

PSIWORLD 2013

Personality of alcohol addict according to the theory of transactional analysis

Marina Hadži-Pešić^{a*}, Milica Mitrović^a, Kristina Brajovic Car^b, Dunja Stojanović^c

^aFaculty of Philosophy, University of Nis, Cirila i Metodija 2, 18000 Nis, Serbia

^bFaculty of Media and Communication, Department of Psychology, Singidunum University, Karadordjeva 65, 11000 Belgrade, Serbia

^cSpecial hospital for psychiatric illness "Gornja Toponica", Stevana Sindjelica 39, 18202 Gornja Toponica, Serbia

Abstract

Objective of the research was to examine the differences in ego states profile, life positions and drivers between alcohol addicts and non-alcoholic participants. 72 respondents took part in the research, 36 of whom were alcohol addict and 36 of whom were the people who do not consume alcohol nor suffer from serious somatic or psychiatric disease. The obtained results point to the existence of statistically significant differences between the alcohol addict group and control group in the presence of drivers: Please others, Be perfect and Try hard. The differences between groups in life positions and ego states profile are not statistically significant.

© 2014 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. Open access under [CC BY-NC-ND license](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).

Selection and peer-review under responsibility of Romanian Society of Applied Experimental Psychology.

Keywords: alcohol addict, ego states, life positions, drivers

1. Introduction

Alcoholism is a medical-psycho-social problem and it is widely connected to a large number of other diseases and different socio-deviant occurrences. Theoretical explanations and research findings on the causes of alcoholism

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +381 641522764.

E-mail address: marinahadzipešić@yahoo.com

can be categorized in three groups, according to difference in focus: biological, psychological and social. Psychological arguments states that there are common personality traits of an alcohol addict. Research on the link between personality and the course of alcohol and drug abuse has suggested that substantial numbers of abusers meet Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders criteria for antisocial personality disorder and that depression also frequently accompanies alcohol and drug dependence (Nathan, 1988). Although no single personality description is likely to be both a sensitive and specific indicator of either alcoholism or antisocial personality disorder, Sher & Trull (1994) concluded that personality variables are important components of etiological models of these disorders.

Transactional analysis (TA) as personality theory gives its contribution to understanding the personality of an alcohol addict analyzing it according to its basic concepts. Regarding the structure of personality, according to TA, there are three ego states: Parent, Adult and Child. Ego state represents a coherent group of thoughts and emotions shown in different patterns of behavior. The Parent, or extero-psyche, represents the mental state in which the person is oriented in relation to introjected messages, learned values and rules, other people's experiences, indirect knowledge of social relations that has not been experienced, and the like.

The Adult, or neo-psyche, is mental state which is the adequate intrapsychic response to the current situation, or a realistic orientation with good assessment and flexibility in the use of available resources including the contents of other ego states such as values or emotions from the Integrated Adult ego state.

The Child, or archaopsyche, is the mental state which represents activation of old memories, outdated identities and patterns, and which becomes the dominant standard for decision-making and behavior at a given time (Berne, 1961). The personality from Parent ego state can function as Nurturing Parent, nurturing toward self or others, or as Controlling Parent, that is controlling and correcting self or others. While in the Child ego state person could behave as Free Child - freely and spontaneously expressing emotions or as Adapted Child - adapting to the surroundings. The authors who have dealt with the problem of alcohol addiction describe their personality in the following way. In alcohol addicts, two out of three ego states are not active: Parent (lack of criticism, concern) and Adult (lack of the ability to decide in the right way). Child ego state is active and it behaves without the censorship which inactive ego states lack (White, 2011). The excluded Parent ego state refers to the Steiner (1971) that in an alcohol addict the injunction "Do not think" is present. At an early age the injunction was "delivered" by parents who did not feel adequate in their parental role, and who feared that the child (future alcohol addict) might notice their inadequacy. To prevent it, they could send to the child non-verbal injunction for clear thinking. In accordance with the above mentioned injunction, the exclusion of Adult ego state is understandable - because the best way to behave in accordance with the injunction "Do not think" is not to use ego state Adult. According to Cloninger, Sigvardsson & Bohman (1988) high novelty-seeking and low harm avoidance were most strongly predictive of early-onset alcohol abuse. These two childhood variables alone distinguished boys who had nearly 20-fold differences in their risk of alcohol abuse: the risk of alcohol abuse varied from 4 to 75% depending on childhood personality.

Parents carry their expectations about what they want their child to be like, therefore, they often send those messages to the child verbally and non-verbally (Stefanovic-Stanojevic & Hadzi-Pesic, 2009). Those messages that implies conditioned acceptance, and becomes the primary drivers in the adult life, are of the five following categories: Be strong (typical of persons who are persevering, resistant to stress, satisfied with little things, ready to sacrifice), Hurry up (person is active and dynamic, and works quickly. This person has no time to stop and think things over), Be perfect (helps us get the respect of others by being informed, competent, which is how we avoid mistakes and incompetence), Try hard (persons dedicated to work, who strive to get a reward as a result of their success in difficult matters and thus avoid defeat), Please others (decent, caring, obedient person, who satisfies everyone's wishes). (Hazel, 1989). Name of the categories summarizes the compulsive elements in the motivational profile of an individual. The meta-analysis conducted by Kotov et.al. (2010) included 175 studies published from 1980 to 2007, which yielded 851 effect sizes, linking "big" personality traits to anxiety, depressive and substance use disorders. All diagnostic groups were high on neuroticism and low on conscientiousness.

White (1994) defines life positions as psychological positions that are shown in the interpersonal style of the individual from birth on. The concept of life positions is somewhat similar to the concept of attachment styles (Bolby, 1988) and developmental phases according to Klain (1984). The mentioned positions that characterizes an individual falls into one of the following four categories: autonomy position (I am OK, you are OK), depressive

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/1116031>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/1116031>

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