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The Millon Index of Personality Styles Revised (MIPS-R) in Portugal: Gender Differences

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MIPS-R in Portugal: Gender differences...

Main goal

- This study aims to determine whether males and females differ in the personality styles measured with the Portuguese version of the Millon Index of Personality Styles Revised, MIPS-R (Millon, 2004).
- Portuguese data will be compared with Millon's theoretical expectations and North American original data (Millon, 1994, 2004) and with Spanish data (Sánchez López, et al., 2000, 2001).

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MIPS-R: Overview

- ❑ The Millon Index of Personality Styles *Revised* (Millon, 2004) is a 180-item, True/False inventory designed to measure personality styles of normally functioning adults between the ages of 18 and 65+.
- ❑ The MIPS-R test comprises 24 scales, grouped into 12 pairs of juxtaposed scales, and three validity indicators.
- ❑ The 12 pairs of scales were conceptually generated and the model of personality which gives them support is grounded in biosocial and evolutionary theory. They are organized into three main areas: **Motivating Styles, Thinking Styles and Behaving Styles.**

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Motivating Styles

There are three pairs of **Motivating Styles** scales and their aim is to assess what purposes and goals direct individual's behaviour.

Pleasure-Enhancing (1A) / Pain-Avoiding (1B)

Persons scoring high on 1A are motivated to improve their lives, are optimistic about future, find easy to enjoy themselves and accept the ups and downs of life.

Persons scoring high on 1B tend to protect themselves against perceived threatening events. They focus on and intensify the problems of life, feeling that things go from bad to worse.

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Motivating Styles

Actively Modifying (2A) / Passively Accommodating (2B)

2A represents the tendency to change, actively, the conditions of one's life. Persons scoring high on 2A take charge of their lives and make things happen rather than wait for them to occur.

Persons scoring high on 2B passively accept life circumstances and do little to achieve the outcomes they desire.

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Motivating Styles

Self-Indulging (3A)/Other-Nurturing (3B)

This pair of scales relates to *r*-strategy and K-strategy which are biological reproductive strategies that differentiate species and, within most animal species, males and females.

The male's *r*-strategy relates to what Millon called Self-Indulging behaviours, characterized as acting more from self-interest than interest in others. The female's K-strategy relates to the Other-Nurturing orientation. Females are more disposed to be other-promoting and protective (Gilligan, 1997).

Persons scoring high on 3A seek to fulfill their needs and wishes, are independent and egocentric.

Persons scoring high on 3B are motivated to attend to other people's welfare. They take care of others before taking care of themselves.

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Thinking Styles

Four **Thinking Styles** scales pertain to describe cognitive processes.

The first and the second ones give account of the sources employed to gather knowledge about life:

Externally Focused (4A)/Internally Focused (4B)

Persons scoring high on 4A turn to others to find ideas, guidance and inspiration. Persons scoring high on 4B prefer to use their own thoughts and feelings as resources.

Realistic-Sensing (5A)/Imaginative-Intuiting (5B)

Persons scoring high on 5A seek for tangible, concrete information and they trust in experience and observable phenomena. Persons scoring high on 5B prefer the symbolic and gather knowledge from inferences and speculations.

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Thinking Styles

The third and fourth bipolarities relate to information processing, that is, the ways in which people evaluate and organize experiences, once apprehended.

Thought-Guided (6A)/Feeling-Guided (6B)

Persons scoring high on 6A are logical and cool and their decisions are based on objective judgements rather than subjective emotions. Persons scoring high on 6B follow their own affective responses to circumstances.

Conservation-Seeking (7A)/Innovation-Seeking (7B)

Persons scoring high on 7A adapt new information to what is known, are perfectionists and traditional. Persons scoring high on 7B are creative and prefer to take risks. They are disinclined to follow routines and seek novelty.

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Behaving Styles

The MIPS-R Behaving Styles represent different ways of interacting with others and comprise five bipolarities. These styles of social behaviour are at the end of the continuum that leads to the personality disorders of the DSM-IV.

Asocial-Withdrawing (8A)/Gregarious-Outgoing (8B)

Persons scoring high on 8A are socially uninvolved and indifferent to others. Persons scoring high on 8B seek social stimulation and attention, are charming but demanding persons.

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Behaving Styles

Anxious-Hesitating (9A)/Confident-Asserting (9B)

Persons scoring high on 9A are shy and nervous in social situations, they strongly want to be liked and they fear rejection. They are prone to isolation. Persons scoring high on 9B feel that they are more competent and gifted than others, are egocentric and self-assured.

Unconventional-Dissenting (10A)/Dutiful-Conforming (10B)

Persons scoring high on 10A are independent and resist following traditional standards. Persons scoring high on 10B are self-controlled and respect authority.

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Behaving Styles

Submissive-Yielding (11A)/Dominant-Controlling (11B)

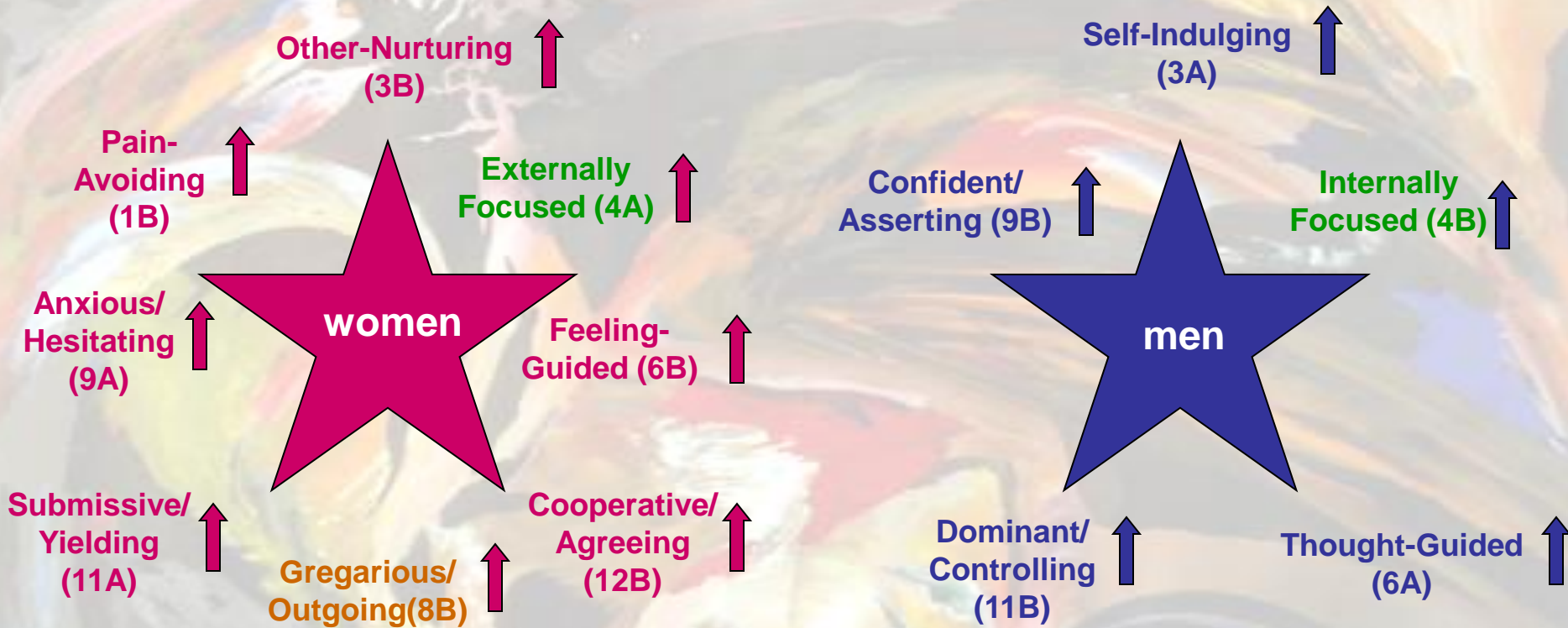
Persons scoring high on 11A are gentle, submissive and are accustomed to suffer rather than to have pleasure. Persons scoring high on 11B are domineering, socially aggressive, competitive, strong-willed and ambitious.

Dissatisfied-Complaining (12A)/Cooperative-Agreeing (12B)

Persons scoring high on 12A have tendency to be passive-aggressive and dissatisfied. Their moods and behaviour are highly changeable. Sometimes they are friendly, on other occasions they are hostile and feel misunderstood and unappreciated. Persons scoring high on 12B are likeable and form strong loyalties and attachments to others. They cover negative feelings.

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Theoretical expectations (Millon, 1990, 2004)



North-American data (Millon, 2004) shows that the correspondence between gender and 4A/4B styles is not simple...

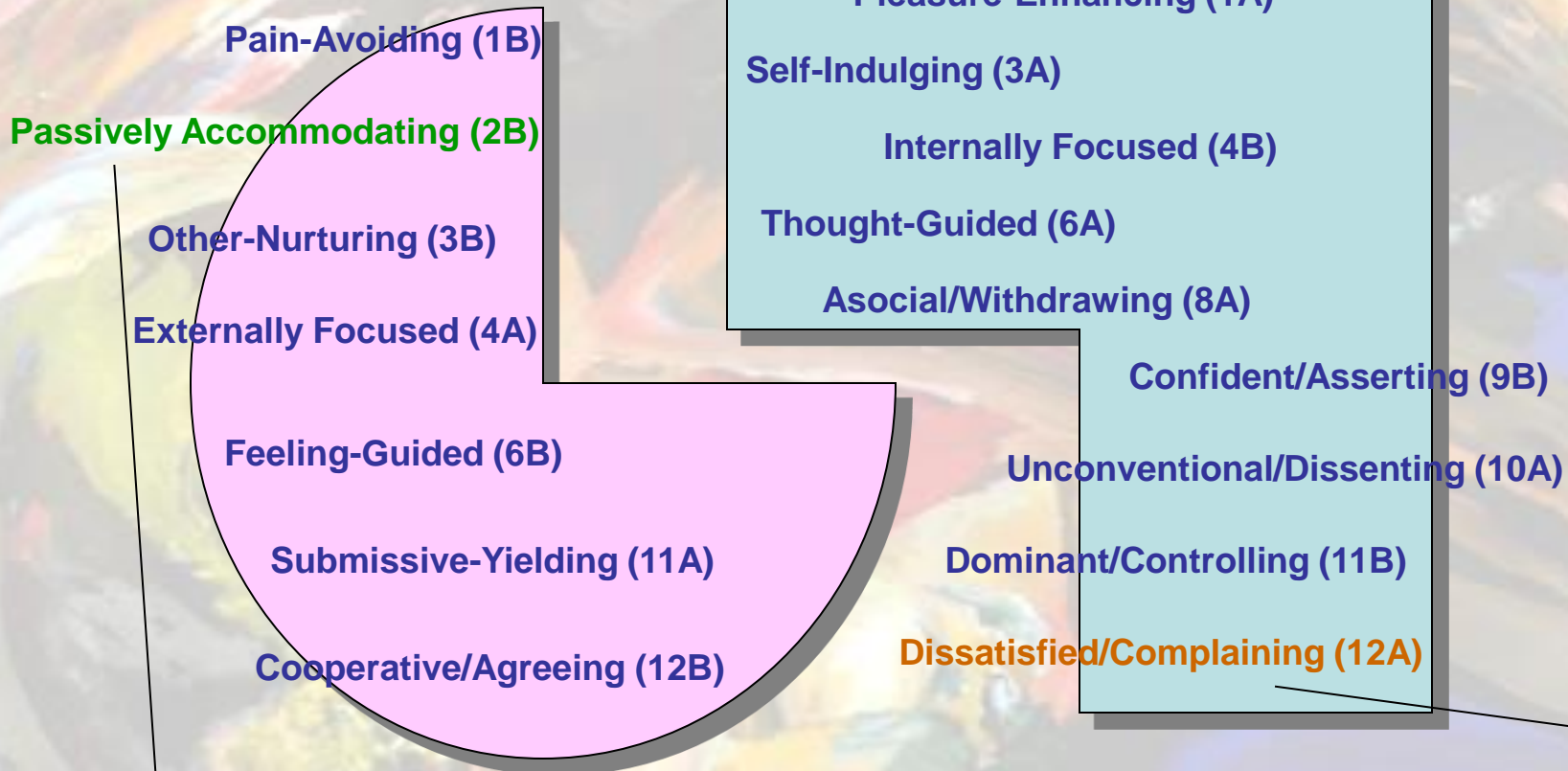
North-American data (Millon, 2004) does not confirm that female have higher scores on 8B.

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Spanish data (Sánchez López, et al., 2000, 2001).

Women score higher on scales:

Men score higher on scales:



2B differs adults but not college students

12A differs college students but not adults

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Portuguese data

Method

Participants

The sample comprised 280 adults (160 females and 120 males) who were attending to job qualification courses in Lisbon city.

Procedure

The participants completed the Portuguese version of the Millon Index of Personality Styles *Revised* in the beginning or at the end of their classes. Their teachers had been previously contacted and authorized this procedure.

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Portuguese data

Results

The male mean age was 35,85 (SD = 11,44) and the female mean age was 34,64 (SD = 10,93) .

The *Mann-Whitney U Test* was used to test if there were significant differences between men and women in MIPS-R styles.

Data analysis point out to significant differences between men and women in the **Other-Nurturing Style** ($p = .006$), the **Internally Focused Style** ($p = .036$), the **Thought-Guided Style** ($p = .000$), the **Feeling-Guided Style** ($p = .003$), the **Unconventional/Dissenting Style** ($p = .013$) and the **Cooperative/Agreeing Style** ($p = .012$).

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Portuguese data

Results

In our Portuguese sample, **WOMEN** are more protective towards others and are more motivated to attend to other people's needs, desires and welfare (**Other-Nurturing Style**); they are more empathic and they value their emotions and feelings rather than their reason and logic when dealing with experience (**Feeling-Guided Style**); in relationships, they are willing to adapt their preferences to be compatible with those of others and they avoid to upset others (**Cooperative/Agreeing Style**).

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Portuguese data

Results

In our Portuguese sample, **MEN** trust more in their own thoughts and feelings as resources than women do (**Internally Focused Style**); are more independent and act more in a nonconforming manner (**Unconventional/Dissenting Style**) and are more logic, cool and objective than women (**Thought-Guided Style**). The **Thought-Guided Style** is the one that best differentiates men and women ($p < .0001$).

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Discussion

In our Portuguese sample, gender differences, although following Millon's theoretical expectations (Millon, 1990, 2004), are less expressive than those obtained in Spain (Sánchez López, et al., 2000, 2001).

❑ Our women score higher than our men in the Other-Nurturing scale (3B), in the Feeling-Guided scale (6B) and in the Cooperative/Agreeing scale (12B). However, they are not more submissive (11A) or anxious (9A) than men, nor focus in problems of life more than do men (1B).

❑ Neither Portuguese women nor Spanish women score higher than men in the Anxious/Hesitating scale (9A) or in the Gregarious/Outgoing scale (8B).

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Discussion

- ❑ Portuguese men are not more oriented than Portuguese women to fulfill their needs and wishes at the expense of others (3B), but they trust more in their own resources than turn to others for guidance (4B). According to Millon (1990, 2004), both scales are conceptually related.
- ❑ Portuguese men, like Spanish men, score higher than women in the Thought-Guided scale (6B), which is theoretically expected (Millon, 1990, 2004).
- ❑ Portuguese men and Spanish men score higher than women in the Unconventional/Dissenting scale (10A), which is not theoretically expected. Perhaps this tendency to be more independent than women results from the disposition to be more internally focused (4B) and more self-indulging (3B).
- ❑ Portuguese men do not score higher than Portuguese women in the Dominant/Controlling scale (11B) and in the Confident Asserting scale (9B).

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Discussion

In overall, Portuguese data follow theoretical expectations about gender differences in MIPS scales and are similar, although less expressive, to those obtained in the Spanish adaptation of the test. This finding points out favourably to our purpose of adapting MIPS-R for Portuguese population.

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Anexo 1

Self-Indulging (3A)/Other-Nurturing (3B)

In biology, the *r*-strategy represents a pattern of propagating a vast number of offspring but giving minimal attention to their survival. The *K*-strategy is typified by the production of few progeny and ensuring their survival. Within most animal species male and female differ in reproductive strategies.

Millon (2004) adverts against the danger of interpret each pair of scales as clear contrasting personality styles. Each bipolar construct represents a continuum and the scores obtained reflect the extent to which one exhibits the characteristics that are being measured. Moreover, no score should be interpreted independently of its relative position with other scale scores, especially those which belong to the same dimension (i.e. motivating, thinking and behaving).

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Anexo 2

The MIPS-R offers separate norms for adults and college students, and for genders, both separate and combined.

2424The MIPS-R provides prevalence scores (*PS*) for each scale (between 0 and 100). An individual who scores above *PS* 50 on any scale displays some of the characteristics measured by that scale. The higher the score, the more pronounced the characteristics.