

FEATURES OF PERSONALITY TO THE ADOLESCENTS WITH BEHAVIOR TROUBLES

O.D. Moldovan

Olga Domnica Moldovan, PhD
Aurel Vlaicu University, Arad
Romania

Abstract: The problem of behavior troubles to the teenagers is a very important and actual one, not only because it supposes accommodation difficulties from the adolescents part, but also because they can commit antisocial acts which are punished by the society and the community in which they live. That is why the author tried to establish some personality features common to the great majority of the adolescents with behavioral troubles. In this way it is possible the early finding out and intervention to prevent some negative consequences. The author presents the results obtained on a 82 subjects sample of adolescents to establish the personality features of those with behavior troubles.

Key words: features of personality, behavioral troubles, teenagers or adolescents, integration in the society

General presentation

The term of personality has a large spreading being used curenly in the cotidian language. The great majority of the people use the word to

refer to an ensemble of characteristics which define the way in which a person sees and acts in the world – something like an unit between the thinking processes and the behavioral modalities. In psychology, these could be define as emotional, cognitive and behavioral features unic for each individual, learned and developed by the experience and relative constant during the time (Doron, 2006).

The controversy continues in the speciality literature from more than 20 years. Many personologists assume the problem as being solved, by accepting an interactionist approach, stating that the personal features, the social-situational aspects and their interaction must be both taking into account if our purpose is to give a complete explanation to the human behavior (Carson, 2008).

The psychologists in the personality domain give an increased importance not only to the wording of the theories, but in equal measure to the modalities by which a great variety of data regarding the person can be put together an systematized to obtain in this way coherence and intelibility.

The importance of the personality study results, mainly, from the fact that both the human kind progresses and the humankind regresses are determined by the people themselves. Although, the importance of personality study becomes evident when we want to regard the men as a social being by excelence, because, without regarding the profession, the work place, the family organization, the environment and the life level, the man lives between other men. As a consequence, the understanding of the human personality nature becomes an essential factor both to the self-knowing, but also to the other knowing.

The adolescence is characterised by an accelerated development of all the processes, an intense intelectualization (the development of the

abstract thinking), by the enrichment and the enlargement of the adult behavior inclusion etc. (Stanley Hall, 1904).

The crisis period produced by the breaking with the childhood period, is accompanied by the fact that the adolescence includes a series of freedom limitations which are lived by the young man as a deprivation or as an attempt to his rights or to the right to express himself as a personality (Munteanu, 1998).

The essential feature of the adolescents with behavior troubles is that of the psychic immaturity. The consequences of this immaturity are numerous:

- difficult accommodation to the environment conditions;
- a low assimilation of the lived and known experience;
- the personality get a disharmonic development by the maintaining of an infantilism in the behavioral level;
- the behavior is dominated by instability, obstination, denying tendencies of all that is appreciated by the other;
- manifeste non-conformist attitudes;
- familial and collective conflicts;
- indifference;
- lake of participation to the social or professional life (Moldovan, Bălaș-Timar, 2010).

In situations of psychic discomfort and unfavourable environment persists the inadaptation phenomenon, that makes it to change at the adolescence age into complexe behavioral troubles. The presence of the behavior troubles is an indicator of the social inadaptation. Thus, we can speak about three categories of inadaptated children:

- psychic inadaptated (the category of the children with intellectual disabilities);

- senzorial inadapated (the category with senzorial defficiencies);
- social inadapated (the category of psychopaths, delinquents, psychotics) (Montreuil, Doron, 2009).

The behavior troubles or the behavior changes are forms of the psychic unbalance, that implies troubles in the emotional-willing sphaera as a results of a cerebral lesion pre or post natal, of some morbid psychic structure of sociogene nature (Străchinaru, 1994). These deviations of the behavior are, therefore not only deviations from the norms of health state, but also from the moral norms, with damages reflected in the normal social reports.

We do not dispose in the scientific literature of many data on the entire infantil population of the country, to can state what is in Romania the frequency of these behavior troubles. Though, they were made studies on the adolescents and children (see Străchinaru, 1994 ; Rășcanu, 1994) which show that from gender perspective the distribution of the behavior troubles is greater in the boys direction (some studies show a percentage of twice higher to the boys, while others mention a report of 9/1). From age perspective the frequency curve is more accentuated between 7 and 15 years. As territorial spreading, the difference between the urban and the rural one is haigher in the favour of the first (the purcentage of the children/adolescents with behavior troubles is four time greater in the urban environment than in the rural one). Maybe, we could explain that fact also by the situation that persists in the villages and where the supervision of the children is more severe and continuous; the children are involved in productive works from a very early age and in this way they can evit the behavior troubles (Păunescu, 1994).

The apparition of the troubles with disharmonic character, become psychopathic features, can be hierarchized fonction to the characteristic

periods of the psychic life development, taking into account the age. To the adolescence the incidence and the gravity of the behavior troubles increase due to the modification in the nervous reactivity and to the new relations with the environment, relations that tend to become more tensioned and conflictual (Enăchescu, 2007).

The incriminatory causes for the appearance of the behavior troubles are very numerous and complexe. We can make a groupement of the causes of these behavior deviations in some big categories:

- organic illness
- children psychic illness;
- genetic causes;
- some particularities of the ambient environment,
- personality particularities (Ionescu, 2006).

The most frequent causes of the behavior troubles are those which are related to the ambient environment (which includes the intra-familial frame, and also the extra-familial medium: the street, the friends, the school, the mass-media, radio, tv, journals, books etc.).

We can assume that these behavior troubles are installed and developed on a certain psychic background, usually more easy to a child or an adolescent with an unbalanced structure of personality, immature, suggestionable and with a self image not yet formed or a distorted one, with a tendence for achievement without effort and for shocking behaviors. To all these the negative conditioning of the micro-social climate is superposed on a labile and fragile personality structure, to which the educational incompetence, the lake of understanding and the adults affective lake of interest, support absurd developments (Clarget, 2008).

Hypothesis and objectives

The research field that we are proposed was the personality structure for the adolescents with behavior troubles. In the approach of our research we coached the following hypothesis:

H 1: *We supposed that the behavior troubles are more frequent to the boys than to the girls.*

H2: *We supposed that there are some common personality features to the adolescents with behavior troubles.*

The wording of these hypothesis determine us to establish the following objectives:

- the selection of adequate samples on which we shall pursue our research;
- the establishment of certain criteria which permit to include the subjects in the troubles of behavior category;
- the choice of the specific psychologic tests which can evidenciate the personality features;
- the statistic processing of the results obtained after the test application;
- the establishment of the correlations and of statistic significant differencies for the personality features;
- the results interpretation from the theoretical support exposed in the first part of the paper.

Samples

We took initially in the research a number of 82 subjects, adolescents in the eleventh classes from the Scholar Group of Transport and Railways Arad. From these 82 subjects 52 were boys and 30 were girls.

Methodology

1. Selection of the target sample

In a first phase we discussed with the tutor professors and with the other professors who are teaching at the classes to appreciate the behavior of the adolescents. Were considered adolescents with behavior troubles the subjects that manifested at least three times one of the next disciplinary deviations: running from the courses, lie, the use of an vulgar and inadequate language, the insulting of the colleagues, effrontery towards the professors, violence towards the colleagues. In the same time the subjects were included in the category of subjects with behavior troubles only if this appreciation was present to at least three professors who are teaching to the classes.

After the processing of the professors' appreciations from the initial sample of 82 subjects, was retained a number of 42 who met all the criteria and who were considered with behavior troubles inside the school (see table 1.)

Table 1
**The distribution taking into account
the presence of behavior troubles**

	number
with troubles	42
without troubles	40
Total	82

2. Methods

To establish the subjects' personality features we chose two multiphasic personality questionnaires:

- The *Woodworth-Mathews Questionnaire* is a multiphasic personality questionnaire, having a number of 82 questions with two possibilities of answers – yes or no. The questions of the questionnaire regard nine fields of the personality: emotivity; obsession, psychoasthenia, anxiety; schizoid tendencies; paranoid tendencies; depression and hypochondriac manifestation; aggressivity, impulsivity; antisocial tendencies; lie scale.

The number of significant answers for each field is multiplied with a specific quotient and the values which surpass 120 are considered as accentuated features or pathologic tendencies.

The Eysenck Personality Inventory

Is also a multiphasic questionnaire, but it regards only three fields: the introversion-extraversion, a neuroticism quotient and a lie scale. The neuroticism or the neurotism is a term by which Eysenck understands a general tendency to emotional instability (Eysenck și Eysenck, 1975).

The answer possibilities are yes or no. There are 24 questions regarding the introversion-extraversion; 24 questions for the neuroticism quotient and 9 questions for the lie scale.

3. Procedure

1. In the first phase the professors were asked (a number of 5 professors who are teaching at the classes) to evaluate each adolescent from the point of view of their dysfunctional behavior and of its frequency. This procedure was used to select the target sample.

2. To the group obtained in this way were applied the questionnaires in the morning, at school. The application was collective and the subjects had to answer on the paper that was given to them. The

results were collected and in a subsequent phase were arranged in a data base for the statistical processing with SPSS 17.0.

Results and discussions

1. Hypothesis 1

We supposed that the behavior troubles are more frequent to the boys than to the girls.

A subject for being included in the category of those evaluated with behavior troubles, must fulfil two criteria:

- to present at least three times one of the behavior troubles mentioned above;
- to be evaluated by at least three professors, who are teaching at the class, as having behavior troubles.

Using these criteria we tried to evitate in a hand the professors subjectivity, and in another hand the interfering of some atypical or accidental behavior manifestations.

The subjects who had less than three dysfunctional behavior were included in the category: without behavior troubles. The subjects who had three dysfunctional behavior were included in the sample only if this frequency was reported by hree professors in the same case. The subjects with more than three dysfunctional behavior were considered as having behavior troubles.

From the 42 subjects included in the target sample, and fulfilling all the criteria exposed 19 were girls and 23 were boys. The distribution of the sample fonceion to gender can be seen in table 2.

Table 2.

Gender distribution of the target sample

gender	number
Boys	23
Girls	19
Total	42

There is a coincidence between this aspect and that from the psychological literature: the studies on the adolescents and children (see Străchinaru, 1994 ; Rășcanu, 1994) which show that from gender perspective the distribution of the behavior troubles is greater in the boys direction (some studies show a percentage of twice higher to the boys, while others mention a report of 9/1).

The smaller difference between boys and girls obtained by us, could be explained by the following aspects:

- our sample is relatively limited from the numerical point of view, in comparison with the samples on which were made the researches from the consulted literature;

- the mentioned studies were carried on 12 years ago, time in which the evolution of the society shows an increase of the violence between the adolescents and especially for the girls. Maybe if we could compare with more recent studies the differences could be not so significant.

- the adolescents which are going to this highschool, are coming in their majority from the rural environment and the studies from the literature show that the behavior troubles are more frequent to the persons who are from the urban area. In the villages the supervision of the children is more severe and continuous; the children are involved in

productive works from a very early age and in this way they can evit the behavior troubles (Păunescu, 1994).

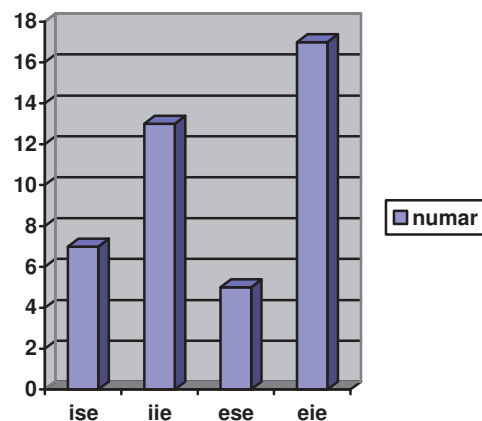
To be sure on our statements we establish with the aid of SPSS 17.0 the significance of the frequency differences for samples with less than 30 subjects and we obtained a significant difference at a threshold of $p = 0.05$. We consider this value enough for our research and we can state that **the hypothesis 1- the behavior troubles are more frequent to the boys than to the girls - is confirmed** by the practical study made by us.

2. Hypothesis 2

We supposed that there are some common personality features to the adolescents with behavior troubles.

The subjects of the target sample (N = 42) answered to the proposed questionnaires.

The Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI)



Figurea 1. The subjects results to the EPI

The EPI answers were included in the four categories established by Eysenck, as being structure of personality: introverted, emotional stable;

introverted emotional unstable; extraverted, emotional stable; extraverted emotional unstable (see the figure 1).

The Woodworth/Mathews Questionnaire (W-M)

The results obtained by our sample to the W-M Questionnaire are presented in the table 3.

From the table we can separate the personality features which characterize the subjects of our sample, appearing with high values and an increased frequency: the subjects present increased emotivity, great impulsivity with aggressivity notes, indifferent that this is verbal or physic, paranoid tendencies, psycho-affective instability and important tendencies to denaturate the truth.

Table 3.
The results to the W-M Questionnaire

Fields	Subjects number
emotivity (e)	31
obsessions,psychoasthenia (op)	7
schizoid tendencies (ts)	12
paranoid tendencies (tp)	21
depression, hipochondry (d)	15
impulsivity/aggressivity (i/a)	38
psycho-affective instability (ipa)	40
antisocial tendencies (ta)	13
lie scale	39

Fifteen (15) of our subjects present also light depressive tendencies, that we interpreted in the context of their incapacity of accommodation and integration in the collective. We can also mention the number relatively great of subjects who denature the answers to the questionnaire which is consonant with the results to the EPI.

Woodworth said that when we have more fields which surpass in the same time the values of the limit between normal and pathologic, we can speak about a disharmonic structure of personality.

To be more accurate we calculated the correlation between the fields of the two questionnaires. The correlation regards the way of association or dissociation of two or more variables (Ilica, 2005, p.54). In our case we have a total of 12 variable – 3 from EPI and 9 from W-M Questionnaire. The correlations obtained by us after the processing with the SPSS 17.0 and their significations are presented in the table 4.

The most powerful correlations we meet between the lie scales of the two questionnaires ($r = .376$ at a significance threshold of $p < 0.01$), and between the psycho-affective instability scale from the W-M and the emotional stability-instability scale from EPI ($r = .494$, at a significance threshold $p < 0.01$). This thing does not surprise us because the named scale are measuring the same thing two by two: the lie and the subjects unstability.

The emotivity correlates strong with the stability/unstability ($r = .376$ at a significance threshold of $p < .01$) and presents a negative correlation with the lie scale ($r = .168$ at a significance threshold $p < .05$). We can interpret this negative correlation as an incapacity of the extremely emotive persons to say any lies, due to the fact that because of this emotivity they can immediately be unmasked.

Table 4**The correlations between the two test applied**

W-M	EPI	introversion- extraversion	stability- instability	lie
emotivity (e)		.046	.376**	-.168*
obsession, psycho- asthenia (op)		0.99	.061	.029
schizoid tendencies (ts)		.311**	.058	.088
paranoid tendencies (tp)		-.162*	.355**	.171**
depression and hipochondriac manifestation (d)		.171*	.127	.162*
impulsivity/aggressivity (i/a)		-.269**	.338**	.046
psycho-affective instability(ipa)		-.016	.494**	.120
antisocial tendencies (ta)		.058	.366**	.144*
Lie scale		.127	.117	.376**

** p < 0,01 * p < 0,05

The obsessions and the psycho-asthenia, the second field of the W-M does not present any correlation with the fields of the EPI. Instead the schizoid tendencies from the W-M strongly correlates with the introversion-extraversion scale from the EPI ($r = .311$, to a significance threshold $p < .01$)

The paranoid tendencies scale is the only W-M scale which correlates with all the three EPI scales. We can state that the introverted persons have a bigger tendency to interpret the gesture and the affirmations of the others than the extraverted persons, from which the negative sign of the correlation ($r = -.162$, to a significance threshold of p

< .05). The correlation with the instability is more powerful ($r = .338$ at a significance threshold of $p < .01$).

For the stability-instability scale the correlations $r = .366$ at a significance threshold of $p < .01$, means that the emotional unstable persons have higher tendencies to do antisocial acts. Even the lie, said with the purpose to obtain some advantages can be included in the category of pathological lie and as a consequence of the antisocial acts. From here results the positive correlation with the lie scale $r = .144$ at a significance threshold of $p < .05$.

All these processing of the correlations between the two personality questionnaires applied, contributed to collect the data needed to make a specific personality profile for the adolescents with behavior troubles. We retain as significant features: emotivity, schizoid and paranoid tendencies, psycho-affective instability, antisocial tendencies and the lie scale.

In this way we established that there are personality features common to all the adolescents with behavior troubles. This means that the **second hypothesis** made by us **was validated** in practice.

Conclusions

The early finding out of the increased risk and the inclusion of the adolescents in a counseling or psychotherapeutic program could influence their evolution and could evitate the transformation of the demonstrative behavior (which are characteristic for this period of age) in behavior troubles with important antisocial implications and with grave consequences.

The counseling programs and also the support programs, the inclusion of the adolescents in activities which develop the self esteem,

the respect for the other and the pride to belong to a professional or social group, can avoid numerous unpleasant situations for the adolescent and for the future adult.

We consider that our research touched all the purposes proposed to the beginning of this and our hypothesis were validated in practice. Moreover, we established personality features common to all adolescents with behavior troubles.

Bibliography:

Carson, B., (2008), *Asumă-ți riscul*, Casa de Editură Viața și Sănătatea, București

Clarget, S., (2008) *Criza adolescenței*, Editura Trei, București

Doron, R., (2006), *Dicționar de psihologie*, Editura Humanitas, București

Enăchescu, C., (2007), *Tratat de psihopatologie*, Editura Polirom, Iași

Eysenck, H.J., Eysenck, S.B.C., (1975), *Manual of the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire*, Holder&Stoughton, London

Ilica, A., (2005)(*Metodologia cercetării experimentale*, Editura Universității Aurel Vlaicu, Arad

Ionescu, S., (2006), *14 abordări în psihopatologie*, Editura Polirom, Iași

Moldovan, O.D., Bălaș-Timar, D., (2010), *Psihologia adolescenței și vârstei adulte*, Editura Universității Aurel Vlaicu, Arad

Montreuil, M., Doron, J.,(coord), (2009), *Tratat de psihologie clinică și psihopatologie*, Editura Trei, București

Munteanu A., (1998), *Psihologia copilului și a adolescentului*, Editura Augusta, Timișoara

Păunescu C, (1977), *Nervozitatea copilului*, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, București

Rășcanu R., (1994), *Psihologia comportamentului deviant*, Editura
Universității București

Stanley-Hall, G., (1904), *Adolescence, its psychology and its relations to
physiology, anthropology, sociology, sex, crime, religion and
education*, D.Appleton and Comp, New York

Străchinaru I., (1994), *Psihopedagogie specială*, vol. I, Editura
Trinitas, Iași