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Creative-Expressive Methods Used for Challenging Purposes within the Psychological Assessment of Children and Teenagers

Elena Otilia Vladislav^{*i}

***Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Psychology Department,
University of Bucharest, Bucharest, Romania**

Abstract

Having a weaker ability of awareness and/or of verbal expression of the feelings one experiences, the child often finds it difficult to express his opinion about the problems which lead his family to turn to a psychologist. However, he does offer extremely valuable information through expressive-creative means. This article will describe, through case-studies, the manner in which several expressive-creative means can be used, as challenging resources for the psychological assessment of children and teenagers.

Keywords: psycho-diagnosis, expressive-creative methods, children, teenagers

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ⁱ Corresponding author: Elena Otilia Vladislav, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, University of Bucharest, Panduri 90, Sector 5, Bucharest, 050663, Romania. E-mail: elena.vladislav@fpse.unibuc.ro

Predictive Variables of Sexual Satisfaction

Florinda Golu^{*ii}

Adrian Gorbănescu*

*Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Psychology Department,
University of Bucharest, Bucharest, Romania

Abstract

Introduction: *Sexual fantasies are defined as any erotic image or sexual thought of a person when he/she is awake. It may be an elaborated story or a transient thought about a sexual activity (Hicks & Leitenberg, 2001). Previous researches showed that sexual fantasies can be found in most people (more than 95% of the population) and they represent an integrating part of human sexuality (Leitenberg & Henning, 1995).*

Objectives: *In this research we aimed to underline the predictive role in the context of using sexual stimuli in sexual satisfaction, to underline an existing relation between sexual satisfaction and sexual fantasies in the context of controlling the covariant variables: relationship duration and religion.*

Methods: *Sexual behavior scale, sexual fantasy scale, anamnesis, sexual satisfaction scale.*

Results: *The obtained results show that the use of sexual stimuli represents a significant predictor for sexual satisfaction, while a high level of religiosity represents an inhibitor for sexual fantasies. Moreover, a longer relationship and the use of sexual fantasies have a significant effect upon sexual satisfaction.*

Conclusions: *In general, the results obtained suggest the fact that subjects are happier with their sexual life when they use a series of sexual stimuli. In this study, religiosity seems to be a predictor for sexual satisfaction in the context of neutralizing the sexual fantasies, although the results of other researches on this topic are contradictory.*

Keywords: *prediction, sexual fantasies, sexual stimulus, religion*

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ⁱⁱ Corresponding author: Florinda Golu, 1 Mai Blvd., Bld. 2, 2nd entrance, apt. 22, Sector 6, Bucharest, Romania. Tel.: 0742525215. E-mail: florindagolu@yahoo.com

Experiential Avoidance in Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder Therapy. Case Study.

Emilia Oprișan^{*iii}

Valentina Ivan^{*}

***Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Special Education
Department, University of Bucharest, Bucharest, Romania**

Abstract

Introduction: *In the practical field of psychotherapy we frequently have to deal with a complex pathology. Sometimes it is difficult to detect the causes for a specific pathology or to identify the main pathology and the secondary ones. This derives from the complexity of the human psyche and sometimes it is conditioned by the period of time during which this pathology has evolved.*

Objectives: *In the case we are going to present, the pathology has a long history with adolescence onset and it seems that obsessive-compulsive symptoms were developed either as a particular manner of dealing with negative family experiences or as a manner of avoiding the necessity to deal with this kind of experiences.*

Methods: *In this particular case, the obsessive-compulsive pathology found a way to express itself in a graphic-plastic manner that helped the patient experience a new way of understanding and curing himself. Additionally, we will present some personal aspects about the obsessive-compulsive disorder that helped us deal with patients in practical psychotherapy. We used an integrative approach as a therapy method in order to help the patient gain control of his symptoms.*

Results: *The psychotherapy result was an improvement of the patient's life quality and a significant gain of control over the negative life experience.*

Keywords: *client resources, emotion expression, death anxiety*

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ⁱⁱⁱ Corresponding author: Emilia Oprișan, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, University of Bucharest, Panduri 90, Sector 5, Bucharest, 050663, Romania. Tel.: 0722-302728. E-mail: emilia.oprisan@yahoo.com.

Differentiated Personality Structuring in Institutionalized and Non-Institutionalized Teenagers – A Study of Two Groups from Bucharest –

Ioana A. Răducanu^{*iv}

Ruxandra Rășcanu*

Ana-Maria M. Rugescu*

***Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Psychology Department,
University of Bucharest, Bucharest, Romania**

Abstract

Introduction: *The authors tried to understand whether there is a significant difference between the institutionalized and non-institutionalized teenagers, in terms of self-esteem; whether the institutionalized ones have positive, negative or average self-esteem. We considered that self-esteem is linked to neuroticism, due to the individuals' background.*

Objectives: *We studied institutionalized teenagers of both genders, aged 16-18 (from the „Life and Light” Orphanage) and non-institutionalized youngsters from „Mircea Vulcanescu” High-School. Our main objective was to study the values of self-esteem, neuroticism and other dimensions of personality for the groups mentioned above.*

Methods: *We used three psychometric instruments: Berger, Eysenck and Berkeley tests. Self-acceptance, neuroticism and self-esteem were measured, on the five dimensions of personality.*

Results: *When processing the collected data, it became obvious that there were significant differences between the two groups concerning self-esteem, neuroticism and other dimensions of personality: institutionalized teenagers have the lowest level for three of these scales. There is a strong connection between self-esteem and neuroticism in the institutionalized teenagers, negatively correlated at a 0.50 level and we had a positive correlation of 0.37 in those non-institutionalized. Moreover, institutionalized teenagers present lower levels of self-acceptance, high levels of neuroticism and low self-esteem for work, emotional and intellectual styles.*

Conclusions: *Our interventions on the level of counseling and short psychotherapy sustain and help us diminish the negative self-image shown by orphans and they also help ease the teenagers' adjustment due to a supportive background (benefitting from the help of the social workers and maternal assistants). The results of our study showed that, as far as the measured characteristics are concerned, the institutionalized adolescents do not form a single population, but they represent distinct populations.*

Keywords: *self-esteem, neuroticism, self-acceptance*

^{iv} Ioana A. Răducanu Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, University of Bucharest, Panduri 90, Sector 5, Bucharest, 050663, Romania. E-mail: ioana.raducanu@ymail.com

Spiritual Intelligence – Description, Measurement, Correlational Analyses

Florin Vancea*^v

*Faculty of Psychology – Pedagogy, Spiru Haret University,
Braşov, Romania

Abstract

At the end of the twentieth century and beginning of the twenty-first century, the new current in terms of studying the shapes of human intelligence, risen from the transpersonal psychology area, brought to the world the third type of intelligence that tends to become acknowledged (after its antecessors: cognitive intelligence and emotional intelligence): „spiritual intelligence”.

Spiritual intelligence, as defined by researchers, is strongly connected to the fulfillment of a human being’s profound need – to feel that everything has a meaning, a purpose. It is the intelligence that makes us whole and renders our integrity. It is the intelligence of the soul, the profound self-intelligence. It is the intelligence that makes us ask ourselves fundamental, existential questions and overcome the boundaries we were used to. The psychologists that discovered this type of intelligence say that its development guarantees the psychic health.

The main challenges, which occurred once we accepted the new concept, were related to the differentiation from other concepts, more or less accepted by the psychological science: spirituality and religiosity. The main difficulties encountered by researchers were to define spiritual intelligence and to build an instrument that could be able to capture it.

For these reasons, this study aimed to identify a valid instrument for the Romanian population in order to measure spiritual intelligence and to capture its significant correlations. The research was conducted on a sample of 200 subjects, by means of the SISRI-24 questionnaire, that we translated and adapted, and it demonstrated a very good validity as far as both internal and external consistency are concerned. To this end, the investigated dimensions were: transcendence, the meaning of life and creativity.

This paper opens up a new perspective of research in the field, which should involve this new concept: „spiritual intelligence”.

Keywords: spiritual intelligence, transcendence, meaning of life, creativity



Immediate Body Experience and Reflexive Awareness

Ileana L. Vitalia*^{vi}

Nicoleta Răban-Motounu*

*Faculty of Social and Human Sciences, Psychology and Communication Sciences
Department, University of Pitești, Pitești, Romania

Abstract

Introduction: *The present study is focused on the dynamic process of self-experiencing that involves immediate, felt experience, related symbolization and a reflexive awareness of the already symbolized past experience. Several authors have considered that self-pathology begins with an imbalance between knowing the self reflexively and through sentient experience. For this reason, a number of techniques have been adapted in order to increase or enhance the client's sentient (body) experiencing. Many recent researches have evaluated the efficacy of mindfulness meditation practice both in clinical and non-clinical population (for the treatment of depression, anxiety, pain and stress) and have argued that people with specific psychological problems experience difficulties in practicing mindfulness meditation correctly in the initial phase.*

Objectives: *The aim of this study was to evaluate the efficiency of a brief mindfulness meditation exercise (awareness of the body). We supposed that an exercise focused on immediate body awareness would facilitate an increased awareness and would reduce negative automatic thoughts compared to an exercise focused on reflexive awareness (a situation reactivating a past self-experience).*

Methods: *A quasi-experimental design, observation, psychodiagnostic instruments (USAQ – Unconditional Self-Acceptance Questionnaire, ATQ - Automatic Thinking Questionnaire, PHLMS – Philadelphia Mindfulness Scale) and statistical methods (Independent Samples t Test) were used in this study.*

Results: *After the participation in this type of brief mindfulness meditation exercise (awareness of the body), the participants experienced increased awareness and less intense negative automatic thoughts compared to the control group.*

Conclusions: *Our results suggested that mindfulness meditation could facilitate the process of self-experiencing, revealing the deficits in emotional self-experiencing and increasing awareness, while more emotionally challenging experiences lay the stress on problematic aspects of self. Both of them can be used for different purposes in the psychotherapeutic process, according to the therapeutic goals. Secondly, it highlights the impact of the affective state on the automatic thinking.*

Keywords: *awareness, self-experiencing, mindfulness, meditation*

^{vi} Corresponding author: Ileana L. Vitalia, Faculty of Social and Human Sciences, Târgu din Vale, 1, Pitești, 110040, Romania. E-mail: ileanavitalia@yahoo.com