

PSIWORLD 2014

## Psychometric evaluation of the short version of the Defense Style Questionnaire on a Romanian non-clinical sample

Ana-Maria Cazan<sup>a</sup>, Aurel Ion Clinciu<sup>b\*</sup>

<sup>a,b</sup> Transilvania University of Brasov, Eroilor 29, 500036, Brasov, Romania

---

### Abstract

The main objective of this study was to evaluate the factor structure of the DSQ-40 on a non-clinical sample of students. The participants were investigated with the adapted DSQ-40 and with the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire. Alfa Cronbach coefficients revealed a high internal consistency for the entire scale, but smaller for the mature and neurotic defenses scales. The present findings support the applicability of the Romanian version of DSQ-40 within the Romanian non-clinical population. However, the factor structure of the Romanian version needs further exploration, regarding the mature and neurotic defenses factors.

© 2015 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license

(<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

Peer-review under responsibility of the Scientific Committee of PSIWORLD 2014.

*Keywords:* defence style, factor structure, ego defences, maturity–immaturity continuum, personality;

---

### 1. Introduction

The Defense Style Questionnaire (DSQ) is a self-report inventory that measures groups of defenses called defensive styles according to Vaillant's (1994) continuum ranging from immature or maladaptive defenses to mature or adaptive defenses (Hyphantis, 2010). DSQ was designed to operationalize and assess conscious derivatives of ego defenses. The questionnaire highlights the hierarchical model of Vaillant, distinguishing four defensive levels based on an immaturity–maturity or pathology–mental health continuum. There are several versions of the instrument: DSQ-88, DSQ-60, and DSQ-40.

The aim of the DSQ is to measure defensive styles rather than defense mechanisms separately, because measuring defenses is not reliable (Andrews, Singh, & Bond, 1993). These styles are the following: the maladaptive

---

\* Corresponding author. Tel.: +40740065734

E-mail address: [ana.cazan@unitbv.ro](mailto:ana.cazan@unitbv.ro)

style, showing the respondents' incapability of coping with internal or external stressors by using actions or behaviors for their own advantage; the image-distorting style, reflecting a pattern of splitting the self-image and the image of others, avoiding reality and stressful situations; the self-sacrifice style, including a denial of a person's own needs and focus on being kind to others; and the adaptive style adopted by the people who are able to eliminate distressing feelings by focusing on humor or by channeling their feelings into constructive, creative activities (San Martini, Roma, Sarti, Lingiardi, & Bond, 2004). DSQ-40 has the following structure: four defenses are included in the mature factor (sublimation, humor, anticipation and suppression); four are included in the neurotic factor (undoing, pseudo-altruism, idealization and reaction formation) and twelve are included in the immature factor (projection, passive-aggression, acting-out, isolation, devaluation, autistic fantasy, denial, displacement, dissociation, splitting, rationalization and somatization). The main criticism addressed to the instrument is the vulnerability to the subject's response distortions, ego defenses being unconscious mechanisms (Hyphantis, 2010). Despite its limitations, DSQ has been used in non-clinical areas, its scores correlating with global mental health, marital and carrier satisfaction and also in a variety of clinical areas, including eating, anxiety, depressive, and personality disorders (Bond, 2004).

Regarding the psychometric properties, DSQ is extensively used in many countries with results only partially corresponding to the original structure. It has been translated and validated into numerous languages and for different populations (Chinese, Dutch, Egyptian, Finnish, French, German, Brazilian, and Italian). The main objective of this study was to evaluate the factor structure of the DSQ-40 on a non-clinical sample of students.

## 2. Materials and methods

### 2.1. Participants and procedure

We used a convenience non-clinical sample, including 232 participants: 124 students from Transilvania University of Brasov (51 male and 73 female, with a mean age of 21.4) and 108 high school students (46 male and 62 female, with a mean age of 15.6), from two different fields, humanities and mathematics. The participants gave their informed consent to participate in the study. The questionnaires were completed during class time, were anonymous and no compensation was offered.

### 2.2. Instruments

The participants were investigated with the adapted DSQ-40 and additionally with the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire. A mini-questionnaire was also used, concerning factual data related to age, gender, parents' schooling, environment etc. With the permission of the author, the DSQ-40 was translated into Romanian. The 40 items measure 20 ego defenses. The DSQ-40 can provide scores for the 20 individual defenses and scores for the three factors (mature, neurotic and immature). The Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ – Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975) was used in order to assess three personality traits: extraversion, neuroticism and psychoticism. The lie scale was also included.

## 3. Results and discussion

Alfa Cronbach coefficients revealed a high internal consistency for the entire scale, .80. For the mature and the neurotic defenses subscales, the Alfa Cronbach coefficients were smaller, .50 respectively, .53, given the small number of items included in these factors. For the immature defenses subscale, Alfa Cronbach coefficient was higher, .72.

An exploratory factor analysis was performed on the 40 items (principal components extraction with Varimax rotation). The KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) method revealed satisfactory results regarding the heterogeneity of the sample  $KMO = .672$  and Bartlett's test of sphericity was statistically significant,  $p < .001$ . The criterion of the explained dispersion percentages revealed the existence of 16 factors but the screeplot highlighted a three factor solution, which confirms previous research and the original structure of the instrument. The three factor solution accounted for 24% of the total variance, as follows: the first factor covers 9.43% of the variance (so it is far from

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/1110368>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/1110368>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)