minutes.

The DVI was developed specifically for domestic violence evaluation. It is much more than just another alcohol or drug test, consequently it measures important behaviors missed by other tests.

Interpretation

This DVI interpretation is provided as a ready reference to augment this dialogue. There are several levels of DVI interpretation ranging from viewing the DVI as a self-report to interpreting scale elevations and scale inter-relationships.

The following table is a starting point for interpreting DVI scale scores.

SCALE RANGES		
Risk Category	Risk Range Percentile	Total Percentage
Low Risk	0 - 39%	39%
Medium Risk	40 - 69%	30%
Problem Risk	70 - 89%	20%
Severe Problem	90 - 100%	11%

A problem is not identified until a scale score is at the 70th percentile or higher. Elevated scale scores refer to percentile scores that are at or above the 70th percentile. Severe problems are identified by scale scores at or above the 90th percentile. Severe problems represent the highest 11 percent of offenders evaluated with the DVI. The DVI has been normed on over 75,000 domestic violence offenders. And this normative sample continues to expand with each DVI test that is administered.

SCALE INTERPRETATION

1. **Truthfulness Scale:** Measures how truthful the offender was while completing the test. It identifies guarded and defensive people who attempt to fake good. Scores at or below the 89th percentile mean that all DVI scales are accurate. Scale scores in the 70 to 89th percentile range are accurate because they have been Truth-Corrected. Scores at or above the 90th percentile mean that all DVI scales are inaccurate (invalid) because the offender was overly guarded, read things into test items that aren't there, was minimizing problems, or was attempting to fake answers. Respondents with reading impairments might also score in this 90-100th percentile scoring range. If not consciously deceptive, offenders with elevated Truthfulness Scale scores are uncooperative, fail to understand test items or have a need to appear in a good light. The Truthfulness Scale score is important because it shows whether-or-not the offender answered DVI test items honestly. Truthfulness Scale scores at or below the 89th percentile indicate that all other DVI scale scores are accurate. One of the first things to check when reviewing a DVI report is the Truthfulness Scale score. The Truthfulness Scale can be interpreted independently. Truthfulness Scale scores override all other DVI scale scores.

2. **Violence (Lethality) Scale:** Identifies offenders that are dangerous to themselves and others. It is defined as the expression of rage and hostility through physical force. Violence is aggression in its most extreme and unacceptable form. Elevated scorers can be demanding, sensitive to perceived criticism and are insightful about how they express their anger/hostility. Severe problem scorers should not be ignored as they are threatening, very dangerous and at risk. A particularly unstable and perilous situation involves an elevated Violence Scale with an elevated Alcohol Scale or Drugs Scale score. The higher the elevation of these scale scores (e.g., Severe Problem range) with the Violence Scale -- the worse the

prognosis. An elevated Stress Coping Abilities Scale with an elevated Violence Scale score provides insight regarding codeterminants and possible treatment recommendations. An elevated Control Scale in combination with an elevated Violence Scale score suggests a rigidly hostile characterological pattern. Loss of control results in punitive consequences, whereas lack of control is anxiety inducing. The Violence Scale score can be interpreted independently or in combination with other DVI scale scores.

3. **Control Scale:** “Control” is a complex psychological term. Some researchers are interested in the dynamics of controlling others. The DVI Control Scale measures one’s need to control others. In social psychology control is often a synonym for power or influence. Within the context of domestic violence, control refers to the process of regulating, restraining or controlling others. These controlling behaviors vary from normal (mild) to pathological (severe). Control-related behavior pathology focuses on exaggerated, distorted or extreme behaviors like swearing, pushing, intimidation, hitting and even battering. Without getting into a discussion of a variety of control theories, the construct “control” has become important in understanding domestic violence. The significance of control is reflected in domestic violence perpetrator’s difficulty in giving up control and their resistance to treatment.

An elevated (70 to 89th percentile) Control Scale score indicates the presence of regulating, restraining and controlling behaviors. Scores in the severe problem (90 to 100th percentile) range identify extreme and even pathological controlling behaviors. Elevated Control Scale scorers have a need to control others. Anything that interferes with this sense of control is frustrating and can be threatening. These people often have a lot of friction or conflict in their relationships.

An elevated Control Scale score with an elevated Violence Scale score is usually a malignant sign. The height of these scale scores is important. Scores in the severe problem (90 to 100th percentile) range should not be ignored as they are indicative of a dangerous person. Similarly, an elevated substance (Alcohol or Drug Scale) abuse score in conjunction with an elevated Control Scale score is problematic. Alcohol and/or drug involvement can exacerbate control issues. An elevated Stress Coping Abilities Scale score with an elevated Control Scale score may help in understanding the offender’s situation. A person that doesn’t handle stress well is likely to experience symptom magnification. In summary the Control Scale can be interpreted independently or in conjunction with other DVI scale scores.

4. **Alcohol Scale:** Measures alcohol use and the severity of abuse. Alcohol refers to beer, wine and other liquor. An elevated (70 to 89th percentile) Alcohol Scale score is indicative of an emerging drinking problem. An Alcohol Scale score in the severe problem (90 to 100th percentile) range identifies serious drinking problems.

Since a history of alcohol problems could result in an abstainer (current non-drinker) attaining a low to medium-risk score, precautions have been built into the DVI to correctly identify “recovering alcoholics.” Several DVI items are printed in the “significant items” sections of the DVI report for quick reference. These alcohol items include the following: admits drinking is a problem (item #31), admits drinking problem in the past year (item #37), admits has a drinking problem (item #79), “recovering alcoholic” (item #87), describes seriousness of own drinking (item #147) and states own desire for alcohol treatment (item #150). In addition, the Alcohol Scale risk range paragraphs (printed for elevated scores) clearly state that the offender may be a “recovering alcoholic.”

In intervention and treatment settings the offender’s Alcohol Scale score helps staff work through the offender’s denial. Most people accept the objective and standardized Alcohol Scale score as accurate and relevant in comparison to a person’s subjective opinion. This is particularly true when it is explained that elevated scores don’t occur by chance. The offender must answer a definite pattern of alcohol-related admissions for elevated scores to occur. And scale scores are based on thousands of offender’s scores who have completed the DVI.

An elevated Alcohol Scale score in conjunction with other elevated scores magnifies the severity of the other elevated scores. For example, if you have an offender with an elevated Violence Scale who also has an elevated Alcohol Scale score, that person is even more dangerous when drinking. In summary, the Alcohol Scale can be interpreted independently or in conjunction with other elevated scores.

5. Drugs Scale: Measures illicit drug use and the severity of abuse. Drugs refer to marijuana, cocaine, crack, ice, amphetamines, barbiturates and heroin. These are illicit substances. An elevated (70 to 89th percentile) Drugs Scale score is indicative of an emerging drug problem. A Drugs Scale score in the severe problem (90 to 100th percentile) range identifies serious illicit drug abusers.

A history of drug-related problems could result in an abstainer (drug history, but not presently using drugs) attaining a low to medium-risk score. Precautions have been built into the DVI to correctly identify “recovering drug abusers.” Several DVI items are printed in the “significant items” section of the DVI report for easy reference. These items include: increased tolerance in last year (item #29), admits has a drug problem (item #39), used drugs within the last year (item #44), admits using and abusing drugs (item #69), in treatment for a drug problem (item #93), rates severity of own drug use (item #148) and states desire for drug treatment (item #151). In addition the elevated Drugs Scale paragraphs clearly state the offender may be a “recovering” drug abuser.

In intervention and treatment settings the offender’s Drugs Scale score helps staff work through client denial. And an elevated Drugs Scale score in conjunction with other elevated scale scores magnifies the severity of the other elevated scores. For example, an elevated

Violence Scale in conjunction with an elevated Drugs Scale score increases the severity and risk associated with the Violence Scale. In summary, the Drugs Scale can be interpreted independently or in conjunction with other elevated scales.

9. Stress Coping Abilities Scale: Measures how well the offender copes with stress. It is now known that stress exacerbates symptoms of mental and emotional problems. Thus, an elevated Stress Coping Abilities Scale score in conjunction with other elevated DVI scale scores helps explain the offender's situation. For example, when a person doesn't handle stress well, other existing problems are exacerbated. This problem augmentation applies to substance (alcohol and other drugs) abuse, violence (lethality), control issues and stress-related problems.

An elevated Stress Coping Abilities Scale score can also exacerbate emotional and mental health symptomatology. When a Stress Coping Abilities Scale score is in the severe problem (90 to 100th percentile) range it is likely that the offender has a diagnosable mental health problem. In these instances referral to a certified/licensed mental health professional may be appropriate to obtain a diagnosis, prognosis and treatment plan. Lower elevated scores suggest less intensive referral alternatives like a stress management program. In summary, the Stress Coping Abilities Scale can be interpreted independently or in conjunction with other elevated scales.

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At one sitting of approximately 30 minutes duration staff can acquire a vast amount of domestic violence perpetrator information which includes acting out (violence) propensity, controlling tendencies, substance abuse and stress coping abilities. Early problem identification facilitates timely intervention and improved outcome results.

Unique DVI Features

Truthfulness Scale measures how truthful the offender was while completing the DVI. This scale identifies denial, problem minimization and faking. Many domestic violence offenders attempt to minimize their problems. The DVI Truthfulness Scale has been validated with other tests, truthfulness studies and the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) L and F Scales. It consists of a number of items that most people agree or disagree with. This important scale has been demonstrated to be reliable, valid and accurate. Much of this research is reported in the document titled "DVI: An Inventory of Scientific Findings."

Truth-Corrected Scores have proven to be important in enhancing assessment accuracy. This proprietary truth-correction program is comparable to the MMPI K-Scale corrections methodology. The DVI Truthfulness Scale has been correlated with the other five DVI scales. The Truth-Correction equation then converts raw scores to truth-

corrected scores. Raw scores reflect what the offender wants you to know. Truth-Corrected scores reveal what the offender is trying to hide. Truth-Corrected scores are more accurate than raw scores.

Violence (Lethality) Scale measures the offender's propensity for using force to injure, damage or destroy. It identifies the offender's danger to self and others. The growing awareness of violence in our society resulted in the inclusion of the Violence (Lethality) Scale in the DVI. When screening violence or lethality potential is important -- we recommend you use the DVI.

Control Scale in psychoanalytic theory control is the process of restraining or regulating impulses. In social psychology control is often a synonym of power or influence. In domestic violence "control" refers to the process of restraining, regulating or controlling others. Controlling behaviors include, but are not limited to pushing, swearing, intimidation and hitting. The concept of control has become an important construct in domestic violence research. Consequently, the Control Scale was added to the DVI in 1998. The inclusion of the Control Scale is an example of the DVI being designed specifically to assess domestic violence perpetrators. The Control Scale adds greatly to our assessment and understanding of domestic violence perpetrators. This important area of inquiry is overlooked by many other domestic violence tests.

Substance Abuse Screening is important because alcohol and/or drug use is often associated with domestic violence. The Alcohol Scale identifies alcohol use and measures the severity of abuse. Similarly, the Drugs Scale identifies illicit drug use and measures the "severity" of abuse.

Stress Coping Abilities Scale measures how well the offender handles tension, stress and pressure. This scale goes beyond establishing whether-or-not the offender is experiencing stress. It determines how well the offender handles or copes with stress. Stress exacerbates emotional and mental health symptoms. Consequently this scale is a non-introversive way to screen established (diagnosable) mental health problems. An offender scoring at or above the 90th percentile on the Stress Coping Abilities Scale might be referred to a certified/licensed mental health professional for a more comprehensive evaluation and diagnosis as warranted. This important area of inquiry is missed by many other domestic violence tests.

More than just another alcohol or drugs test. In addition to alcohol and drugs the DVI assesses other important areas of inquiry like truthfulness, violence (lethality), control issues and stress coping abilities. The DVI is designed specifically for domestic violence perpetrators.

Confidentiality: Professional Online Testing Solutions, Inc. encourages test users to delete offender names. This proprietary name deletion procedure involves a few keystrokes. Once offender names are deleted they are gone and cannot be retrieved.

Deleting names does not delete demographics or test data which is downloaded into the DVI database for subsequent analysis. This “name deletion” procedure insures confidentiality and compliance with HIPAA (federal regulation 45 C.F.R. 164.501) requirements.

Test Data Input Verification: This proprietary program allows the person that inputs test data from the answer sheet into the computer to verify the accuracy of their data input. In brief, test data is input twice and any inconsistencies between the first and second data entry are highlighted until corrected. When the first and second data entry match or are the same the staff person may continue. Use of this data input verification procedure is optional, yet strongly recommended by Professional Online Testing Solutions, Inc.

4 VERSIONS OF THE DVI

- 1. Domestic Violence Inventory (DVI):** for adult domestic violence offender assessment. Has 6 scales: Truthfulness, Violence (Lethality), Control, Alcohol, Drugs and Stress Coping Abilities. Contains 155 items and takes 30 minutes.
- 2. DVI Short Form:** For adult domestic violence offender assessment, minus the Stress Coping Abilities Scale.
- 3. DVI-Juvenile:** for troubled youth (12 to 17 years). has same 6 scales as DVI, but juvenile oriented. Contains 156 items and takes 30 minutes.
- 4. DVI Pre-Post:** the DVI has been modified so the same test can be used as a pretest and posttest. Automatically compares pretest - posttest scores. An objective measure of change or outcome. Has 147 items and takes 30 minutes.

ALL THREE VERSIONS ARE AUTOMATED (COMPUTER SCORED) ON SITE.