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Differences between serbian and croatian samples in driver behaviour as measured by the driver test 35Q

Razlike med srbskim in hrvaškim vzorcem glede gonil pridobljene s pomočjo Testa gonil 35Q

POVZETEK

Driver test 35Q (Test gonil 35Q) je konstruiral Stefan Sandstrom leta 2012 in meri pet tipov gonil. V teoriji transakcijske analize predstavljajo gonila vedenjske vzorce, podprte s skriptnimi prepričanji in neavtentičnimi občutki, in so bolj reaktivno kot proaktivno usmerjeni. Gonila so najbolj očiten znak življenjskega načrta, skriptne usmeritve. Driver test 35Q je že razvit za uporabo v treh jezikih (angleškem, nizozemskem in švedskem). V članku predstavljamo raziskave, izvedene na dveh vzorcih – srbskem in hrvaškem. Cilj raziskave je bil preveriti psihometrične karakteristike v srbskem in hrvaškem prevodu Driver testa 35Q in izvesti primerjalno analizo variabilnosti rezultatov testa med dvema različnima vzorcema. Rezultati kažejo, da kultura statistično pomembno prispeva k variabilnosti rezultatov testa za gonila „Pohiti» in „Bodi popoln», pri katerima so se pokazale višje vrednosti na srbskem vzorcu.

Ključne besede

Driver test 35Q, transakcijska analiza, gonila.

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ABSTRACT

The driver test 35Q was constructed by Stefan Sandström in 2012 and it measures the five types of driver. In Transactional Analysis theory the concept of drivers refers to five different patterns of behaviour, script beliefs and non-authentic feelings, more reactive than pro-active in a person in relation to reality. The driver is the most visible sign of *script* (*life plan*), easily observable moment to moment during a conversation. Driver test 35Q has already been developed for use in three languages (English, Dutch and Swedish). Our study was conducted across two samples of participants (N = 337): (1) Serbian sample (N = 148; 76% females, 23% males; M = 23.5; SD = 2); (2) Croatian sample (N = 189; 81% females, 19% males; M = 21.1; SD = 1.4). The goals of this study were to perform a comparative analysis of the variability between the two different samples of the driver test results. Results suggest that national identification, with statistical significance, does contribute to the results' variability on the drivers Hurry up and Be perfect, with higher results found on the Serbian sample.

KEY WORDS

Transactional analysis, drivers, analysis of variance, cultural differences

Introduction

The term '*driver*' in Transactional Analysis (TA) stands for certain characteristic sequences of behaviour that show right before an individual gets into any kind of script behaviour or feeling, lasting from a split second up to seven seconds (Stewart & Joines, 1987). By observing several thousand people, Kahler (Kahler & Capers, 1974) suggested that there are five basic drivers: »Be perfect«, »Try hard«, »Hurry up«, »Please me«, and »Be strong«. Although they would appear to be useful adaptation strategies each of these drivers is, actually, an invitation to get more into the script's restrictive behaviour because of the way they are formed, being the residues of directives introjected from parental figures. In TA these personality structures externally influenced are called Parent Ego states. The content of introjected directives can be summarized and illustrated in short limiting statements, for example that the person is OK only if he/she: is perfect, strong, tries hard, hurries up or pleases others. These messages induce maladaptive reactions and feelings, recognized as various neurotic symptoms, usually accompanied by compulsion and repetition of the same adaptive style regardless of context. Behind the compulsion that follows the driver activation is the irrational belief that the »person is worthless« unless he/she behaves as »Perfect, Strong, Trying Hard, Pleasing Others, Hurrying Up«.

In her conceptual analysis work Julie Hay (2003) emphasized the reference to positive drivers that was made by Klein (1987), who described the assets and ways of relating positively for each driver type. For example, for Be Perfect she wrote: »If you are mostly Be Perfect you undoubtedly have a better idea of how to succeed than most people and »A Be Perfect person –minus his or her intolerance, bigotry, and autocratic self-righteousness –is as wise, steadfast, warm and good a person as you will ever know

(p.161).« Negative and positive differentiation of outcomes to dominant drivers could be explained through the differences between intentional and unintentional use of available drivers' tendencies by a person. Referring to each driver as a personality type, Klein (1987) provides a table of assets, liabilities, needed permissions and ways to »get the best out of them« (p.161).

Hazell (1989) also commented on the positive aspects of drivers, presenting them as »habits that we all utilize to deal with the challenges... useful when well moderated...«and »positive when used to achieve« (p.212). To reflect this positive aspect, he proposed renaming Be Perfect as Be Right, so that all of them »describe a goal that is desirable and possible to achieve, within reason.« (p.212). He also suggested we use Be Pleasing instead of Please Me/Please You. Hazell presented a drivers checklist he had developed, together with an explanatory handout that gives information on how drivers help as well as hinder.

The driver test 35Q was developed by Stefan Sandström (2015) starting from the position that some existent drivers scales (Hazell, 1989; Falkowski & Munn, 1989) which are not evidence-based, contain non-functional items that distort the results. In his empirical efforts to develop a scientifically valid driver instrument, Sandström (2015) created a test with the following psychometric characteristics: the values of Cronbach's alpha for the drivers as a measure of reliability for each individual sub-scale are: Hurry Up - 0.83; Be Strong - 0.80; Please Me - 0.82; Try Hard - 0.77; Be Perfect - 0.73. Interesting findings emerged once factor analysis was applied to the results. Factor analysis pointed to the existence of subgroups in four out of five drivers. The only one driver identified as a stabile factor in a factor analysis was the »Hurry up« driver. These empirical findings are in line with theoretical assumptions that the Hurry up driver is usually found as a secondary, not primary driver, that adds to the intensity and severity of the experienced and demonstrated neurotic symptoms.

The above mentioned may be interpreted as empirical support for the theory of nine different drivers, or to see it as an argument for a second degree structure of drivers. It is fairly clear that a person can have either both or just one of the sub- group drivers (henceforth referred to as sub-drivers), and as such it yields clearly different results in behaviour, emotion and cognition.

The sub- groups were as follows:

Please me. The *Please me* driver after factor analysis conducted by Sandström (2015) was divided into two sub-drivers. The first sub-driver represents tendencies to be overly attentive to the needs of others, while discounting themselves. The second sub-driver is concerned with obedience, which means that those individuals tend to put themselves down in relation to others, especially figures of authority. A person with both sub-drivers will be both obedient and take care of others.

Be perfect. The most common attributes of the *Be perfect* driver have to do with performance and appearance; being spotless, clean, with a perfect presentation for others. The factor analysis, however, showed that besides this group there is also another which derived perfection from internal principles (morality). A person can then have either an external or internal *Be perfect* sub-driver or both simultaneously.

Try hard. In both analyzed variants of the *Try hard* driver there is a pattern of valuing effort over result, which leads to a tendency to miss the goal. The first one is concerned with trying hard by working hard while the second is concerned mainly with over-detailing various tasks. With both sub-drivers permission to do things simply and effortlessly is effective in counteracting them.

Be strong. The two sub-drivers identified with *Be strong* are on the one hand concerned with being strong by enduring various hardships, such as heavy workloads, pain or suffering. On the other hand, the second *Be strong* sub-driver is more directed towards a kind of quasi-autonomy. It may seem easy to confuse this first sub-driver with the first *Try hard* sub-driver that is also concerned with working hard, but in our opinion, the emphasis here is more to do with »suffer in silence« or »not being a coward« while the *Try hard* sub-driver has to do with »producing a lot of work«.

The second *Be Strong* sub-driver expresses itself in not wanting to be a burden to others or not wanting to ask for help.

The psychometric properties of five scales (sample adequacy – KMO, reliability – α and β , and homogeneity, mean correlation – h^2) was calculated again after administration in Serbia and Croatia using the RTT10G program developed by Knežević & Momirović (1996). The psychometric properties for five scales (Pejić, Brajović Car & Ellersich, 2015) obtained from research on the Serbian and Croatian sample showed that the reliability coefficients of sub-scales within the driver test 35Q are low, and so we can conclude that drivers scale items developed in Sweden need to be adapted to different cultures before any correlational study with empirical hypotheses is conducted. For the aforementioned reason, we decided to inspect more closely the pragmatical values and contextual relevance of the driver test 35Q by conducting a comparative analysis on two subsamples out of the total number of samples subjected to the psychometric evaluation.

The main research question posited in this research was to find out if the interaction between gender and national identification generates the differences in the results on the driver test that measures the adaptation strategies of personality.

Method

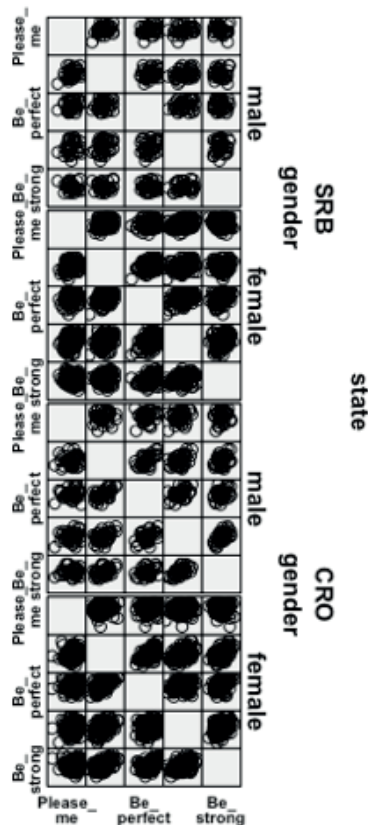
Driver Test 35Q by Sandström (2015) is a 35 item questionnaire that was constructed in order to measure the five drivers from the theory of Transactional Analysis (Please me, Be perfect, Try hard, Be strong and Hurry up). Each subscale has seven questions using the five point Likert response scale (0 = never/disagree totally, to 4 = most of the time/agree totally). The Serbian version of this scale was first administered and then translated and back translated by two persons fluent in both Serbian and English (Pejić, Brajović Car & Ellersich, 2015). The two-factor multivariate analysis of variance, MANOVA was used to test the main research question.

The sample consisted of 337 participants all coming from a student population, the Serbian sample (N = 148; 76% females, 23% males; M = 23.5; SD = 2.0) coming from the University of Belgrade and University of Niš, the Croatian sample (N = 189; 81% females, 19% males; M = 21.1; SD = 1.4) from the University of Zagreb and University of Rijeka.

The participants all provided the data at their faculties on a voluntary basis. Completing the questionnaires took on average twenty minutes.

Results

There were five dependent variables –the drivers: Be perfect, Hurry up, Please others, Be strong and Try hard. Independent variables were (1) national identity, operationalized by the country of origin and residence named by the participants (Croatia or Serbia) and (2) gender identity (male and female). Assumptions of non-typical multivariate distribution, normality, linearity, homogeneity, variance-covariance matrix and multicollinearity were the subject of preliminary testing . Taking into account that five dependent variables were included, the critical value for the Mahalanobis distance was 20.52. Considerably higher values were noted in six examined cases, so they were excluded from further analysis. In scatter diagrams nonlinearity is not present so the linearity assumption is not violated (graph 1). Based on the information presented above, we can conclude that the use of the MANOVA test was the appropriate methodological choice.



Graph 1: Scatter diagram

Dependent variables are moderately correlated, so the assumption of multicollinearity is satisfied (table 1). This finding meets another prerequisite for the methodological justification of using the MANOVA test, its main goal being to test the central research question, whether gender and culture influence the results of the driver test 35Q .

				Please me	Try hard	Be perfect
Please me	r	1				
Try hard	r	.174	1			
	sig	.001				
Be perfect	r	.190	.454	1		
	sig	.001	.000			
Hurry up	r	.186	.349	.359	1	
	sig	.001	.000	.000		
Be strong	r	-.087	.304	.310	.329	1
	sig	.113	.000	.000	.000	

Table 1: intercorrelation

A statistically significant difference was found between Croatian and Serbian participants by using the MANOVA test in combination with dependent variables ($F(3,327) = 4.231$, $p = 0.001$; Wilks' Lambda = 0.939; Partial Eta Squared = 0.061). Also, it was found that the factor of difference is the *interaction of gender and national identity* among the participants ($F(3,327) = 4.118$, $p = 0.001$; Wilks' Lambda = 0.940; Partial Eta Squared = 0.060). When considering the dependent variables results separately, it was found that gender is not a statistically significant factor of differences. On the other hand, it was found that *national identity* is a factor of differences in drivers Be perfect ($F(3,327) = 5.554$, $p = 0.019$; Partial Eta Squared = 0.017) and Hurry up ($F(3,327) = 7.984$, $p = 0.005$; Partial Eta Squared = 0.024). National identity as an independent factor explains 1.7% of variance in Be perfect and 2.4% of variance in Hurry up. With regard to the arithmetic mean, it is possible to see that it is slightly higher among Serbian students in driver Be perfect ($M = 20.02$; $SD = 4.586$) than among Croatian students ($M = 19.30$; $SD = 4.473$); and slightly higher among Serbian students in driver Hurry up ($M = 18.02$; $SD = 4.726$) than Croatian students ($M = 17.12$; $SD = 4.156$).

Discussion

Drivers represent learned patterns that shape a cluster of emotional, cognitive, motivational and behavioural mechanisms that become characteristic ways in which a person reacts, especially in stressful situations. Transactional analysis theorists and researchers consider five such clusters are universally present regardless of gender and national identification (Stewart & Joines, 1987). An earlier study of these concepts in Serbia and Croatia gave results that indicate the need for further development of the psychometric characteristics of the drivers test (Pejić, Brajović Car & Ellersich, 2015). Also indicated was the need for further conceptual analysis of drivers that will take into account cultural and other factors of influence in the process of socialization that indirectly or directly shapes the development of personality. For this reason, in this research the driver test was administered to participants from two different countries – Serbia and Croatia. Factor analysis of data tested single factor influence (i.e. separate) and mutual factor influence (i.e. factors in interaction) on the variability of results by the factors: gender and nationality. Results showed that gender as a factor in mutual interaction with the factor of nationality, with statistical significance, accounts for variability between subsamples, Croatian and Serbian. However, gender analysed as an independent factor does not explain observed variance between samples with statistical significance. Therefore, we can conclude that gender, as an aspect of identity, does not influence directly the formation of certain types of drivers, as dimensions of personality. On the other hand, national identity significantly influences differences in two of five drivers, Hurry up and Be perfect. Since it is a culturally influenced personality dimension, we can conclude that there could exist certain variations in upbringing styles and goals between two countries that have resulted in these registered differences. The sense of belonging to the European Union may result in a broader psychological perspective, especially among youth and young adults encompassed by the Croatian sample, with potentially more options in terms of identification models, employment and professional development opportunities. Here, we can state a hypothesis that all named factors could encourage and hasten the separation process in regard to the family of origin, and also contribute to the development of critical thinking skills as a cognitive mechanism of resilience to the domination of negative introjects in adulthood (Kahler & Caspers, 1974). Correlational analysis between the driver test and HEXACO personality model (Ashton & Lee, 2009) suggested a negative correlation between Emotionality (defined as oversensitivity, sentimentality, fearfulness, anxiety, irritability, vulnerability or as shyness, independence, self-awareness and stability) and driver »Hurry up« (Brajović Car et al, 2015). This could suggest that the more prominent emotionality is, the less manifested driver »Hurry up« will be and vice-versa. Factor analysis performed by Sandström (2015), mentioned above in the introduction, reveals the existence of sub-drivers within each driver type with the exception of the driver »Hurry up«. According to the theoretical model of Transactional Analysis (Joines & Stewart, 2002), the driver »Hurry up« is not found as a primary, dominant driver, but is combined with one of the remaining four drivers, which only intensifies the level of adaptation and prominence of negative aspects of the primary driver. In the case of the Serbian sample, we could say that the expressiveness of Hurry up and Be perfect drivers indicate intellectualization and the need to be »rigidly correct« in their attitudes as a pronounced defense mechanism in a stressful situation in comparison to the sample with the same demographic features from Croatia. Since drivers represent the manifestations of the prominent ego state Adapted Child, the repression of authentic emotions is one of the basic indicators of dysfunctional adaptation.

Conclusion

This research has indicated that differences could be found in dominant drivers in relation to national identity. Differences between the Croatian and Serbian samples were found in two of five drivers: Be perfect and Hurry up. Results found on the Serbian sample were higher on those two drivers as compared to the Croatian sample. In the light of this fact we could conclude that the driver test 35Q with regard to the factors that represent drivers Be perfect and Hurry up needs to be revised with items operationalized in a way that will enable factor stability and reliability in the practice of psychodiagnosis regardless of the context of instrument application. On the other hand, if the 35Q version of the psychometric test is developed following the criteria for validity by which all factors (in this case drivers) are the same and stable regardless of cultural differences, we could assume that in such cases the contextual sensitivity and pragmatical validity of such a test would be in question. Significant differences found in the distribution of dominant drivers across the samples suggests that national identity also could also have a significant influence in the formation of drivers as an adaptive mechanism. In line with this fact, we can interpret drivers more as a product of a broader socialization process, including all external influences on personality formation. Some of the findings from this research suggests that parental influences are not such crucial influential determinants in the development of dominant driver types and adaptation models, as classical transactional analysis theory suggests (Hazell, 1989., Kahler & Caspers, 1974).

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