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Edited by Clara Pracana & Michael Wang



Advances in Psychology and Psychological Trends

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Section 4, entitled “Clinical Psychology”, provides reviews and studies within various fields concerning relationship processes in clinical practice. Each chapter is diversified, mainly addressing thematic related to individuals well-being and improvement of quality of life.

Chapter 12: *How Personality and Coping Styles Differ in Optimists and Pessimists*; by Lilly E. Both. Personality and coping styles were examined in relation to optimism and pessimism. The sample consisted of 178 individuals (M age = 23.00; SD = 6.27; range = 19-50 years; 79% women) who completed an online survey. Participants completed the BFI-2 to assess personality, the Ways of Coping Scale to determine coping styles, and the Future Events Scales to measure optimism and pessimism. The results found a moderate negative correlation between optimism and pessimism, suggesting that although these constructs are related, they are still distinct. A series of hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted predicting optimism and pessimism. Optimism was predicted by lower scores on negative emotionality (neuroticism), and higher scores on extraversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness. As well, problem-focused coping made a unique contribution. Specific facets that predicted optimism were higher compassion and lower depression scores. Pessimism, on the other hand, was predicted by age (being older), gender (being female), and higher negative emotionality (neuroticism) scores. Also, higher scores on emotion-focused coping contributed to the model. The only facet that predicted pessimism was depression. These results suggest that our perceptions – whether we have a positive or negative bias – are influenced by both dispositional factors (like personality) and situation influences (like coping).

Chapter 13: *Associations between Primary School Children’s Perceptions of Parental Acceptance and Rejection, and their Drawings of a “Person Picking an Apple from a Tree”*; by Or Shalev, Andriani Papadaki, Elias Kourkoutas, & Michal Bat Or. The present study of 644 Greek school-age children (323 boys and 321 girls, ages 10–12) examined and compared associations between perceptions of parental acceptance and rejection, and their unique depictions of a “Person Picking an Apple from a Tree” or “PPAT” drawings. Perception of parental behavior was measured by the “Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire” (Rohner & Khaleque, 2005). Drawing content was analyzed quantitatively according the Symbolic Content rating system in PPAT drawings (SC-PPAT: Bat Or, Ishai, & Levi, 2014, 2017). We employed K-means cluster analysis and obtained three relatively discrete PPAT scripts. Drawing scripts were found to be associated with children’s perceptions of parental behavior. These associations were found mainly among boys, especially when perceiving their parents as highly aggressive. These results demonstrate how empirical inquiry into PPAT content contributes to identifying implicit relational representations in the drawings. Furthermore, they reinforce the value in examining drawings from a holistic perspective, i.e. not just the individual components, but also the relationship between such components; while focusing on the relational experience of children as expressed through their pictorial PPAT narratives.

Chapter 14: *An Insider's Perspective: The Experience of Parents and Gender Variant Youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder*; by Wallace Wong, Jaime Semchuk, Veronique Nguy, & Melissa Jonnson. While a growing body of research has documented the co-occurrence of autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and gender variance, only a handful of published studies have investigated the perspectives and experiences of gender variant youth with ASD. Current clinical care guidelines for this population have generally been obtained through expert knowledge and fail to consider the perspectives of key stakeholders with an insider perspective such as youth and their caregivers. As such, two semi-structured focus-groups and an individual interview were conducted to explore the experiences and perspectives of four gender variant youth with ASD and three of their parents. Interviews were transcribed and analyzed for themes. This study seeks to increase our understanding of this population, identify avenues for future research, and contribute to improving the quality of clinical services for gender variant youth with ASD.

Section 5, entitled “Social Psychology”, gives a glance on projects from a psycho-social perspective. Themes vary from gender stereotypes, sexual orientation, emigration, well-being, motivational potential as well as health promoting habits.

Chapter 15: *Content of the Father and Mother Stereotypes in Japan: Compared to the Overall Gender Stereotypes*; by Mizuka Ohtaka. Suzuki (2017) reviewed the studies on gender inequality and concluded that gender stereotypes contribute to the persistence of gender discrimination in the workplace and at home. It has also been verified that the content of father (Troilo, 2013) and mother stereotypes (Ganong & Coleman, 1995) differed from the overall gender stereotypes in American society. This study investigated whether the content of the father and mother stereotypes was dissimilar to that of the overall gender stereotypes in Japan. That is, does the content of the father (versus men) and mother (versus women) stereotypes differ from the typically held gender stereotypes? A survey was conducted among undergraduates (N = 266; Men = 106, Women = 160), with a mean age of 19.05 years (SD = 1.02 years). The results imply that the idea that ‘fathers (rather than men) should work outside the home and mothers (rather than women) should keep the house’, is held in Japanese society. In the future, it would be helpful to examine not only explicit stereotypes but also implicit stereotypes about fathers and mothers. Further, it would be useful to study stereotypes held by older and/or less educated adults.

Chapter 16: *An Implicit Model of Assessment of Attitude to Health of Specialists in an Organization*; by Elena Rodionova, Vladislav Dominiak, Zoya Dudchenko, & German Nikiforov. Attitude to health can be considered as one of the most important factors of efficiency and professional success of employees today, as it is a regulator of human behavior in a challenging and controversial professional

situation. Studies of psychologists (starting with R. La Pierre's phenomenon, 1934) often fix the discrepancy between the declared attitude to health and true attitude and behavior. The imperfection of methods of diagnostics of attitude to health may be one of the reasons for such discrepancy. The authors suggest studying the attitude to health of specialists in an organization not only by traditional survey methods (for example, R.A. Berezovskaya's (2003) attitude-to-health questionnaire, a questionnaire on studying the barriers of health-seeking behavior by Nikiforova, Rodionova, Vodopyanova, & Dudchenko, 2016.), but also by means of an implicit method (based on the priming effect, implicit associative test). The article presents the results of a study conducted by using the implicit methodology for studying attitude to health, which is based on a model of polar values.

Chapter 17: *Road Less Traveled: Motivations and Pathways of Filipino Lesbians and Gays Identifying as Ex-Lesbians and Ex-Gays*; by Nel Jayson Santos, Zyra Evangelista, Aaron Vichard Ang, Sigrid Joyce Dela Paz, & Daniel Jan Duque. This study explores the motivations and the pathways of past self-identifying Filipino lesbians and gays. In this study, the researchers seek to (1) understand the motivations that influenced ex-gays in modifying their sexual orientation and (2) delve more into the different pathways (stages and/or steps) that are involved in the sexual orientation modification of ex-gays specifically in the Philippine context. A semi-structured interview was conducted with 10 self-identified Filipino ex-gays. Inductive thematic analysis was then used to analyze the data and to identify common themes. Four themes emerged as motivations of ex-gays: Identity Dissonance, Spiritual Conviction, Cognitive Reconstruction, and Influential Role Models. Likewise, three themes emerged as common pathways taken by ex-gays: Church Involvement, Accountability/Support Groups, and Adaptation of New Lifestyle. Moreover, the study clarifies the current definition of being an ex-gay, and added an evidence to the existing notion that sexual orientation cannot be fully changed.

Chapter 18: *Resilience, Migration Experience and Emigration Self-Efficacy as Factors Related to Emigration Intentions among University Students in Slovakia*; by Bohuš Hajduch, Oľga Orosová, Jozef Benka, & Marcela Štefaňáková. In Slovakia, there has been an increase in the number of students who aim to move abroad. The main objective of this study was to explore whether factors such as emigration self-efficacy, evaluation of migration experience, frequency of migration experience and resilience are related to the emigration intentions of Slovak university students. We also explored mediational effect of emigration self-efficacy in the relationship between resilience and emigration intentions. The research sample consisted of 474 university students from Slovakia (M=22.4, SD=2.13) from which 76.8% were women, all participating in the Student Life Cohort Study (SLiCE 2016). We found that all factors have a positive unique effect on emigration intentions. Gender was not significant in relation to the emigration

Foreword

intentions. Later, we found that resilience positively predicts emigration intentions both directly and indirectly through emigration self-efficacy, which is a significant mediator of this relationship. These results contribute to a better understanding of the role of migration and personality factors in explaining emigration behaviour among young people in Slovakia.

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Section 1
Educational Psychology

Chapter #1

HOW LEARNING STYLE RELATES TO STATE AND TRAIT ANXIETY AMONG JAPANESE FRESHMEN TRANSITIONING TO UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

This study examined how learning style relates to anxiety among university freshmen, controlling for gender, during their academic transition from high school to university. The study applied Kolb's experiential learning theory and Spielberger's paradigm of state and trait anxiety. Participants consisted of 194 freshmen of a Japanese university located near Tokyo. Data were collected in a required course and analyzed using two-way analysis of variance (i.e., learning style and gender). Results revealed that the four learning styles significantly differed in both state and trait anxiety variables. However, there was an insignificant difference in both anxiety types between male and female students. Additionally, there was no interaction effect of learning style and gender for either type of anxiety. We offer practical implications based on the study findings.

Keywords: learning style, state anxiety, trait anxiety, academic transition, Japanese undergraduates.

1. INTRODUCTION

Freshmen encounter psychological challenges when beginning their university life (Basco & Olea, 2013; Clinciu, 2013; Pancer, Hunsberger, Pratt, & Alisat, 2000). One such challenge, student anxiety as a negative emotional experience derived from the unfamiliar university environment, leads to adverse consequences (Von Ah, Ebert, Ngamvitroj, Park, & Kang, 2004) such as poor academic adjustment and performance (Levitz & Noel, 1989; Saklofske, Austin, Mastoras, Beaton, & Osborne, 2012), mental and physical illness (Ribeiro et al., 2017), and even dropout (Clinciu, 2013). Research on efforts to alleviate freshman anxiety has reported the effectiveness of social support (Compas, Wagner, Slavin, & Vannatta, 1986; Sato et al., 2017), which includes institutional aids and school counselors. Although the effect of freshman anxiety as well as methods to reduce it have been investigated, little research has examined the relationship between freshman anxiety and individual differences—especially learning style. Using a sample of university students in Jordan, Kadiem and Hamzah (2004) documented the association of gender, personality, and trait-anxiety with learning styles, but their study did not highlight the context of transition to university. Based on studies performed by Spielberger (1972) and colleagues (Spielberger, Gorsuch, Lushene, Vagg, & Jacobs, 1983; Vagg, Spielberger, & O'Hearn, 1980), state anxiety was also identified as a crucial construct that hinges more on environmental conditions. As a consequence of the limited research, it is still unknown whether there is a relationship between learning style and state as well as trait anxiety of university freshmen at a time when students experience the important transition from high school to university. The current study sought to fill this gap. Accordingly, the aim of this

study was to examine how learning style relates to state and trait anxiety in this group of freshmen encountering a transitional period when entering university.

The current study's context is Japan, where the college-going rate has been increasing over the past several decades and was 57.9% in 2018 (Education Career, 2019). One issue facing Japanese universities as well as students is dropout and repeating a grade in university (Tateishi & Ogata, 2016). Tateishi and Ogata (2016) stressed the high rate of dropout in male students who attend private universities—with this trend rising since the 1990s. The Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (2014) reported that the reasons for dropout from higher education institutions in Japan include financial distress (20.4%), transferring to another university (15.4%), poor academic performance (14.5%), starting work (13.4%), illness (5.8%), and difficulty in university adaptation (4.4%). Similarly, the Japanese Institute for Labour Policy and Training (2015) listed reasons such as poor academic performance and uninteresting courses/ classes (42.3%), financial or home problems (17.6%), changing careers (14.8%), difficulty in university adaptation including poor human relationships (11.8%), and illness (11.8%). Among the reasons, poor academic performance and difficulty in university adaptation seem relevant to learning and learning style. Thus, it seemed appropriate to study learning style in the context of Japanese higher education.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Learning style

Over several decades, learning style has been of interest to scholars and practitioners in multiple fields (Honigsfeld & Schiering, 2004). A large number of learning style studies have indicated that people have a distinctive way of learning (Dunn & Dunn, 1978; Kolb, 1984; Kolb & Kolb, 2017; Peterson, Rayner, & Armstrong, 2009). The term “learning style” refers to a person’s preferred way of responding to tasks, assignments, or problems in a learning situation (Peterson et al., 2009). Keefe (1979) indicated that learning style is related to affection, cognition, and physiological activities in learning situations that require individuals to respond to their environment. In fact, various learning style paradigms have been offered, with different definitions of learning style (Hawk & Shah, 2007; Honigsfeld & Schiering, 2004). For instance, Dunn and Dunn (1978) explained learning style as individual cognitive activities when processing new and difficult information. Kolb (1984) proposed experiential learning theory through which learning style represents an individual’s preferred way of approaching a learning situation based on his or her experience. Curry (1987) presented the onion model that contains different cognitive and learning styles, noting that learning styles in Kolb’s theory correspond with the information processing paradigm (Cassidy, 2004), which calls for interacting between the person and the environment (Riding & Cheema, 1991). Later, Fleming (2001) presented the VARK learning style model, which represents visual, aural, read and write, and kinesthetic. His model deals with information by collecting it, putting it in order, and thinking. This study chose Kolb’s (1984) learning model because it is based on individuals’ experiences as a source of learning, and in this study the learning context involved freshmen experiencing an academic transition.

According to Kolb’s (1984) model as shown in Figure 1, learning has four modes: concrete experience (CE), reflective observation (RO), abstract conceptualization (AC), and active experimentation (AE). Each learning mode has a specific function (Kolb, 1984). The CE mode relates to grasping concrete experiences, dealing with human situations, and using intuition. Individuals with this mode are good at valuing and respecting human