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Original

Measurement of the Jungian Psychological Types in Mexican university students

Medición de los tipos psicológicos junguianos en estudiantes universitarios mexicanos

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to measure the eight Psychological Types proposed by Carl G. Jung in Mexican population. A cross-sectional, multicenter, exploratory study was carried out, for which a psychometric instrument based on Jungian typology theory was developed. The Psychological Type Indicator (ITP, for its acronym in Spanish) consisted of 8 subscales (one per psychological type). It was administered to a sample of 1194 participants and validated by the methodological and statistical procedure developed by Reyes Lagunes and García y Barragán. The participants were Mexican university students, ranging from 17 to 40 years (median = 21, IQR = 4; 63% female). The internal consistency of the instrument was determined, obtaining an alpha coefficient of 0.873. An exploratory factor analysis indicated a structure of 10 factors, which together explained 32.672% of the variance. Four of the found factors were consistent with Jungian typology (Introverted Feeling, Introverted Thinking, Extraverted Sensing and Extraverted Feeling). The rest of the factors grouped attributes of this theory, which enable a new way of assessing personality in Mexican population with reference on this model of personality.

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Keywords: Psychological types; Personality; Validation; Scale development; Assessment

Resumen

El objetivo de este estudio fue medir los 8 tipos psicológicos propuestos por Carl G. Jung en población mexicana. Se llevó a cabo un estudio transversal, multicéntrico y exploratorio, en el cual se desarrolló un instrumento basado en la tipología junguiana. El Indicador de Tipos Psicológicos (ITP) se conformó por 8 subescalas (una por tipo psicológico). El instrumento fue administrado a una muestra de 1,194 estudiantes universitarios mexicanos provenientes de 3 estados distintos de la República Mexicana (Guanajuato, Jalisco y la Ciudad de México), y se validó por medio de la propuesta metodológico-estadística de Reyes Lagunes y García y Barragán. Los participantes fueron hombres y mujeres (37 y 63%, respectivamente) de entre 17 y 40 años de edad (mediana = 21, RIC = 4). Se determinó la consistencia interna del instrumento, obteniéndose un coeficiente alfa de 0.873. El análisis factorial exploratorio arrojó una estructura factorial compuesta por 10 factores, que en conjunto explicó el 32.672% de la varianza. De los

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10 factores encontrados, 4 fueron consistentes con la tipología junguiana (sentimiento introvertido, pensamiento introvertido, sensación extravertida y sentimiento extravertido). El resto de los factores agruparon atributos de la teoría junguiana, los cuales permiten una nueva forma de evaluar la personalidad en México de forma válida y confiable, con referencia a este modelo de personalidad.

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Palabras clave: Tipos psicológicos; Personalidad; Validación; Desarrollo de escala; Evaluación

Introduction

The Psychological Types model proposed by Carl G. Jung in the 1920s posits the existence of eight characteristic types of a persistent general attitude, understanding as “attitude” the disposition of the mind for acting in a certain form and direction, in a predetermined way (Jung, 1995 [1921]). The theory assumes the existence of innate preferences for gaining energy, gathering information, taking decisions and, in general, orienting oneself toward the world (Tucker, 2010). Additionally, this theoretical approach tries to understand the point of view from which the individual experiences the unconscious (Beebe, 2004). Thus, Jung suggests two fundamental attitudes: introversion and extraversion, which are originated by the concepts of “object” and “subject”. Jung defines the “object” and the “objective” as everything that belongs to the real, external and tangible world; on the other hand, the “subject” and the “subjective” represents conceptions that corresponds fundamentally to the person’s psyche (Jung, 1995 [1921]). According to the theory, four functions emerge: Thinking, Feeling, Sensing and Intuition. The functions involve the way the individual relates to the immediate surrounding, and how information is extracted from the environment (Robertson, 2006). If each attitude is combined with a different function, eight psychological types will be obtained (Fig. 1).

Since its creation, this theory has been embraced by a large number of professionals of different areas of psychology. It has proven being fruitful in the therapeutic context, and clinically useful for providing a framework to understand individual differences in behavior (Osmond, Siegler, & Smoke, 1977). However, an increasing number of psychology professionals have questioned this theory in the past decades, as its empirical support has not been fully demonstrated (Loomis, 1982). This Jungian personality model has been difficult to operationalize and to empirically demonstrate (Davis

& Mattoon, 2006). According to some authors, Jung himself found difficult “typifying” his patients, coming to believe that his typology could have been just a word-play (Osmond et al., 1977). Other difficulties revolves around accurately understanding the introverted attitude from an objective perspective, since it depends strongly of archetypes and mental images that cannot be easily communicated (McCrae & Costa-Jr, 1989). Likewise, the descriptions given by Jung about each type make strong reference to the unconsciousness, propitiating that attitudes and functions overlap with each other (McCrae & Costa-Jr, 1989). A study conducted by Cook (1970) indicated the only genuine bipolarity in this typology was extraversion/introversion. Moreover, Gray (1947) also pointed a temporal instability in the theory, finding that, in a lapse of 5 years, people tends to use more sensation and thinking than in their youth, and also develop a more introverted attitude.

In spite of these difficulties, psychometric instruments that measure Jungian typology have been developed. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is the most widely used test based in this theory (Mattoon & Davis, 1995). It measures 16 Psychological Types instead of eight, since two additional dimensions that were added by Katherine Briggs and Isabel Briggs-Myers to Jung’s original model: “Judging” and “Perceiving”. Judging focuses in a preferred lifestyle in the sense of order, meanwhile Perceiving indicates a preference for a less structured approach to life (Arnau, Green, Rosen, Gleaves, & Melancon, 2003). This 16-type structure was later used in several subsequent Jungian typology instruments. Despite its extensive use and its influence on other test, the MBTI has been target of numerous controversies. The authors of the test, Katherine Briggs and Isabel Briggs-Myers were outsiders from the scientific community, thus, their incursion into the field of personality assessment has been questioned by theorists and researchers (Cranton & Knoop, 1995). Furthermore, the instrument is not isomorphic with the theory on which it is based, since it measures 16 types and not eight. Therefore, using the

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