



# The Centre For Male Psychology

## Mental wellbeing: the Positive Mindset Index

(Barry, Folkard & Ayliff, 2014)

The Positive Mindset Index (PMI; Barry, Folkard & Ayliff, 2014) uses six items to measure mental positivity: happiness, confidence, being in control, emotional stability, motivation and optimism. These are rated on a 5-point Likert scale, with a neutral midpoint, from 1 to 5.

The scale is designed for ease of use, both for participant and researcher. For example, there are only six items, all using simple language, which is useful for people in a hurry, with limited reading skills, or impaired ability. Also, the neutral midpoint removes any pressure on participants to commit to either the higher or lower end of an opinion.

This scale shows good internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.926) and good concurrent validity with the **mental health subscale of the SF-12** ( $r = .678$ ). Seager et al (2014) found good concurrent validity between the PMI and Paykel's (1974) **Suicidal Ladder** ( $r = -.539$ ). Phillips et al (2018) found good concurrent validity with PsyCap (an **appealing personality**) ( $r = .687$ ) and the **Subjective Happiness Scale** ( $r = .689$ ). Barry et al (2020) found good concurrent validity between the PMI and Rosenberg's (1965) **self-esteem** scale ( $r = .766$ ).

The PMI has been so far used in 13 peer-reviewed published studies and a conference presentation, with a total of 10,598 participants:

- Male and female patients with uveitis (an eye condition) ( $N = 200$ ) ([Barry, Folkard & Ayliff, 2014](#))
- Men and women from general population ( $N = 348$  women & 170 men) ([Seager, Sullivan & Barry, 2014](#)).
- Men and women from general population ( $N = 217$ ) ([Barry, Seager & Brown, 2015](#))
- Black men & women ( $N=53$ ) and White men & women ( $N=149$ ) ([Roper & Barry, 2016](#))
- Men and women from general population ( $N = 115$  men & 232 women) ([Liddon, Kingerlee & Barry, 2017](#)).
- Men in the British Isles ( $N = 2000$ ) ([Barry & Daubney, 2017](#))
- Audit of mentoring scheme (conference presentation) ( $N = 16$ ) (Doyle & Harney, 2018)
- Men and women, ~4% of whom were colour blind ( $N = 128$  men & 291 women) ([Barry, Mollan, Burdon, Jenkins and Denniston, 2017](#))
- Men in the US ( $N = 5000$ ) ([Barry, 2018](#))
- Disabled men and women in the US ( $N = 330$ ) ([Phillips et al, 2018](#)).



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- Men and women in the UK aged over 50 years old ( $N = 394$ ) ([Hadley, Newby & Barry, 2019](#))
- Men and women from general population ( $N = 203$  men & 52 women)(Barry, Walker, Liddon and Seager, 2020)
- Men and women with disabilities in the US ( $N = 292$ ) ([Fry et al, 2020](#))
- Men and women in the UK ( $N = 408$ ) (Barry & Liddon, in press)

These populations vary by age, race, and ability, though are mostly from either the US or UK so are culturally relatively homogenous.

## Structure of the PMI

The stimulus question for participants is:

*Please select one of the options (e.g. “happy” or “unhappy”) for the words in each row, indicating how you are feeling at this moment.*

<b>Item 1</b>	Very unhappy	Unhappy	Moderately happy	Happy	Very happy
<b>Item 2</b>	Very unconfident	Unconfident	Moderately confident	Confident	Very confident
<b>Item 3</b>	Very out of control	Out of control	Moderately in control	In control	Very in control
<b>Item 4</b>	Very unstable	Unstable	Moderately stable	Stable	Very stable
<b>Item 5</b>	Very unmotivated	Unmotivated	Moderately motivated	Motivated	Very motivated
<b>Item 6</b>	Very pessimistic	Pessimistic	Moderately optimistic	Optimistic	Very optimistic

## Scoring the PMI

The PMI is scored from 1 to 5, with lower scores indicating a less positive mindset. The mean of the 6 scores is used.

The mean for men and women tends to be roughly similar e.g. in a study of the relationship between PMI and childhood attachment (Barry et al, 2015), the mean (SD) PMI for men was 3.2 (0.8), slightly lower than for women was 3.4 (0.8). In a study of people with uveitis



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(Barry et al, 2014), the mean (SD) score for men was slightly higher than for women: 3.3 (0.8) versus (3.2 +0.9).

Based on the scores from Barry (2018) of 5000 men in the US, the mean (SD) norm is 3.7 (0.8), and the cut-off for clinical scoring is 2.9. This study also indicates that the mean in the US is slightly higher than the US.

Older people appear to score slightly higher too, a finding that is not unusual in the literature on age and happiness. For example, Hadley et al (2019) found the mean (SD) for 394 men and women aged over 50 in the UK was 3.6 (0.7) for men and 3.5 (0.8) for women.

Physically disabled people have used the PMI too, those with medical problems (uveitis).

Roper & Barry (2016) found that the mean (SD) PMI for 53 Black men and women scored similarly to 149 White men and women: 3.4 (0.7) versus 3.4 (0.7).

## Reference

Barry, J. A., Folkard, A., & Ayliffe, W. (2014). Validation of a brief questionnaire measuring positive mindset in patients with uveitis. *Psychology, Community & Health*, 3(1), 1-10. [Full text available here](#)