



## PERSONALITY DISORDERS AMONG FUTURE PSYCHOLOGISTS

STELIANA RIZEANU<sup>a</sup> FLORIN ENE<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>*Hyperion University, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences  
Department of Psychology*

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### **Abstract**

*Taking into account the growing incidence of personality disorders in the general population and the daily life problems they lead to, we decided to study the prevalence of personality disorders among future psychologists.*

*We used a test group of 89 subjects made up of psychology students and MA students of the Clinical Psychology and Counselling Psychology Master's programme from the Hyperion University. In order to diagnose personality disorders we used the Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-IV Axis II Personality Disorders – SCID II (First et al, 2007).*

*The results show that 53% of the subjects meet the criteria for personality disorder diagnosis, out of whom 20% have one personality disorder, 18% two personality disorders and 15% three or more personality disorders. The most common personality disorder among the psychology students is the obsessive compulsive disorder found in 35 of the subjects, representing 39.3% of the test group.*

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**Keywords:** *personality disorders, psychologists, diagnostic.*

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Prevalence of personality disorders in the general population is approximately 10% (Lenzenberger, Lane, Loranger, Kessler, 2007; Samuels, Eaton, Bienvenu et al, 2002; Sansone and Sansone, 2011).

Research carried out by Torgersen, Kringlen and Cramer (2001) on a group of 2053 people aged 18 to 65 in Norway showed that the prevalence of personality disorders was 13.4% and the highest prevalence was among subjects with only high school education or less, and living without a partner. The most frequent were

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*Corresponding author: Steliana Rizeanu*

*E-mail address: stelianarizeanu@yahoo.com*

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the avoidant, schizoid and paranoid personality disorders, the least common being the borderline. Zimmerman, Rothschild and Chelminski (2005) carried out research on a number of 859 psychiatric outpatients who were interviewed with the Structured Interview for DSM-IV Axis II Personality Disorders upon presentation for treatment. Results showed that 270 of them, amounting to 31.4% of the total group were diagnosed with one of the ten personality disorders officially recognized, the most common being avoidant, borderline and obsessive-compulsive personality disorder.

Research carried out by Gawda and Czubak (2017) in Poland on a group of 1460 nonclinical people proved that 8.9% out of them had at least one personality disorder, the most prevalent being obsessive-compulsive (9.6%), narcissistic (7%), and borderline (7%).

Research carried out by Chabrol and his collaborators (2001) on a group of 60 high school students showed that 26.7% met the criteria for the borderline personality disorder diagnosis, 16.6% for depression and 10% for dependent personality disorders. The Longitudinal Study of Personality Disorders carried out by Sansone and Sansone (2011) analysed the prevalence of personality disorders in a university population of 2000 and concluded that overall prevalence of personality disorders in this young community sample was 11.0 percent.

## **2. OBJECTIVE AND HYPOTHESES**

### **2.1. OBJECTIVE**

The main objective of the present paper is determining the prevalence of personality disorder among the future psychologists.

### **2.2. HYPOTHESES**

Our hypothesis is that the prevalence of personality disorder among the future psychologists is higher than in the general population.

## **3. METHOD**

### **3.1. PARTICIPANTS**

For this research we used a group of 89 psychology students and MA students from the Clinical Psychology and Counselling Psychology Master's programme, from Hyperion University of Bucharest, aged 19 to 48, out of whom 9 male subjects – 10.1% and 80 female subjects, representing 89.9% of the experimental group.

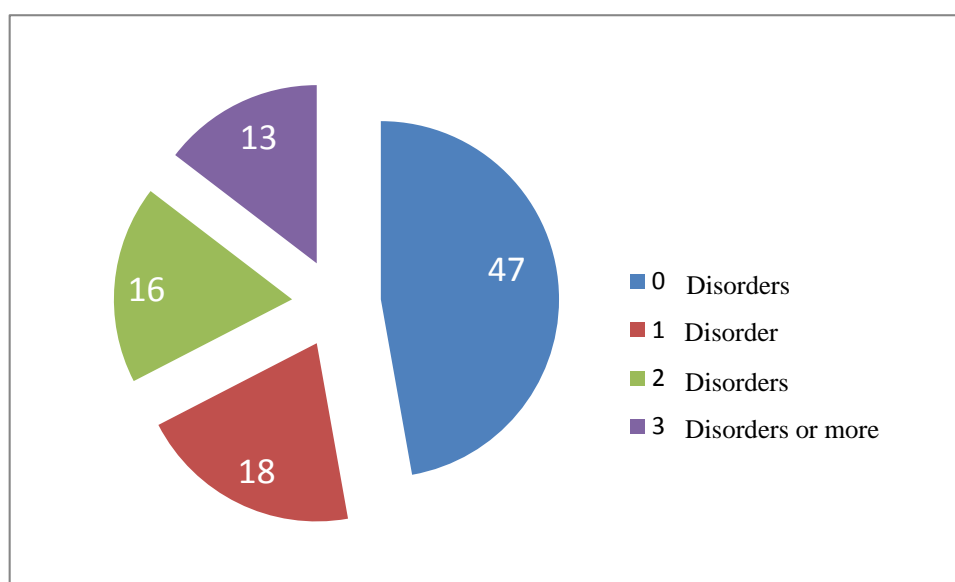
### 3.2. INSTRUMENTS

In order to diagnose personality disorders we used the Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-IV Axis II Personality Disorders SCID II (First et al, 2007).

## 4. RESULTS

When applying the SCID II questionnaire, 47 out of the total number of subjects, representing 53% of the group, were diagnosed with personality disorders, out of whom 18 subjects (20%) with one personality disorder, 16 subjects (18%) with two personality disorders and 13 subjects (15%) three or more personality disorders (figure 1).

Figure 1. Diagnosis with one or more personality disorders



The descriptive statistics on the number of the criteria obtain for each personality disorder in our group are shown in table 1.

The most frequent personality disorder within our experimental group is the obsessive-compulsive disorder found in 35 of the subjects, representing 39.3% of the total, followed by the narcissistic personality disorder diagnosed in 16 subjects (17.9% of the group), and the antisocial personality disorder diagnosed in 9 of the subjects (10.1%).

Table 1. Descriptive statistics

Descriptive Statistics									
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Avoidant	89	0	6	1.13	1.375	1.603	.255	2.668	.506
Dependent	89	0	7	1.36	1.416	1.447	.255	2.330	.506
Compulsive	89	0	8	3.19	1.833	.368	.255	-.402	.506
Passive-Agressive	89	0	5	1.30	1.326	.855	.255	-.037	.506
Depressive	89	0	4	.74	1.103	1.521	.255	1.623	.506
Paranoid	89	0	5	1.10	1.415	1.197	.255	.469	.506
Schizotypal	89	0	6	2.00	1.438	.657	.255	-.198	.506
Schizoid	89	0	5	1.15	1.293	1.109	.255	.646	.506
Histrionic	89	0	6	.99	1.133	1.557	.255	3.460	.506
Narcissistic	89	0	10	2.78	2.315	.888	.255	.570	.506
Borderline	89	0	9	1.70	2.019	1.731	.255	3.358	.506
Antisocial	89	0	6	.67	1.213	2.217	.255	5.223	.506
Valid N (listwise)	89								

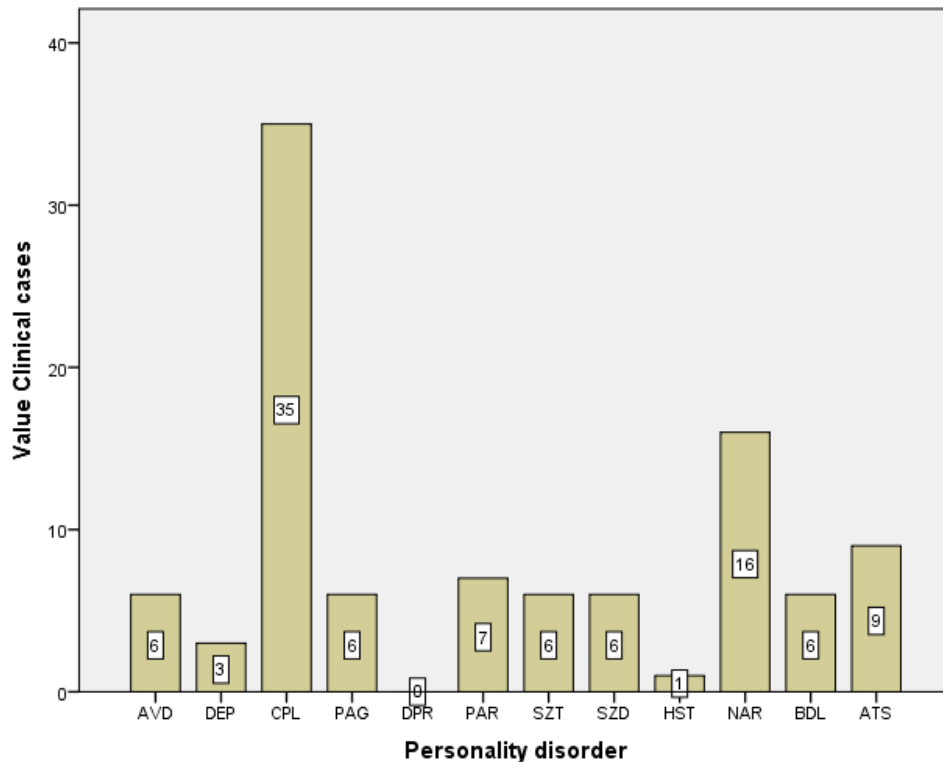
Obsessive-compulsive personality disorder is characterized by perfectionism, order, high standards and rigid beliefs (Rowland, Jainer & Panchal, 2017). People with this disorder have unwanted and repeated thoughts and sensations and the study conducted by Rosa-Alcázar and her collaborators (2008) concluded that cognitive restructuring treatment is efficient for the reduction of obsessive-compulsive symptoms. The prevalence of this disorder in United States is between 2.3% (Ruscio et al, 2010) and 7.8% (Grant, Mooney & Kushner, 2012) and it is associated with anxiety, mood disorders and impulse control disorders.

Narcissistic personality disorder is a mental disorder characterized by exaggerated feelings of self-importance, great need for admiration, and a lack of empathy (Rizeanu, 2015). Prevalence of this disorder is around 6.2%, greater for men than for women (Stinson et al, 2008).

Antisocial personality disorder has some characteristics such as: a lack of internal motivation to follow social rules, a long-term pattern of manipulating the rights of others without any remorse and relationship problems (McRae, 2013). Its lifetime prevalence is estimated to range from 1-4% of the general population (Lenzenweger et al, 2007; Trull et al, 2010).

The last places are held by the depressive personality disorder, diagnosed in 0 subjects, histrionic personality disorder – 1 subject and dependent personality disorder (8.9%), diagnosed in 3 subjects (3.4%), as seen in figure 2.

Figure 2. Distribution of personality disorders



## 5. CONCLUSIONS

As it can clearly be seen from the results of the research, the prevalence of personality disorders among future psychologists is 53%, much higher than in the general population, where the prevalence estimates are between 6.1% (Huang et al, 2009) and 9-10% (APA, 2013; Gawda & Czubak, 2017). The most frequent personality disorders in our experimental group are obsessive-compulsive disorders (39.3%), the narcissistic personality disorders and antisocial personality disorders. The findings of this study are consistent with the study conducted by Nachshoni and his collaborators (2008) on a sample of 128 professionals, included 63

psychologists and 65 social workers, where Axis II traits were reported by 73.4% of subjects, the three most frequent personality disorders being narcissistic, avoidant and obsessive-compulsive.

Therefore it is highly recommended for all psychology students to take up a personal development within which to identify the possible emotional problems that might interfere with their future career as a psychologist (Patterson-Hyatt, 2016). Also, graduated students should enter personal therapy and treatment during their training (Dearing, Maddux & Tangney, 2005). At present, cognitive behavioural therapy, with its component hypnotherapy, represents one of the most efficient personality disorder treatment methods (David, 2006; Holdevici, Crăciun, 2018; Rizeanu, 2016, 2017).

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