

## FOREWORD

InScience Press is pleased to publish the book entitled *Psychology Applications & Developments II* as part of the Advances in Psychology and Psychological Trends series. These series of books comprise authors and editors work to address generalized research, albeit focused in specific sections, in the Psychology area.

In this second volume, a committed set of authors explore the Psychology field, contributing to the frontiers of knowledge. Success depends on the participation of those who wish to find creative solutions and believe their potential to change the world, altogether, to increase public engagement and cooperation from communities. Part of our mission is to serve society with these initiatives and promote knowledge, therefore it requires the reinforcement of research efforts, education and science and cooperation between the most diverse studies and backgrounds.

Contents show us how to navigate in the most broadening issues in contemporary education and research, in the broad Psychology field. In particular, this book explores four major divisions within general Psychology, divided into four sections: Clinical Psychology, Cognitive and Experimental Psychology, Educational Psychology and Social Psychology. Each section comprises chapters that have emerged from extended and peer reviewed selected papers originally published in the proceedings of the International Psychological Applications Conference and Trends (InPACT) conference series (<http://www.inpact-psychologyconference.org/>). This conference occurs annually with successful outcomes. Original papers have been selected and invited to be extended significantly, then reviewed, and authors of the accepted chapters requested to make corrections and improve final submitted chapters. This process has resulted in the final publication of 14 high quality chapters organized into 4 sections. The following sections' and chapters' objectives provide information on the book contents.

**Section 1**, entitled “Clinical Psychology”, provides reviews and studies within various fields concerning relationship processes in clinical practice. Each chapter is diversified, mainly addressing thematics in mental health patients, their well-being and quality of life. It also explores motivations and cognitions.

Chapter 1: *Posttraumatic Growth and Psychological Well-Being of Georgian Citizens: A Comparative Study of Internally Displaced Persons and other Citizens*; by Lili Khechuashvili. This chapter summarizes a study of psychological well-being, based on the multidimensional model proposed by Ryff, and posttraumatic growth as described in the transformational model by Tedeschi and Calhoun. The study explores psychological well-being and posttraumatic growth

indicators based on self-report measures, and aims to answer two questions: are there indicators that differentiate internally displaced persons (IDPs), who emerged after armed conflict with Russian troops in 2008, and other citizens of Georgia (non-IDPs), and if so, can the differences between these groups be predicted by other variables measured in the study? The study was planned as a two-step process: preparatory procedures — cross-cultural adaptation and validation of the instruments, and the main study. The Stressful Life Event Checklist, The Posttraumatic Growth Inventory, the Scales of Psychological well-being, and a demographics measure were administered to 1189 participants. Data showed no differences between IDPs and non-IDPs regarding psychological well-being and posttraumatic growth totals. However, IDPs scored lower on the New Possibilities factor. Further, significant within group differences were revealed: non-IDPs with low social-economic status and IDPs with poor conditions reported significantly less psychological well-being than other subgroups. The level of psychological well-being can be reliably predicted by socio-economic status and self-perceived health condition.

Chapter 2: *Psychological Distress and Coping Strategies among Women who Undergo Cancer Genetic Testing*; by Valentina Di Mattei, Martina Bernardi, Fabio Madeddu, & Lucio Sarno. Carriers of BRCA mutations (BRCA1 and BRCA2) have a higher risk for breast and ovarian cancer. Although cancer genetic testing is an effective instrument for cancer prevention, little is known about the psychological impact it may have on its users. The aim of the present study is to investigate the effect of coping strategies on the prediction of psychological distress among women who decide to undergo cancer genetic testing; distinguishing them by their reasons for undertaking genetic testing. The study included three groups of women: breast and/or ovarian cancer patients (N = 33), breast and/or ovarian cancer survivors (N = 22) and people with strong family histories for breast and/or ovarian cancer (N = 10). All cancer patients (both in/out of remission) were affected by breast or ovarian cancer. Assessment of psychological distress and coping strategies were respectively obtained with the administration of the SCL-90-R and the COPE-NVI questionnaires. ANOVA and multiple regression models were carried out. Groups of participants significantly differed with regards to somatization, depressive symptoms and hostility. The use of avoidance coping strategies predicted higher levels of psychological distress. Results from the present study suggest the importance of coping strategies on the prediction of psychological distress, allowing psychologists to draw up appropriate intervention strategies during cancer genetic testing.

Chapter 3: *Inception of an Instrument on Health Capability of Family Caregivers*; by Barbara Bucki, Elisabeth Spitz, & Michèle Baumann. The health capability of family caregivers has already been studied through eight factors: physical and psychological functioning, lifestyle value, self-efficacy towards health services, family support, social capital, socio-economic conditions and access to health

services. Our aim was to identify new factors. Family caregivers of stroke victims living at home were recruited in the Lorraine region (France; n=8) and Luxembourg (n=6). Semi-structured interviews about their health statuses, how they currently take care of their health, and the internal resources they need to achieve optimal health were conducted face-to-face. Verbatim transcriptions were open-coded and grouped into new factors of health capability. Items reflecting the main idea of the categories were formulated. Seven women and seven men (age 63.6±10.1) participated. Statements were regrouped together into new ways, giving rise to seven new emergent factors: health knowledge, health self-efficacy, health value, life skills, health decision-making, motivation, and attitude towards the future. Of them, 76 items were generated, 51 reflecting generic abilities while 26 being specific to family caregiving. Content analysis of these factors first allows guiding the preparation of innovative supports to promote health capability. Second, this list can serve as a basis to elaborate a guide to which clinicians can refer to, in orienting family caregivers according to their needs. Further research is needed to complete the validation of the HCFC instrument.

Chapter 4: *Mental Health in Japanese Parents Living Abroad: A Case Involving a Japanese School in Nairobi*; by Eriko Suwa, Minoru Takahashi, & Hirofumi Tamai. As the number of Japanese citizens living abroad has increased, mental health care for such individuals has become an important concern. Due to the language and culture peculiar to Japan, a number of Japanese schools that offer a Japanese curriculum for Japanese expatriate children have been founded to not only maintain their academic ability but also facilitate cultural transition. Moreover, these schools often have a role in the community for parents and other Japanese residents in the country. Therefore, supporting Japanese schools assists Japanese expatriates. This project involved the development of a psychological support system for a Japanese School in Nairobi. The first step involved exploring the needs of Japanese adults in Nairobi (N = 33) via the administration of a brief questionnaire survey. The results showed different types of stress reaction, which may have developed as a result of living in Nairobi, in this group relative to those of their counterparts in Japan. Although they tended to be preoccupied with the anticipation of stress, this did not always interfere with their mental health. In addition, the frustrations of daily life were assumed to generate their stress symptoms.

Chapter 5: *Depressive Symptoms and Suicidal Ideation among Czech Adolescents*; by Helena Klimusová, & Iva Burešová. The incidence of suicide and suicide attempts in Czech adolescent population are among the highest in Europe. Based on the data of crisis hotline counselors for children, the frequency of suicidal callers doubled in the last five years. There seems to be many reasons for this increase; the depression in children and adolescents being the major one besides socio-demographic factors, family-related factors, substance abuse etc. The aim of our study was to investigate the incidence of depression symptoms during the

period of early adolescence and to compare them with Czech normative data from 1997. The study was conducted on a large sample (N=1708) of Czech adolescents aged 11-16 years (m = 13.65; 52% female), utilizing the Children's Depression Inventory (CDI - Kovacs, & Beck, 1977; Kovacs, 1992). The CDI evaluates the presence and severity of specific depressive symptoms in youth; depression is seen as a syndrome, not a specific behavior. The proportion of the adolescents with the total score indicating higher risk of clinical depression was between 17,8 - 42,9 % in our sample, depending on the cut-off score. Regarding the incidence of suicidal ideation, almost 2 % expressed a commitment to suicide and further 21 % admitted ideation without a firm intention (the latter being twice more common in girls than in boys). Significantly higher scores both in CDI total score and in the scale scores were found when compared to Czech norms constructed more than 15 years ago. Detailed pattern of gender differences and the correlations of CDI scores and family-related factors or relationships with peers including belonging to a subcultures as emo or goth are also presented.

**Section 2**, entitled “Cognitive and Experimental Psychology”, delivers chapters concerning, as the title indicates, studies and research in the area of behavior from the point of cognitive aspects. Memory, decision making, functioning, and cognitive approaches are used to compile these works.

Chapter 6: *The Role of Cognitive Bias Distortions in Pathological Gambling*; by Franca Tani, Alessio Gori, & Lucia Ponti. Several factors are related to the onset and the maintenance of pathological gambling. An important role is carried out by cognitive bias distortions, which represent real “errors” in the reasoning processes. The aim of this study is to analyze these cognitive errors in two groups of gamblers. A total of 323 gamblers (131 males and 192 females), average age 25.31 (SD = 10.55), was recruited in various gambling rooms, and at the University of Florence. All participants completed the Italian version of the *South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS)* and were divided in two groups on the basis of their questionnaire score: a clinical sample composed of 62 pathological gamblers (SOGS score above 5); and a non-clinical sample composed of 261 non-problematic gamblers (SOGS score below 3). All participants completed the Italian version of the *Gambling Related Cognitions Scale (GRCS)*, which assesses 5 dimensions related to cognitive distortions: *Illusion of control*, *Predictive control*, *Interpretative bias*, *Gambling expectancies*, and *Perceived inability to stop/control gambling*. *Results*. Our findings support the results of previous investigations on gambling-related cognitive biases. Specifically, pathological gamblers showed higher levels in all cognitive bias distortions considered when compared to non-problematic gamblers.

Chapter 7: *Psychopathology: The Cognitive Orientation Approach*; by Shulamith Kreitler. The objective of the chapter is to reintroduce into the scene of psychopathology the psychological perspective by describing the cognitive orientation approach to mental disorders. This cognitive-motivational approach emphasizes the role of meanings, beliefs and attitudes in promoting specific behaviors in the normal or abnormal range. A large body of empirical studies showed the predictive power in regard to behaviors of cognitive contents referring to themes identified as relevant for the particular behavior and presented in terms of four belief types (about self, about others and reality, about rules and norms, and about goals and wishes). The chapter presents a brief theoretical approach to psychopathology based on the cognitive orientation approach and describes its application to the following three disorders: paranoia, schizophrenia and depression. The presented studies describe questionnaires based on the cognitive orientation theory that enabled to differentiate between patients with specific diagnoses and healthy controls. The themes that contributed most to the differentiation are presented. These included, for example, non-conformity, perfectionism, extreme distrust of others, and rejection of compromise. The findings provide new insights into the underlying dynamics of the specific psychopathological disorders and enable delineating the blueprints of a general theoretical approach to psychopathology. The results may also be applied for assessment, prevention and therapeutic interventions in psychopathology.

Chapter 8: *Meaning – Its Nature and Assessment: The General Approach and the Specific Case of Body Image*; by Shulamith Kreitler. The purpose is to introduce the theory, applications and assessment of a new conception of meaning and to illustrate one of its empirical application by means of the multi-dimensional questionnaire of the body image. The first part is devoted to meaning. Meaning is often regarded as an elusive and subjective construct. The meaning theory of Kreitler and Kreitler provides a new way of defining the nature of meaning and exploring how it affects our cognitive and emotional functioning, our personality tendencies, and our worldview and construction of reality. This approach complements and expands previous approaches to meaning in psychology and other disciplines. It is based on characterizing contents in terms of the provided information and the manner of expression. It is based on a very large body of empirical studies. The major concepts of the meaning theory are meaning system, referent, meaning value, meaning unit and meaning variables. The assessment technique enables assessing meaning of different kinds (e.g., verbal and nonverbal), and identifying meaning assignment tendencies of individuals of different ages. Applications of the meaning system include clarifying constructs, exploring the underlying dynamics and constituents of personality traits and cognitive acts, comparing worldviews of different groups and producing changes in states of consciousness. The second part is devoted to describing a particular application of the meaning system to the dimensional assessment of the body image. The questionnaire, its characteristics and applications are described.

Chapter 9: *The Usefulness of Phantom Latent Variables in Predicting Changes in the Effects among Structural Relations - An Example of Modeling Food Attitude and Human Values*; by Marco Vassallo. The goal of this study was to examine the usefulness of phantom latent variables of models with structural relations. Phantom latent variables are defined as latent variables with no observed indicators (Rindskopf, 1984) and take form by making constraints on structural relations into latent variables path models. The constraints in applied psychology have the purpose to explore and simulate unrevealed aspects of psychological theories with latent variables. As a consequence, the phantom latent variables have the purpose to model the respondents' *alteration* to such constraints and to provide proxy of new effects that take into account the constraints and the alterations, simultaneously. In this respect, an example of the application of phantom latent variables was proposed to an attitude model towards buying sustainable food products in Italy, with second-order dimensions of Schwartz's taxonomy of basic human values (1992) as predictors. To this end, phantom latent variables were introduced as mediators into the model with the purpose of simulating what would have happened to the model respondents if the openness to change dimension of the Schwartz's taxonomy had been restricted to be greater than, less than, or equal to, specified constants in predicting the attitude.

**Section 3**, entitled "Educational Psychology", offers a range of research about teachers and students, the learning process, as well as the behavior from a psycho-educational standpoint.

Chapter 10: *Constructive and Apparent Nonconformists at School*; by Ryszarda Ewa Bernacka. The article explores two specific types of nonconformists, with reference to nonconformity as a personality dimension based on an original theory of a human creative attitude (Popek, 1989). The aim of the present study was to determine the occurrence of constructive and apparent nonconformity among students at middle school, secondary school and undergraduate level, among girls and boys. Studies performed on 2239 school students in Poland employed the Creative Behavior Questionnaire (CBQ III) (Bernacka, 2009). The study provides evidence that constructive nonconformists are predominant at all of the three stages of education and there are more constructive nonconformists among girls than boys, especially in middle schools. The study has shown that nonconformity as a personality trait is a mechanism of motivation and emotion which strongly stimulates the conduct and mental functioning of adolescent students in the school environment.

Chapter 11: *Vocational Identity in the Context of Values and Career Motivation*; by Katarína Baňasová, Tomáš Sollár, & Eva Sollárová. Vocational Identity is one of the core components of identity construction in adolescence. The suitability of using the Vocational Status Assessment for population of Slovak adolescents was explored via comparing results of the cluster analysis conducted on American

students. Our chapter describes relations among Vocational Identity, career motivational orientation and values, and explores their contribution to clarifying each other. The research was conducted on 136 grammar school students. The sample was composed of 50% men and 50% women with a mean age of 17.7 years ( $SD = .64$ ). The results show that the structure of six types of Vocational Identity is highly similar to the original American sample. The second part of the study shows statistically significant positive correlations between career motivational orientation and the dimension of the Vocational Identity – Career Commitment and negative significant correlations between the dimension of the Vocational Identity – Career Reconsideration and career motivational orientation. The results show statistically significant differences in the level of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Career Motivation and in the level of Achievement value and value of Hedonism among six Vocational Identity statuses. Applying the Vocational Identity Status Assessment as a useful tool for determining Vocational Identity status of Slovak adolescents is recommended.

**Section 4**, entitled “Social Psychology”, gives a glance on projects from a psycho-social perspective. Themes vary from life satisfaction, career, as well as health promoting habits.

Chapter 12: *Life Satisfaction in Undergraduate Students: The Role of Dispositional and Situational Factors*; by Lilly E. Both, & Lisa A. Best. Satisfaction with life is related to positive mental health outcomes and people who are satisfied with their lives report lower levels of distress (Wang & Kong, 2014) as well as higher levels of happiness (Peterson, Park, & Seligman, 2005). The purpose of this research was to determine factors that predicted life satisfaction in university students. Three hundred and eighty-six participants completed a series of questionnaires to measure personality, attachment, coping styles, loneliness, social connectedness, and life satisfaction. In this sample, participants used the full range of life satisfaction scores, with over 50% of the participants reporting that they were satisfied with their lives. A series of hierarchical regression analyses was used to predict life satisfaction. In the first regression using personality factor scores, satisfaction with life was predicted by higher Extraversion, Conscientiousness, and social connectedness, coupled with lower Neuroticism, fearful attachment, and family loneliness. A second regression model using personality facet scores indicated that higher Positive Emotions, Impulsiveness, and Self-Discipline as well as lower Depression, Assertiveness, and Altruism predicted higher life satisfaction. Higher levels of social connectedness and lower levels of family and romantic loneliness also made significant contributions to the model. Overall, the quality of personal relationships (i.e., loneliness and social connectedness) rather than general coping styles was predictive of well-being in adulthood. It should be noted that there was a large proportion of variance unaccounted for and future researchers should focus on adding to the predictability of the model.

Chapter 13: *Disparities in Career Attitudes among Postgraduate Students*; by Senad Karavdic, Angela Odero, Chrysoula Karathanasi, & Michèle Baumann. The preparation of students' future career trajectories is a dynamic process in relation to social and educational determinants. Our objective is to analyze the associations between generic employment capabilities, career attitudes and related factors among postgraduate students. All masters' students registered at the Centre for Documentation and Information on Higher Education (CEDIES) database in Luxembourg were contacted by post, to participate in an online questionnaire. The five point scale questionnaire was scored as follows: 1) Dynamic Career Attitudes (DCA); 2) Employability Soft-Skills (ESS); 3) Search for Work Self-Efficacy (SWSES); 4) Quality of Life domain Autonomy (QLA); and 5) Socio-demographic characteristics. The data were analyzed using bivariate tests, correlations and multiple linear regression models. 481 of the volunteers (26.4 years; SD=5.5) were predominantly women, Luxembourgish, unemployed or had less than or equal to six months of job experience. The higher the ESS, SWSES and QLA scores, the higher the DCA score was. Nationality, being unemployed, having less than six months job experience and being in the first year of a Master's degree programme were associated with a lower dynamic career attitude score. The Dynamic Career Attitudes scale seems to be an appropriate instrument to evaluate the efficacy of the university career services programme.

Chapter 14: *Subjective Health Problems in the Context of Personality Characteristics and Health-Related Behavior in Czech Adolescents*; by Iva Burešová, Helena Klimusová, Martin Jelínek, & Jaroslava Dosedlová. This chapter reports partial results of an extensive research project called Health-Enhancing and Health-Threatening Behavior: Determinants, Models, and Consequences. This project involves a detailed analysis of select variables reflected in the process of self-regulation with respect to health. Its goal is to create models of health-promoting and health-threatening behavior applicable among the Czech population. This is made possible by means of a cross-section research study carried out using sample groups of adolescents, young, middle and advanced aged adults as well as seniors. The presented results focus on the explored selected factors of health-promoting behavior in adolescents, the level of commitment that adolescents invest in taking care of their health, and their cognitive evaluations and perceptions of their own health. In addition, the role of personality characteristics in relation to maintenance, loss or restoration of one's health was also explored. The data from the following instruments were utilized in this study: Health-Related Behavior Scale (Dosedlová, Slováčková, & Klimusová, 2013); Subjective Health Problems Inventory (modified version of the inventory by Osecká, Řehulková, & Macek., 1998), and the Big Five Inventory (John, Donahue, & Kentle, 1991). The sample consisted of 835 adolescents (47.4% female) aged 12-19 years (35.3% were in the period of early and middle adolescence and 64.7% were in the period of late adolescence). A principal component analysis of the items of the Health-Related Behavior Scale yielded five factors: healthy eating habits,

exercise and lifestyle, avoidance of addictive substances and other risks, regular daily routine and emotional well-being. To predict subjective health issues, we used a hierarchical regression analysis with demographic variables entered in the first block, personality factor scores entered in the second block, and health-related behaviors entered in the third block. The results indicated that girls, compared to boys, scored higher on the subjective health issues scale; among personality characteristics, higher neuroticism and lower conscientiousness predicted more subjective health issues. Furthermore, lower scores on emotional well-being, regular daily routines and healthy eating habits predicted more health issues.

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