SCOPRI IL NUOVO SITO DEDICATO A BPA - BOLLETTINO DI PSICOLOGIA APPLICATA

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Cari lettori e colleghi,

ancora una volta il BPA si rinnova e migliora se stesso. Nuova veste grafica, più accattivante, e soprattutto nuovi servizi di qualità per i lettori e i ricercatori che sceglieranno di collocarvi la propria produzione scientifica.

Da quest’anno, infatti, numerose saranno le novità della nostra rivista:

• tenace perseguimento (e, a questo punto, manca davvero pochissimo) dell’indicizzazione su Scopus e WoS;
• acquistabilità dei singoli paper attraverso modalità online;
• disponibilità dei paper anche in lingua italiana (scaricabili gratuitamente per gli abbonati) a vantaggio degli utilizzzi applicativi e formativi;
• nuovi Associate Editor (a breve saremo in grado di comunicarVi la nuova formazione);
• allargamento dell’Editorial Board a numerosi colleghi stranieri di provenienza europea ed extraeuropea.

Come vedete ci siamo spesi molto per migliorare ulteriormente la qualità della rivista con il duplice obiettivo di definire uno standard editoriale che potesse:

• concorrere (iniziare a concorrere) con riviste italiane e straniere sia sul piano degli indicatori bibliometrici che del carattere scientifico, in senso esteso, degli articoli e
• mantenere una caratterizzazione in senso applicativo e clinico di utilità transazionale per i colleghi professionisti quotidianamente a contatto con l’essere umano.

Il progetto è ambizioso e auspichiamo possa incontrare il riscontro della comunità scientifica e del pubblico appartenente alla professione anche in termini di sottoscrizione degli abbonamenti, in assenza dei quali sarà impossibile raggiungere gli obiettivi elencati.

Voglio chiudere questo breve editoriale con un ricordo a Laura D’Odorico, Associate Editor per Developmental Psychology, recentemente scomparsa. Grazie Laura per il sostegno che hai saputo darci finché ne hai avuto le forze.

Dear Readers and Colleagues,

...
Predictors of job-search behaviors among Italian job-centers users

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ABSTRACT. Reaching a deeper understanding of job-search behaviors is essential in order to improve ways individuals can enter and remain into the labour market, especially in countries like Italy, characterized by increasing levels of unemployment and inefficient job–centers. Several psychological and situational factors predict job-search behaviors which, in turn, affect chances of reemployment. Objectives. This paper aimed to explore the role of several psychosocial (i.e. proactive personality and job-search self-efficacy), biographical (i.e. educational level) and socio-economic (i.e. social support and financial hardship) variables as predictors of job-search behaviors, building upon the theoretical model by Kanfer, Wanberg and Kantrowitz (2001). Methods. Data were collected among 505 Italian job-centers users via a self-report questionnaire. Hierarchical linear regressions were used to evaluate associations between variables and identify potential mediated/moderated effects. Results. Educational level, proactive personality and, above all, job-search self-efficacy proved to be main predictors of preparatory and active job-search behaviors; mediated and moderated effects were also found. Conclusions. Results were discussed on the basis of the current literature and provided an original and innovative contribution to this topic about the Italian situation which was largely unexamined. Moreover, evidence from this study can guide practitioners to tailor their counseling and re-employment support interventions.

Keywords: job-search behaviors, unemployment, job-search self-efficacy

INTRODUCTION

Understanding the role played by the predictors of job-search behaviors has become progressively more important in the light of the continued deterioration of the Western economies labour markets and, in particular, of their unemployment rates. In many countries, there has also been an increase in the average rate of entry into, and especially exit from, the labour market cause of increased flexibilization and precariousness (Lo Presti, 2009), phenomena which promote the need, felt by public opinion, policy makers and practitioners working in employment services, to increase the employment opportunities of those who are currently looking for a job.

ISTAT data (2014a) depict the Italian situation as in progressive and worrying deterioration; the unemployment rate has increased from 8.2% in July 2011 to 12.5% in the third quarter of 2013; data even more alarming concern Campania region (ISTAT, 2014b), the most populous and rich region of Southern Italy which has suffered the most from the effects of the crisis due to processes of deindustrialization and loss of competitiveness of large productive sectors, and where the unemployment rate has risen from 15.5% in the second quarter of 2011 to 20.5% at end of 2013.
Decades of research carried out on unemployment have unequivocally shown that this occupational condition is accompanied by negative effects on psychological well-being (Warr, 1987; Schaufeli & Van Yperen, 1992) as well as on the quality of family and social relationships (Grant & Barling, 1994). As there are several data supporting the positive relation between the frequency and intensity of job-search behaviors and rate and chances of re-employment (Saks & Ashforth, 2000; Wanberg, Kanfer & Rotundo, 1999), it is fundamental to study and understand the mechanisms that predict the likelihood of their implementation. Bretz, Boudreau and Judge (1994) stated that job-search behaviors refer to the specific activities that an individual engages in to acquire knowledge about labour market alternatives. Instead, in the 2001, Kanfer, Wanberg and Kantrowitz defined job-search as the outcome of a dynamic, recursive, self-regulated process; such formulations depicted job-search as a purposive, volitional pattern of action that begins with the identification and commitment to pursuing an employment goal.

Job-search can be carried out via several means, one of which is visiting a public job-center in order to benefit from information and more structured and professional forms of support and guidance. Italian job-centers have specific characteristics that make them quite different than other European job-services. Pastore (2013), on the basis of previous classifications of school-to-work transition systems, identified four public job-services regimes: liberal (e.g. United Kingdom), euro-continental (e.g. Germany), scandinavian (e.g. Sweden) and euro-mediterranean (e.g. Spain and Italy). The euro-mediterranean regime does not provide efficient intermediation between jobs supply and demand (as in the liberal regime) nor is well integrated with the educational and training system (as in the euro-continental and Scandinavian regimes) while has a predominant bureaucratic role. According to Mandrone (2011), in the 2010, Italian job-centers were able to intermediate the 3.7% of all new jobs, less than half than United Kingdom and just a quarter than Germany; a very low percentage compared, for example, with family and friend networks which were helpful in the 35.3% of cases. These data make compelling to understand the way job-centers’ services are able to support individuals in their job-search and foster their speed of re-employment, in order to compare such users with other job-seekers, not recurring to job-centers, or with other European job-centers, which seem more efficient in intermediating jobs supply and demand.

On the basis of the above-mentioned peculiarities of the Italian labour market and job-centers (as compared to other European countries) and on the importance of promoting, in the best possible way, processes of exploration and reintegration of individuals within the internal labour market, this study aims to explore the role of variables such as proactive personality, job-search self-efficacy, educational level, financial hardship and social support as potential antecedents of job-search behaviors, as well as the potential moderations by biographical and socio-economic data (gender, marital status, previous work experiences, occupational condition, length and local rate of unemployment). Being the hypotheses supported, and considering their empirical, but above all practical, salience, a better knowledge of these antecedents and their moderators may allow job-centers management to calibrate better career counseling and transition support interventions on the basis of the actual characteristics of the users and their context, stimulating deficit psychosocial aspects which could instead catalyze more effective and efficient job-search behaviors.

Theoretical model and study hypotheses

Saks and Ashforth (2000) listed the main theoretical models about job-search behaviors (Barber, Daly, Giannantonio & Phillips, 1994). The sequential model proposes that job-search follows a logical sequence of stages in which “search activities change sequentially and systematically over the duration of search” (Barber et al., 1994, p. 742). On the basis of such model, Blau (1993, 1994) conceptualized the so-called “preparatory job-search behaviors” (e.g. preparing a resume) that imply the search for information and potential avenues of action. According to the second model, the so-called learning model, job seekers learn more efficient and effective search techniques during their job-search; in this regard, Saks and Ashforth cited the so-called “active job-search behaviors” (e.g. telephoning a prospective employer) which instead imply more concrete activities such as the search for contacts or the consultancy of specific advisers. Finally, the third, emotional response, model asserts that job seekers experience high levels of stress and frustration that “may cause searchers to expand, contract, or otherwise modify their search activities, regardless of the utility of those activities” (Barber et al., 1994, p. 741). The sequential model and the learning model justify the traditional distinction, also considered in the present paper, between preparatory and active
The Family Assessment Measure III (FAM III) in an Italian sample

An exploratory study

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ABSTRACT. The Family Assessment Measure III (FAM III; Skinner, Steinhauer & Santa-Barbara, 1995) is one of the most widely used family assessment tool at the international level. However, research supporting its use in the Italian context is lacking. In order to help to fill this gap, the main aim of this pilot study was to explore the use of FAM III in the Italian context. The questionnaire was administered to an Italian community sample of 1572 parents together with the Parenting Stress Index (PSI-SF; Abidin, 1995), as a measure of parental stress. Confirmatory Factor Analyses were carried out. The 7-factor model showed the best fit. Internal consistency of FAM III showed acceptable values. Analysis of variance showed significant differences for age cohorts, few differences for parental role, and no effect for child’s gender. The data collected for the Italian sample were compared with available data for the American sample showing few differences. Convergent validity was assessed investigating relationships between the FAM III and PSI-SF. Correlations revealed a good association between quality of family functioning and parenting stress as referred by parents. The FAM III appears to be a reliable tool for assessing Italian family functioning in different moments of the family cycle of life.

Keywords: family, stress, assessment’s instruments, Italian population

INTRODUCTION

The need for tools to assess family functioning is well established, and is considered important by those who work daily with children and families and need to assess their strengths and weaknesses (Alderfer et al., 2008). In the clinical setting, family assessment tools have been devised and used to face the challenge of assessing not only the referred child, but also the family functioning, that is, the child’s family system and its individual members (Gan & Schuller, 2002). The family is complex per sé, with various definitions coming from different family system theories (Lis, Mazzaeschi, Salcuni & Di Riso, 2008). The families are organized systems that aim to maintain balance and order through communication and assigned roles (Kazak, Rourke & Crump, 2003). As systems, they have to accommodate developmental changes such as those elicited by the child’s growth. The parental subsystem is also challenged according to the age of the sibling and family functioning may be different at the various ages of the child. These different developmental moments of transition in the...
The “Body Image Control in Photos questionnaire” (BICP)

A new tool for the analysis of self-presentation of body image on Facebook during adolescence

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Research on self-presentation in social networks has neglected the selection and management of photographs posted on people’s profiles. The aim of the present study is to build and validate a new tool to investigate body image control behavior in photos posted on Facebook. Methods. A questionnaire was built and administered to 478 Italian adolescents (219 females and 259 males), aged from 12 to 19 years old. Psychometric properties were investigated; explorative and confirmative factor analyses were carried out. Results. The questionnaire presented good psychometric properties: Section I and Section II showed a good internal reliability. The five factors that emerged from the explorative factorial analysis, verified by the confirmative factor analysis, evidenced a good internal reliability. Conclusions. These factors describe important dimensions of the selection process and management of photos to post on Facebook, such as correcting and improving your body image. Therefore the proposed instrument would be useful to better understand the process of mentalization of the body.

Keywords: social networks, self-presentation, photo selection
Psychometric properties of the Italian version of the Short Form of the Metacognitions Questionnaire (MCQ-30)

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ABSTRACT. Introduction: The Metacognitions Questionnaire (MCQ-30) is a scale which measures a range of metacognitive beliefs and processes relevant to vulnerability and maintenance of emotional disorders. Past studies have shown that the original version of the MCQ-30 has good psychometric characteristics and it is a brief, reliable and valid self-reporting measure of metacognitions. Despite other Italian versions that were proposed, this study presents the validation and adaptation to the Italian context of the MCQ-30. Methods. 306 participants took part in this study and took the Italian version of MCQ-30. Internal consistency was examined using Cronbach’s alpha and corrected item-total correlations. Reliability and convergent validity were verified and the stability of the MCQ-30 was tested. An exploratory factor analysis was run and examined using the five-factor solution of the English version. Results. The results demonstrated good psychometric properties for the MCQ-30 Italian version. The MCQ-30 showed satisfactory internal consistency and convergent validity, and had a good test-retest reliability. Moreover the confirmatory factor analysis affirmed the five-factor solution. Conclusions. The Italian version of MCQ-30 has good psychometric properties and appears to be a valid and reliable tool for clinical research in the area of metacognition.

Keywords: metacognitions; metacognitions questionnaire; confirmatory factor analysis
The Anxiety Sensitivity Index-3: Factor structure and psychometric properties in Italian clinical and non-clinical samples

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Abstract. Introduction: This study examined the factorial structure, internal consistency, and construct validity of the Italian version of the Anxiety Sensitivity Index-3 (ASI-3). Methods. ASI-3 has been translated with a back-translation procedure and then administered in a mixed sample of anxiety disorder patients (n = 154) and non-clinical participants (n = 629), along with measures of anxiety sensitivity, depression and anxiety. Results. Confirmatory factor analyses confirmed the hierarchical model of a single higher order factor and three lower order factors (physical, social, and cognitive concerns). ASI-3 demonstrated sound psychometric properties. Conclusions. Participants with different clinical status differed from each other on the ASI-3 subscales in theoretically meaningful ways. Panic disorder patients scored higher on the social concerns subscales than social phobia patients. The Italian version of the ASI-3 is a reliable tool, but more studies with Italian clinical samples are needed to further explore the criterion-related validity of the three ASI-3 subscales.

Keywords: Anxiety Sensitivity Index-3, validity, Italy

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