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# Personality and quality-of-life improvement after apomorphine infusion in Parkinson's disease

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## Abstract

People with Parkinson's disease with motor fluctuations can be treated by Continuous Subcutaneous Apomorphine Infusion (CSAI) to reduce their symptoms. Nonetheless, factors are lacking to predict patients' quality-of-life amelioration after CSAI. This pilot study aimed to evaluate associations between personality dimensions and quality-of-life improvement after six months of CSAI.

Thirty-nine people with Parkinson's disease awaiting CSAI were included. Linear regression models between "Temperament and Character Inventory" personality dimensions at baseline

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and percentage of change in PDQ-39 (Parkinson's Disease Questionnaire-39) scores after six months of CSAI were realized (n=35). Temperament and Character Inventory was also compared between patients awaiting CSAI and patients awaiting deep brain stimulation of the sub-thalamic nucleus (n=39 from the PREDI-STIM study).

Higher Reward Dependence scores were associated with a better quality-of-life outcome after six months of CSAI, while Self-Directedness scores were associated with a better quality of life before CSAI (as opposed to Harm Avoidance, Reward Dependence, and Self-Transcendence scores associated with a worse quality of life). Moreover, people with Parkinson's disease awaiting deep brain stimulation of the sub-thalamic nucleus had similar Temperament and Character Inventory dimensions compared to patients awaiting CSAI.

People with Parkinson's disease with higher Reward Dependence scores at baseline had the best quality-of-life improvement after six months of CSAI. This finding could be used to better prepare and accompany people with Parkinson's disease during CSAI establishment. Moreover, this result could serve as an orientation factor to second-line treatments.

Short title: Personality and QoL improvement after CSAI

Keywords: Temperament and Character Inventory; Precision Medicine; Therapeutics

#### Introduction

Second-line treatments such as Deep Brain Stimulation of the Sub-Thalamic Nucleus (DBS-STN) or Continuous Subcutaneous Apomorphine Infusion (CSAI) can be offered to people with Parkinson's Disease (PwPD) with motor fluctuations<sup>1</sup>. CSAI significantly reduces OFF time in PwPD compared with placebo, but did not improve Quality of Life (QoL) in the double-blind, randomized TOLEDO study<sup>2</sup>, even if some open-label studies have found QoL amelioration following CSAI<sup>3–7</sup>. Improvements in motor function, overall non-motor burden, sleep, fatigue, mood, apathy and executive functions were also observed after 6 months of CSAI in a recent prospective study<sup>8</sup>. Similarly, CSAI reduced motor fluctuations and improved QoL without impacting cognition and psychiatric<sup>7</sup>. Finally, recent reviews confirmed all these results: improvement in OFF-time duration and in various non-motor symptoms (including

neuropsychiatric disorders) following CSAI, as well as its safety and efficacy in people with advanced PD<sup>9,10</sup>.

Personality corresponds to each individual characteristic associated with behavior, cognition and emotions in order to adapt to the environment<sup>11</sup>, and it affects the perception of the impact of illnesses on well-being and capabilities<sup>12</sup>. Hence, personality was shown to be associated to health-related QoL in different studies<sup>13</sup>, as previously reported in PD<sup>14</sup>. In this respect, personality could be an interesting factor for predicting QoL improvement after CSAI, as it was associated with QoL improvement after DBS-STN<sup>15</sup> using the Temperament and Character Inventory (TCI) (validated in a large cohort of PwPD<sup>16</sup>), which provides quantitative measure of seven personality dimensions<sup>17</sup>.

In absence of randomized controlled trials comparing the improvement induced by second-line treatments (DBS-STN vs CSAI)<sup>1</sup>, patients' choice and clinical judgement remain the main factors in treatment choice<sup>1</sup>. Since our previous study showed that PwPD with higher Novelty Seeking and Cooperativeness scores had the best improvement of QoL after DBS-STN<sup>15</sup>, personality could help to select the best treatment.

This pilot study aimed to determinate associations between personality dimensions and QoL improvement after six months of CSAI and as a secondary objective to evaluate associations between personality dimensions and QoL before CSAI establishment. As complementary objective, using additional data from our previous study, we aim to compare personality dimensions between two cohorts of PwPD awaiting CSAI or DBS-STN.

## Materials and methods

#### Patients

In this PSYCHO-PERF study, we included PwPD who started CSAI treatment from 2019 to 2022 in the University Hospital of Toulouse. CSAI introduction was decided in routine care after medical evaluation.

PwPD presenting an atypical parkinsonian syndrome, a DBS device, a significant psychiatric disorder, or cognitive decline (Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA) score<24) were excluded.

All patients gave their informed consent and PSYCHO-PERF study (clinicalTrial.gov n°NCT03793491) was approved by ethics committee (CPP Nord-Ouest IV).

As complementary objective, supplementary data from the PREDI-STIM cohort (Protocol 2013-A00193-42; clinicalTrial.gov n°NCT02360683) of the best-matched PwPD awaiting DBS-STN were extracted and used to compare PD patients awaiting CSAI or DBS-STN. Protocol can be found in our previous study<sup>14</sup>. Matching with PwPD awaiting CSAI was done according to age, disease duration and sex. When a "perfect match" was not available, we prioritized age and sex for matching, followed by only age, followed by only disease duration. Age and sex were chosen as matching criteria since both factors have been shown to influence TCI personality dimensions scores in different populations such as the normative French one<sup>18</sup> and different psychiatric populations<sup>17</sup>. The supplementary table 1 presents the matched-characteristics of all the patients.

#### Methods

The primary objective of this pilot study was to evaluate associations between TCI personality dimensions and QoL improvement measured by the change in PDQ-39 scale after six months of CSAI. The secondary objectives were to determine associations between TCI personality dimensions and QoL before starting CSAI treatment and to compare personality dimensions of PwPD awaiting CSAI to those awaiting DBS-STN from the PREDI-STIM study<sup>14</sup>.

Motor and non-motor states (Movement Disorder Society-Unified Parkinson's Disease Rating Scale (MDS-UPDRS)<sup>19</sup> in ON condition), depression (Hamilton Depression Rating Scale (HAMD)<sup>20</sup>), anxiety (Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HAMA)<sup>21</sup>), apathy (Lille Apathy Rating Scale (LARS)<sup>22</sup>) and QoL (Parkinson's Disease Questionnaire-39 (PDQ-39)<sup>23</sup>) were collected at baseline (V0) and six months after CSAI (V1). The PDQ-39, a self-questionnaire specific to PD, is divided into eight sub-scales of QoL with a mental component score ("Emotional Well-Being", "Stigma", "Social Support", "Cognitions", and "Communication") and a physical component score ("Mobility", "Activities of Daily Living" (ADL), and "Bodily Discomfort"), altogether forming a PDQ-39 Total score. A higher score indicates a worse QoL.

The TCI was used to assess patients' personality across seven dimensions<sup>17</sup> before CSAI (V0) and was not re-assessed after second-line treatment establishment, as in our previous study within the DBS-STN cohort<sup>15</sup>. This self-questionnaire of 226 items with binary responses

(true/false) is divided into four genetically determined temperaments (Novelty Seeking (NS), Harm Avoidance (HA), Reward Dependence (RD), and Persistence (P)) and three characters, which are developed through growing (Self-Directedness (SD), Cooperativeness (C), and Self-Transcendence (ST)). Each dimension score represents a part of individual personality on a spectrum. The higher the score, higher the patient presents the associated personality dimension.

The daily total Levodopa Equivalent Dose (LED) was calculated for each patient according to levodopa treatments, dopaminergic agonists, COMT and MAO inhibitors and other antiparkinsonians<sup>24</sup>, in accordance with the updated systematic review and proposals from Jost et al. (2023)<sup>25</sup>.

#### **Statistical analyses**

As descriptive analyses, mean, standard deviation and range (min, max) were calculated for quantitative variables, and headcount and percentage for qualitative variables. Before the analyses, Shapiro tests were done to verify the variables' normality.

Concerning clinical, behavioral and motor evolution assessment after six months of CSAI, we compared the PDQ-39 Total score and eight sub-scores, the four parts of the MDS-UPDRS, the HAMD, the HAMA, the LARS and the LED between V0 and V1 using paired two-sample Mann-Whitney tests or paired two-sample t-tests.

Univariate linear regression models were used to evaluate associations between TCI dimensions (explicative variables) and i) PDQ-39 scores at V0 and ii) percentages of change in PDQ-39 at V1 (responses variables). Due to the small sample size and in order to avoid over-adjustment in the models, Pearson correlations were performed between each TCI dimension and each potentially relevant variable (age, disease duration, LED, MoCA, MDS-UPDRS, LARS, HAMA and HAMD). Only variables with significant correlations (p-value<0.05 and Pearson correlation coefficient≥0.5) were then used as adjustment variables in the models.

Each PDQ-39 sub-scores and Total score at V0, and the percentages of change of each PDQ-39 sub-scores and Total score at V1 were separately used as response variables while scores of each TCI dimensions were used as explanatory variables, with previous significant correlated variables being used as adjustment. An FDR (False Discovery Rate) correction was applied for seven comparisons with calculation of q-values (FDR-adjusted p-values) for each model.

TCI dimensions and clinical parameters (age, disease duration, LED, PDQ-39, MDS-UPDRS, LARS, HAMA and HAMD) were compared between PwPD with motor fluctuations awaiting CSAI or DBS-STN using two-sample Mann-Whitney tests or two-sample t-tests.

All analyses were conducted on R Studio Software Version 2022.02.3 and a threshold of bilateral statistical significance of 0.05 was used. FDR corrections were applied (q-values) and interpretations were made carefully according to results strength.

#### Results

Forty PwPD with motor fluctuations awaiting CSAI were screened and thirty-nine were included in the PSYCHO-PERF study (one patient refused the CSAI). At V1, we analyzed thirty-five patients because of four drop-outs related to CSAI adverse effects (fatigue (n=1), cutaneous intolerance (n=1), hallucinations (n=1), and nausea (n=1)). Demographic and clinical parameters are presented in Table 1.

Due to COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown in France during part of the study (from March 17 to May 11, 2020), five PwPD were evaluated at V1 through phone calls. Nonetheless, this unplanned evaluation did not seem to impact the result of our study since comparisons of data at V1 between patients evaluated in the hospital center and by phone calls did not reveal any significant difference.

At V1, significant reduction in oral LED, MDS-UPDRS-III-on, MDS-UPDRS-IV, PDQ-39 Total scores, PDQ-39 "Emotional Well-being", and "Stigma" sub-scores, HAMD and HAMA scores were found. Only total LED (CSAI + oral medications) significantly increased (Table 1).

We only found significant Pearson correlation between Persistence dimension and disease duration at V0 (Supplementary table 2). Therefore, disease duration was used as an adjustment variable in the linear regression models using Persistence as explanatory variable.

Table 2 presents models with significant associations (FDR-corrected or not). At V0, after FDR-correction, significant positive associations remained between Self-Transcendence and PDQ-39 Total and "Communication" scores, between Reward Dependence and PDQ-39 "ADL" scores, and between Harm Avoidance and PDQ-39 "Emotional Well-being" scores. Conversely, Self-Directedness and PDQ-39 "Emotional Well-being" scores were significantly negatively associated (Table 2). At V1, after FDR-correction, only Reward Dependence tended to be negatively associated with the percentage of change in PDQ-39 Total score (Table 2).

 No significant difference in the TCI were found between PwPD awaiting DBS-STN compared to patients awaiting CSAI (Table 1), while significant clinical differences were found between both populations. Patients awaiting CSAI had lower LED, higher MDS-UPDRS II and III, PDQ-39 "Emotional Well-being", HAMD and HAMA scores at baseline.

#### Discussion

Our study suggests that PwPD with higher Reward Dependence scores at baseline have a better QoL after six months of CSAI while Self-Directedness scores are associated with a better QoL before CSAI (as opposed to Harm Avoidance, Reward Dependence and Self-Transcendence scores associated with poorer QoL at baseline). Moreover, PwPD awaiting CSAI or DBS-STN had similar personality dimensions.

In accordance with the literature<sup>5</sup>, after six months of CSAI, our study confirmed a significant improvement of motor symptoms (MDS-UPDRS-III), motor complications (MDS-UPDRS-IV) and a significant decrease of daily oral LED<sup>26</sup>. Global and mental/emotional parts of QoL were also significantly improved after CSAI, as in the literature<sup>3,4,6,26</sup>, as well as anxio-depressive state, again in line with the literature<sup>5</sup>.

Concerning our main objective, Reward Dependence was associated with QoL changes after CSAI: higher baseline Reward Dependence scores were associated with best QoL improvement. Reward Dependence corresponds to social and affective dependency with a need for social approval leading to sensible, loving and devoted individuals<sup>17</sup>. In this model of personality, Reward Dependence is related to the norepinephrine system<sup>17</sup>, as shown mainly by genetic studies<sup>27–29</sup>. Although this model is questionable, there is no direct evidence that Reward Dependence can be linked to the dopaminergic system, making it difficult to establish a direct link with the role of apomorphine. In addition, apomorphine was also shown to interact with the norepinephrine system<sup>30,31</sup>, hence an interaction between different neurotransmitters systems may certainly be involved in our results. Moreover, this personality dimension has already been associated with a better social part of QoL or a higher perception of social support in different patients populations<sup>32,33</sup>. Therefore, due to its link with social dependence, PwPD with higher Reward Dependence before CSAI may have better social adaptation and are so less disrupted by wearing CSAI, allowing them to enjoy a better QoL after CSAI implementation. Conversely, some patients do not appreciate the CSAI because of its inconveniences / constraints<sup>26</sup> (pump wearing, daily infusion often carried out by a nurse or spouse, etc.) which

can lead to a negative feeling of lack / loss of independence and therefore a poor perception of QoL. This dissatisfaction with the CSAI may result in the discontinuation of the pump<sup>34</sup> for personal reasons<sup>26</sup>, and poor compliance with the device<sup>35</sup>. Moreover, a lack of patient support (importance of "full-time caregivers") has been related to CSAI discontinuation in some cases<sup>36</sup>, which may reveal the potential loss of independence associated with this treatment. As a result, patients who are more socially adapted (higher Reward Dependence) may be less affected by these disadvantages as they enjoy being cared for.

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that better QoL improvement after CSAI for patients with high Reward Dependence was found for the overall QoL (PDQ-39 Total), rather than for the social component usually found in the literature<sup>32</sup>.

Moreover, despite worst motor and anxio-depressive state in PwPD awaiting CSAI compared to the ones awaiting DBS-STN, TCI personality dimensions were similar between both cohorts of fluctuating PwPD awaiting second-line treatments. These demographical differences (LED, motor and anxio-depressive state) may be explained by surgical selection criteria.

The main limitation of our study is the small sample size. Thus, to confirm the results of this pilot study, we are currently conducting a multicentric study evaluating the relationships between several bio-psycho-social factors (personality, believes about the treatment, ways of copying, and social support) and the improvement in QoL after CSAI (ClinicalTrials.gov: NCT06080399). Patient-Reported Outcome (PRO) measures are also another innovative and important way of conducting research that we will consider in our future studies since it could have a major impact in advanced therapies<sup>37,38</sup>. Another limitation could be the absence of behavioral variables (such as the anxio-depressive state) as adjustment in our models. However, due to the small sample size, we only used relevant variables correlated with TCI personality dimensions in order to avoid over-fitting in the models. In addition, we are aware that a significant number of analyses was performed to evaluate the associations between the seven personality dimensions and the QoL improvement after CSAI. Nevertheless, the use of the FDR correction for each personality dimensions comparisons should validate the reliability of our positive results. Our aim was to assess personality dimensions as predictors of improved QoL and, therefore, they were only assessed prior to the implementation of the intervention. Any personality changes induced by CSAI could be the subject of another study.

Finally, since we found different associations between personality and QoL outcome after CSAI and DBS-STN<sup>15</sup>, personality dimensions could be used as a predictive factor of QoL

improvement to orientate patients toward their best second-line treatment. PwPD with higher Reward Dependence scores could be preferably oriented towards CSAI, while PwPD with higher Novelty Seeking and Cooperativeness scores could be preferably oriented towards DBS-STN<sup>15</sup>. To implement this guideline in clinical practice, our team is currently validating a decision algorithm based on personality to best guide PwPD towards DBS-STN.

#### Data availability

The data supporting the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author.

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## **Competing interests**

The authors report no competing interests.

## Supplementary material

Supplementary material is available at Brain Communications online.

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## **TABLES**

#### Table 1. Characteristics of PwPD awaiting CSAI or DBS-STN

	CSAI-PD patients		V0 vs V1 – p-value - [95% CI of the	DBS-STN-PD patients	CSAI vs DBS- STN – p-value
Variables	V0 (n=39)	V1 (n=35)	difference] <sup>1</sup>	V0 (n=39)	[95% CI of the difference] <sup>2</sup>
Sex F/M <i>(N (%))</i>	17 (44%) / 22 (56%)	15 (43%) / 20 (57%)	/	16 (41%) / 23 (59%)	ed fron
Age (years)	$66.4 \pm 6.4$	/	/	$65.1 \pm 5.3$	0.25 [-1;4]
<b>Disease duration</b> (years)	$10.7 \pm 3.7$	/	/	$10.5 \pm 3.5$	0.83 [-1.4;0.8]
Total LED (mg/day)	$1008.9\pm401.4$	$1452.1 \pm 449$	8e-7 [-569.5; -287.3]	$1318.7 \pm 436.4$	0.002 [-495;211
Pump LED (mg/day)	/	$716.6 \pm 178.9$		1	/ cad
Oral LED (mg/day)	$1008.9\pm401.4$	$735.5 \pm 354.2$	8e-6 [186.6; 390.8]		/ em
MDS-UPDRS-I	$11.8 \pm 5$	$12.5 \pm 5.7$	0.23 [-3; 0.5]	$10.3 \pm 5.4$	0.26 [-1;3]
MDS-UPDRS-II ON	$14.2\pm5.9$	$14.6 \pm 6$	0.54 [-2.2; 1.2]	$7.3 \pm 6.4$	1e-5 [5; 10]
MDS-UPDRS-III ON	$23.7\pm12.1$	$16.2 \pm 12.9$	0.008 [2.5; 11.5]	$15.9 \pm 9.1$	0.004 [2.6; ] 2.9
MDS-UPDRS-IV	$9.3 \pm 2.5$	$6.4 \pm 3.4$	0.002 [1; 3.8]	$9.5 \pm 3.5$	0.73 [-1.7; 🗄 .2
CGI-S	/	$2.3 \pm 0.7$		/	/ ain
PDQ-39 Total	$33.1 \pm 12.2$	27.4 ± 10.3	0.005 [1.7; 8.4]	$30.1 \pm 12.4$	0.29 [-2.6; 8.5]
Mobility	$38.7 \pm 21.3$	$33.8 \pm 21.3$	0.18 [-2.1; 10.7]	$36.6 \pm 20.1$	0.66 [-7.3; 1.4
ADL	$35.6\pm18.3$	$33.2 \pm 16.7$	0.14 [-1.2; 8.1]	$38.5\pm19.8$	0.51 [-11.5 ] 5.7
Emotional well-being	$41.5\pm20.6$	$30.8\pm20$	0.004 [4.2; 16.7]	$29.9 \pm 15.7$	0.007 [3.3; 39.8
Stigma	$31.3 \pm 19$	$19.3 \pm 17.6$	0.001 [6.3; 18.8]	$32.5 \pm 25.5$	0.88 [-12.5; 2.
Social support	$12.5 \pm 13.6$	$8.1 \pm 13.6$	0.22 [-4.2; 16.7]	$8.8 \pm 15$	0.07 [0; 83]
Cognition	31.9 ± 17.3	$28.8\pm16.3$	0.46 [-3.1; 6.7]	$26 \pm 16.6$	0.13 [-1.7; 3.6
Communication	$28.6 \pm 21.4$	$24.8 \pm 18.7$	0.47 [-4.2; 16.7]	$25 \pm 19.4$	0.42 [-8.3; \$6.7
<b>Bodily Discomfort</b>	$44.7\pm20.9$	$40.2 \pm 22.6$	0.23 [-3.2; 12.7]	$43.8\pm20.5$	0.62 [-8.3; 46.7
LARS	$-27.2 \pm 4.3$	$-27.8 \pm 4.1$	0.25 [-1; 2.5]	$-27 \pm 4.6$	0.88 [-2.2; ].9
HAMD	$8.8 \pm 4.6$	$6.6 \pm 4$	0.006 [0.6; 3.2]	$4.8 \pm 4.2$	4e-5 [3;6]
НАМА	$10.2 \pm 4.9$	$8.6 \pm 4.8$	0.03 [0; 2.5]	$4.9 \pm 5.1$	3e-6 [4; 🗐
TCI dimensions			<u> </u>		lino
Novelty Seeking (NS)	$17.3 \pm 5$	/	/	$15.5 \pm 4.4$	0.09 [-0.3;3.9]
Harm Avoidance (HA)	$18.8 \pm 6.4$	/	/	$17.6 \pm 6.1$	0.42 [-1.7 4]
<b>Reward Dependence (RD)</b>	$15.4 \pm 3.2$	/	/	$14.5 \pm 3.9$	0.25 [-0.7;2.5
Persistence (P)	$5.4 \pm 1.6$	/	/	$5.5 \pm 1.7$	0.84 [-1; 🖁 ]
Self-Directedness (SD)	$31.7 \pm 6.4$	/	/	$34 \pm 5.8$	0.10 [-5.1; 9.4
Cooperativeness (C)	$32.5 \pm 5.1$	/	/	$33.4 \pm 4.6$	0.18 [-3;🎘 ]
Self-Transcendence (ST)	$14.2 \pm 5.7$	/	/	$14.9 \pm 6.7$	$0.70 \left[-4; \frac{2}{2}\right]$

Mean  $\pm$  SD; <sup>1</sup> paired two-sample Mann-Whitney tests or t-tests between V0 and V1; <sup>2</sup> two-sample Mann-Whitney tests or t-tests between PwPD awaiting CSAI or DBS-STN; significant p-values in bold; PD = Parkinson's Disease; CSAI = Continuous Subcutaneous Apomorphine Infusion; DBS-STN = Deep Brain Stimulation of the Sub-Thalamic Nucleus; CI = Confidence Interval; F/M = Female/Male; LED = Levodopa Equivalent Dosage; MDS-UPDRS=Movement Disorder Society-Unified Parkinson's Disease Rating Scale; ON = medication state; ADL = Activities of Daily Living; LARS = Lille Apathy Rating Scale; HAMD=Hamilton Depression scale; HAMA=Hamilton Anxiety scale; TCI = Temperament and Character Inventory

Table 2. Significant associations between TCI dimensions at V0 and PDQ-39 scores at V0 (n=39) and percentages of change in PDQ-39 at V1 (n=35)

PDQ-39 scale and sub-scales		TCI dimensions	Coefficients	p-value	q-value	R <sup>2</sup>
	Total	SD	-0.63	0.04	0.13	0.09
	Total	ST	0.98	0.003	0.02	0.19
PDQ-39 at V0	Mobility	ST	1.35	0.02	0.17	0.11
	ADL	RD	2.87	0.001	0.009	0.22
	Emotional well-being	НА	1.58	0.002	0.007	0.22
		SD	-1.54	0.002	0.007	0.21
	Stigma	НА	1.12	0.02	0.06	0.12
		SD	-1.11	0.02	0.06	0.12
	Social support	С	-0.93	0.03	0.20	0.10
	Cognition	SD	-0.91	0.04	0.08	0.09
		С	-1.22	0.02	0.08	0.11
		ST	1.26	0.01	0.06	0.15
	Communication	RD	2.31	0.03	0.11	0.09
		ST	1.62	0.006	0.04	0.16
	<b>Bodily Discomfort</b>	С	1.57	0.02	0.11	0.13
Changes in PDQ- 39 (%) at V1	Total	RD	-4.73	0.008	0.05	0.17
	ADL	Р	-12.71	0.03	0.20	0.09

Significant q-values (FDR-corrected p-value) in bold; ADL = Activities of Daily Living; SD = Self-Directedness; ST = Self-Transcendence; RD = Reward Dependence; HA = Harm Avoidance; C = Cooperativeness; P =Persistence

