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Religion and happiness: A study among university students in Turkey

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Running head: PSYCHOLOGICAL TYPE OF PERSON-CENTRED COUNSELLORS

Research Report

Psychological type of Person-Centred counsellors

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ABSTRACT

There are various models and approaches to counselling and psychotherapy. Nevertheless, one of the most important tools a therapist has is themselves and a key factor in who they are is their psychological type. This study aimed to investigate the psychological type profile of Person-Centred counsellors. The psychological type of 85 counsellors (63 females, 22 males) was measured with the Francis Psychological Type Scales (FPTS). Results indicate that the FPTS can reliably measure psychological type among counsellors, and the most common psychological type was introvert, intuitive, feeling, and judging (INFJ). The relation of these psychological types with a Person-Centred approach is further discussed.

Key words: counsellors; Person-Centred; psychological type

INTRODUCTION

There are various models and approaches to counselling and psychotherapy each with differing concepts and features. Acceptance of one particular model does not imply the rejection of the others, as each has useful elements and all offer something in terms of understanding human thoughts and behaviours. The various models can be placed in two distinct categories; directive and non-directive. Directive models include Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, a present-centred and structured approach utilising a range of cognitive, emotive, and behavioural techniques; Gestalt Therapy, which incorporates a variety of experiments designed to intensify experiencing and assimilate conflicting emotions; and Behaviour Therapy which utilises techniques such as systematic desensitisation, flooding, and modelling. Non-directive models include Existential Therapy which focuses on first understanding the issue, using techniques from other models, and then applying them in an existential framework; Psychoanalytic Therapy which encourages clients to become aware of their unconscious internal conflicts via techniques such as dream analysis and free association; and Person-Centred Therapy which highlights the attitude of the therapist as the most important ingredient (Corey, 2001).

Person-Centred counsellors are existentially orientated concerning themselves with how the client experiences life, rather than diagnosis and cause. Their relationship with the client is of primary importance and it is this which facilitates therapeutic change (Rogers, 1951, 1967). A Person-Centred counsellor needs to be congruent, empathic, and offer unconditional positive regard. It is these three core conditions that allow a therapeutic alliance to be established. This alliance has been found to correlate with effectiveness in a range of counselling approaches (Krupnick, et al., 1996; Hovarth & Bedi, 2002). That said, Mearns, Thorne, and McLeod (2013) argue that in Person-Centred counselling, the therapeutic alliance is not enough and working at relational depth is more effective. To achieve relational depth the core conditions need to be offered in such a way that each enhances the effect of the other, allowing the client to experience empathy, together with a feeling of acceptance, and to believe that these are offered in a congruent manner. When the core conditions are delivered in this way, they are more powerful than if they were partially given.

Regardless of which model is being used it can be argued that one of the most important tools a therapist has is themselves. A key factor in who they are, is their

psychological type. Psychological type theory originated with Jung (1971), and can be explained in terms of three dichotomous preferences: two orientations, two perceiving preferences, and two judging preferences. The two orientations are defined as extraversion (E) and introversion (I), and are concerned with how individuals obtain their energy: extraverts preferring to draw energy from the outer world of people and things and introverts preferring to draw energy from the inner world of ideas. The two perceiving functions are defined as sensing (S) and intuition (N), and are concerned with how individuals perceive the world: sensors preferring to focus on the details and present realities, and intuitives preferring to focus on the 'big picture' and future possibilities. The two judging functions are defined as thinking (T) and feeling (F), and are concerned with how individuals reach their judgements: thinkers preferring to rely on objective logic and feelers preferring to rely on their subjective appreciation of the personal and interpersonal factors involved in a situation. A fourth dichotomous preference that explores attitude toward the outer world was added by Katherine Cook Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers (Myers & Myers, 1980; Myers & McCaulley, 1985). Attitude toward the outer world is defined as judging (J) or perceiving (P), and are concerned with how individuals approach day-to-day life: judgers preferring an organised and planned approach, and perceivers preferring a flexible and spontaneous approach. Taken together, these four dichotomous preferences generate sixteen discrete psychological types (Myers & McCaulley, 1985).

Bayne (1995) highlighted that psychological type theory has three main objectives to do with the self, others, and self-development. These enable people to: identify their own psychological type, understanding how they can be most effective; help with understanding of others especially those of different psychological types; and aid in the understanding of the development of a personality over the lifespan. Bayne (1995) argued that by understanding their own psychological type, counsellors are better equipped to alter their own counselling style to suit a client's psychological type thereby offering the best possible environment for personal growth.

Investigating the relationship between psychological type and preferred counselling orientation, Erikson (1993) found that counsellors limited their flexibility by utilising techniques that fitted their own psychological type. Thinking types were more likely to choose directive approaches such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, whereas feeling types were more likely to choose non-directive approaches such as Person-Centred therapy. This study was criticised by Dodd and Bayne (2006) as the sample size was small (N=23) and

drawn from counsellors specifically interested in attending a Myers-Briggs Type Indicator workshop (Briggs-Myers, McCaulley, Quenck, & Hammer, 1998).

Dodd and Bayne (2006) investigated the same relationship but with a larger sample (N=123) and employed the Kiersey Temperament Sorter II (KTS: Keirsey & Bates, 1978). They found that in experienced counsellors, psychological type does influence the choice of counselling model chosen. In a later study, which also utilised the KTS, Varlami and Bayne (2007) surveyed 84 counselling psychology students and found that those who preferred SJ (i.e., Sensing and Judging) were more likely to choose the Cognitive Behavioural model, the NFJ (i.e., Intuitive, Feeling, and Judging) types were more drawn toward the Psychodynamic model, and those with a preference for NFP (i.e., Intuitive, Feeling, and Perceiving) were more inclined to opt for the Person-Centred model. However, in a later study involving counselling students in Malaysia, Sumari, Al Sayed Mohamad, and Ping (2009) did not find any significant differences between directive and non-directive counsellors in terms of their psychological type. That said, this particular Malaysian study utilised an alternative measure to the ones mentioned above and it may be that it was not a good measure of psychological type as evidenced by its lower than normal reliability rate ($\alpha = .64$). The studies mentioned so far have looked at the various models of counselling and psychotherapy; however, they have not tended to focus on a particular model.

Psychological type has been operationalised in a number of different ways including the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Myers & McCaulley, 1985), the Keirsey Temperament Sorter (Keirsey & Bates, 1978) and the Francis Psychological Type Scales (Francis, 2005). The Francis Psychological Type Scales (FPTS) is increasingly being employed in research. First, it has been demonstrated to be reliable in a number of contexts including among clergy in England (e.g. Robbins & Francis, 2010; Brewster, Francis, & Robbins, 2011), and the USA (e.g. Francis, Wulff, & Robbins, 2008); and among congregations (e.g. Francis, Butler, Jones, & Craig 2007; Francis, Duncan, Craig, & Luffman, 2004). Second, it is easy to complete as part of a pencil and paper questionnaire, and the length of the instrument makes it ideal to use as a research tool (Francis, 2005).

The aims of this study are first to assess the instruments internal reliability among counsellors, thereby, extending its application, and second to present the personality profile of Person-Centred counsellors. Given previous research, it was assumed Person-Centred counsellors are more likely to present an INFJ profile. Introverts (I) focus on their inner world of ideas whilst intuitives (N) tend to utilise their imagination. These strengths will help

a Person-Centred counsellor see the world through their clients' eyes. As feelers (F) often take a subjective approach, once they have focussed on the clients perspective they will be able to better understand any issues that arise. Judging types (J) prefer life to be orderly with systems in place making them suited to the time boundaries that need to be observed by Person-Centred counsellors. Accordingly, the following hypotheses were tested:

H1: The FPTTS will achieve an acceptable internal reliability as measured by the alpha co-efficient among counsellors.

H2: The majority of Person-Centred counsellors will present an INFJ profile.

METHOD

Sample

Eighty-five counsellors (63 females, 22 males) participated in the study. Their ages ranged from 20 years to 70+ years. Four counsellors were in their twenties, 17 were between 30-39 years, 23 were between 40-49 years, 23 were between 50-59 years, 14 were between 60-69 years, and four were aged 70+ years. Of the 85 participants, 69 were currently working with clients and 66 had a supervisor who they met with regularly. The counsellors had been qualified from less than one year to fifty years, 6 were in practice for less than a year, 8 for a year, 29 for between two and five years, 13 between six and ten years, 15 between eleven and fifteen years, and 13 for sixteen years or more. One did not disclose their years as a counsellor.

Procedure

Participants were recruited via the online directory provided by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). Those who listed "Person-Centred" as a type of therapy offered were each sent a personal email explaining about the research project and inviting them to take part. Those willing to participate were directed to an online survey. Appropriate ethical approval was obtained in line with British Psychological Society guidelines. Anonymity of participants was assured along with their right to withdraw.

Measures

Psychological type was assessed via the Francis Psychological Type Scales (Francis, 2005). This scale has 40 forced choice items which aim to differentiate between the two orientations, (e.g., do you prefer having many friends (E) or a few deep friendships (I)), the two perceiving processes, (e.g., are you more interested in facts (S) or interested in theories (N)), the two

judging functions, (e.g., are you more analytic (T) or sympathetic (F)), and the two attitudes towards the outside world, (e.g., are you more structured (J) or open-ended (P)), with 10 items for each category.

Data analysis

The research literature concerning the empirical investigation of psychological type has developed a highly distinctive method for analysing, handling, and displaying statistical data in the form of 'type tables'. This convention has been adopted in the following presentation in order to integrate these new data within the established literature and to provide all the detail necessary for secondary analyses and further interpretation within the rich theoretical framework afforded by psychological type.

The alpha co-efficient was calculated for each of the four scales to give an indication of the internal reliability of each scale.

RESULTS

Table 1 presents the scale properties of the four dimensions of the FPTs. The following alpha co-efficients were obtained: Extraversion/Introversion .77; Sensing/Intuition .64; Thinking/Feeling .69; and Judging/Perceiving .78. Whilst Extraversion/Introversion, Thinking/Feeling, and Judging/Perceiving are in excess of DeVellis (2003) recommended threshold of .65, Sensing/Intuition falls short of this level. That said, given the size of the sample in this study, this slightly lower alpha co-efficient is deemed acceptable. Thus, H1 was supported; the FPTs can reliably measure counsellors' psychological type.

Table 2 presents a distribution of the psychological type profiles of the 85 counsellors who took part in the survey. The data demonstrate that the counsellors described themselves as more introverted (59%) than extraverted (41%); more intuitive (59%) than sensing (41%); more feeling (66%) than thinking (34%); and more judging (75%) than perceiving (25%). Although, INFJ was the most common type among the counsellors its frequency was not over 50%, and therefore H2 was rejected.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

It has previously been reported by Erikson (1993) that counsellors tend to choose approaches that fit with their own psychological type preferences. Thinking types were more likely to choose directive/cognitive approaches, such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy;

whilst feeling types were more drawn towards non-directive/affective approaches such as Person-Centred Therapy. The current findings, in which 66% of Person-Centred counsellors had a preference for feeling, support Erikson's assertion. A study by Varlami and Bayne (2007), involving counselling psychology students, commented that those who preferred SJ were more likely to choose the cognitive behavioural model; however over a third (36.5%) of the counsellors in the current study had a preference for SJ and their counselling approach was Person-Centred. It could be argued that the previous study involved counselling students who had not yet fully decided on their particular choice of counselling, and therefore were not fully aware of what the different approaches entailed. Participants in this study were all qualified in their chosen model, Person-Centred Therapy, and therefore may have had a deeper understanding of this method.

Taking dichotomous pairs, participants had a greater preference for introversion (58.8%) than extraversion (41.2%). With introverts gaining their energy from within and being happy to work alone; feeling drained by too many people and preferring to think before they speak (Francis, 2005; Keirsey, 1998); this fits in well with the Person-Centred counselling model as the role requires them to disregard their own private life and step into the world of the client in relational depth (Mearns, Thorne, & McLeod, 2013). Being happier to work alone would suit the role of a counsellor as it involves working on a one-to-one basis as opposed to working with groups of people. Looking at the imaginative profile of intuition, 58.8% of participants preferred this to sensing (41.2%). Person-Centred Therapy is based on how a client feels in the here and now and looks at discovering where those feelings originate (Rogers, 1951). This fits in well with the intuition profile as the preference is for focusing on the bigger picture and looking at meanings and relationships that go beyond any sensory information (Francis, 2005; Keirsey, 1998). Taking the humane profile of feeling, 65.9% of participants preferred this over thinking (34.1%). Feeling types strive for harmony and peace; prefer to be gentle, sympathetic, warm-hearted, and trusting; making them suited to the role of Person-Centred counsellor, which requires the use of therapeutic core conditions of empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence (Rogers, 1967). When looking at participants attitudes towards the outer world, a preference for judging (75.3%) was preferred over perceiving (24.7%) making this the most common of all preferences. This type prefers their outer world to have routine and structure, to be organised and orderly, and they themselves prefer to be punctual and systematic (Briggs-Myers, & Myers, 1995). This type

Running head: PSYCHOLOGICAL TYPE OF PERSON-CENTRED COUNSELLORS

preference fits in well with the role of Person-Centred counsellor, where appointments with clients have to be punctual, and structured with regards to the length of time a session lasts.

It is acknowledged that the sample size in this study is small and further research is recommended in this area along with research into psychological type profiles of other counselling orientations such as Cognitive Behaviour Therapy.

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Table 1: Scale properties

	mean	SD	alpha
Introversion/Extraversion	1.58	0.50	.77
Sensing/iNtuition	1.59	0.50	.64
Feeling/Thinking	1.67	0.48	.69
Judging/Perceiving	1.25	0.43	.78

Running head: PSYCHOLOGICAL TYPE OF PERSON-CENTRED COUNSELLORS

Table 2: Type distribution of Person-Centred counsellors

The Sixteen Complete Types				Dichotomous Preferences	
ISTJ n = 7 (8.2%) +++++	ISFJ n = 10 (11.8%) +++++	INFJ n = 13 (15.3%) +++++	INTJ n = 12 (14.1%) +++++	E n = 35 (41.2%)	I n = 50 (58.8%)
+++	+++++	+++++	+++++	S n = 35 (41.2%)	N n = 50 (58.8%)
++	+++++	+++++	+++++	T n = 29 (34.1%)	F n = 56 (65.9%)
	++	+++++	++++	J n = 64 (75.3%)	P n = 21 (24.7%)
				Pairs and Temperaments	
ISTP n = 0 (0.0%) +++++	ISFP n = 0 (0.0%) +++++	INFP n = 6 (8.3%) +++++	INTP n = 2 (2.4%) ++	IJ n = 42 (49.4%)	IP n = 8 (9.4%)
		+++++	++	EP n = 13 (15.3%)	EJ n = 22 (25.9%)
		+++		ST n = 11 (12.9%)	SF n = 24 (28.2%)
ESTP n = 0 (0.0%) +++++	ESFP n = 4 (4.7%) +++++	ENFP n = 7 (8.2%) +++++	ENTP n = 2 (2.4%) ++	NF n = 32 (37.6%)	NT n = 18 (21.2%)
	+++++	+++++	++	SJ n = 31 (36.5%)	SP n = 4 (4.7%)
	+++++	+++		NP n = 17 (20.0%)	NJ n = 33 (38.8%)
	++			TJ n = 25 (29.4%)	TP n = 4 (4.7%)
ESTJ n = 4 (4.7%) +++++	ESFJ n = 10 (11.8%) +++++	ENFJ n = 6 (7.1%) +++++	ENTJ n = 2 (2.4%) ++	FP n = 17 (20.0%)	FJ n = 39 (45.9%)
	+++++	+++++	++	IN n = 33 (38.8%)	EN n = 17 (20.0%)
	+++++	++		IS n = 17 (20.0%)	ES n = 18 (21.2%)
	++			ET n = 8 (9.4%)	EF n = 27 (31.8%)
				IF n = 29 (34.1%)	IT n = 21 (24.7%)

Jungian Types (E)		Jungian Types (I)		Dominant Types		<i>J Turley & M Robbins. Type distribution for Person-Centred counsellors</i>		
n	%	n	%	n	%			
E-TJ	6	7.1	I-TP	2	2.4	Dt.T	8	9.4
E-FJ	16	18.8	I-FP	6	7.1	Dt.F	22	25.9
ES-P	4	4.7	IS-J	17	20.0	Dt.S	21	24.7
EN-P	9	10.6	IN-J	25	29.4	Dt.N	34	40.0

Note: N = 85 (NB: + = 1% of N)