Abstract.

In this study our intent is to identify the maladaptive schemes in girls and boys in the province of Almeria. To achieve these objectives we have used the survey method, using the Young Schema Questionnaire Long Form - Second Edition, YSQ-L2. This questionnaire was used on 126 girls and 120 boys, after which we have reached the conclusion that there are no differences in the maladaptive schemes based on gender. Generally all maladaptive schemes are present in young adolescents.

1. Introduction:

The schemas consist of stable and deep cognitive structures that contain rules or instructions that guide the selection, coding, storage and recovery of the information. They are formed between the genetic predisposition of the individual and their exposure to environmental influences through their relationships with significant others, parents, teachers, siblings, which will result in a set of ideas and beliefs about oneself and others that will condition the manner in which situations are evaluated and interpreted (Beck, 1995). Along this same line, Young (1999) specified that extremely stable and long lasting schemas that develop during infancy are created throughout the individual's life and are significantly dysfunctional and serve to process subsequent experiences.
These are created during infancy and are generated from lived experiences and relationships with the social-affective environment. In this sense, a schema will be a profound cognitive structure containing the basic rules for selecting, filtering and coding information (Restrepo, 2007).

Riso (2006) and Young et al. (2003) define the ETI as those counterproductive cognitive and emotional patterns related with oneself and others, which begins to be built based on constant patterns of harmful feelings that the person experiences when interacting with their environment during infancy/adolescence. For example, when persons develop a psychological disorder, the processing of information is distorted, causing the cognitive schemas to act under relevant circumstances in the environment, magnifying the data and negating or minimizing any information that is inconsistent with it, pushing away and probably inhibiting those that may be better adaptive and better focused on reality (Beck, 1995). These persons throughout their life will experience a constant distortion of reality and this will result in maladaptive emotions and improper conducts.

However, it is important to clarify that another important factor that results in the development and maintaining of the schemas is the emotional temperament present in each child, which is highly resistant to change but through therapy, a child can learn to moderate their emotional responses and modify or even eliminate some dysfunctional conduct that is favoured by their temperament (Young, et al., 2003).

2. Classification of the maladaptive schemes

According to Young and Klosko (1994) 15 early maladaptive schemes exist, arguing that in a greater of lesser degree, they are present in all persons, these are evaluated using the Young Schema Questionnaire (Young y Brown, 1994) or other instruments. We are talking about the following schemas:

Disconnection/Rejection Domain: Is linked to the frustration of the need to belong and is comprised of those schemas that involve the expectation that the need for security, affective stability, empathy, protection, care and respect would not be met by others. Includes: (1) Emotional Deprivation, their emotional needs cannot be satisfied by other people; (2) Abandonment/instability, the persons around them will not offer the emotional support they need and will abandon them for other people; (3) Mistrust/Abuse, the belief that other people will hurt them, believing it is intentional; (4) Social Isolation/alienation, one withdraws from the world, is not part of the group; (5) The Defectiveness/Shame Schema, the feeling that one is defective and therefore not loved.

Impaired Autonomy Domain. Refers to a lack of perceived ability to function independently of others and perform successfully. Said domain includes the following schemas: (6) Failure, the person believes they have failed or will fail in life; (7) Dependence, the belief that one is unable to handle one’s everyday responsibilities without considerable help from others; (8) Vulnerability to harm, exaggerated fear of any unpleasant moment, and that they cannot do anything to prevent it; (9) Enmeshment, is an excessive emotional involvement and closeness with other people, being unable to face anything or of being happy without them.

Other Directedness Domain. This domain relates to the inadequate satisfaction of the need to feel free to express emotions and desires that are valid and involves those schemas that have to do with the excessive emphasis on the desires, feelings and reactions of others at the expense of one’s own needs. (10) Subjugation, involves giving up ones own rights because they feel coerced by other people; (11) Self-Sacrifice, do not satisfy their own needs because they put the needs of other people before their own needs.

Over-vigilance and Inhibition Domain. This is linked to a lack of expressing spontaneity and playfulness and concerns beliefs relative to the suppression of impulses and spontaneous feelings as well as rigid, internalized rules about performance and behaviour, frequently at the expense of happiness, self-expression, relaxation, close relationships or health. (12) Emotional Inhibition, spontaneous excessive inhibition of ones feelings; (13) Unreachable goals, strives to achieve high goals to avoid criticism, setting aside one’s own welfare.

Impaired Limits Domain. This is related to a lack of appropriate limits and sufficient self-control to achieve one’s own objectives and taking responsibility with respect to others or focusing on long term goals. In fact, this leads to difficulties respecting the rights of others, cooperating with others, making commitments or setting and meeting realistic personal goals. This domain is comprised of the following schemas: (14) Grandiosity, which involves the belief that one is superior to other people, including the excessive competitiveness or domination over
others; (15) Insufficient self-control, which involves difficulty or refusal to exercise sufficient self-control and tolerance to achieve one’s objectives.

Based on everything we have mentioned until now, we can point out that schemas develop throughout life and are stable, long lasting and significantly dysfunctional due to their tendency to resist change. They seem familiar and comfortable, to the point that the threat of change results in an unstable central cognitive organization, causing the individual to distort the information and use cognitive manoeuvres to keep the schema valid and intact (Young, 1999; Welburn, K., Coristine, M., Dagg, P., Pontefract, A., & Jordan, S, 2002; López Pell, F. A., Rondón, J. M., Alfano, S. M. & Cellerino, C; 2012).

3. Objectives

The purpose of this research is to identify early maladaptive schemas in young adolescents in the province of Almeria and establish the differences based on gender.

4. Methodology

To this end, we have used the survey method, using the Young Schema Questionnaire Long Form - Second Edition, YSQ-L2, which is an instrument developed by Young & Brown (1994) and validated by Castrillón, Chaves, Ferrer, Londoño, Maestre, Marín and Schnitter (2005). The questionnaire includes 45 items, evaluates eleven schemas and has a Cronbach alpha of 0.9093 for the entire test:

- Emotional deprivation (M: 11.03, D.T.: 5.01).
- Vulnerability to harm and illness (M: 10.34, D.T.: 5.53)
- Entrapment (M: 4.42, D.T.: 2.58)
- Emotional Inhibition (M: 6.17, D.T.: 3.49)
- Unrelenting standards 1/Hypercriticalness (M: 9.29, D.T.: 4.76)
- Unrelenting standards 2/Perfectionism (M: 9.17, D.T.: 4.00)
- Entitlement/Grandiosity (M: 6.55, D.T.: 3.11)

5. Population and sample

The sample is comprised of 238 adolescent students from the province of Almeria in Spain. Focused on the gender variable it is comprised of 126 females and 112 males from public and subsidised Secondary Schools. Said schools were chosen via voluntary sampling. Finally the sample was comprised as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subsidised School in the Capital City of Almeria</td>
<td>Public School located in Vera, Almeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of all the adolescents of the sample, 53.1% (128) are students of 1º de bachillerato (11th grade) and 46.2% (110) were students from 2º de bachillerato (12th grade) with an average age of 17 (50.8%), and ages ranging between 16 and 19.

6. Data analysis

The data has been analysed using the quantitative program SPPS v.20 and a descriptive study has been conducted, which included central and dispersion tendency measures. In the analysis presented we have focused on those that present significant differences.

Factor 2. “Insufficient self-control/self-discipline”. In this factor we find that there are many significant differences according to gender in four of the six items that comprise it:

- Item 40 “It seems like I can’t discipline myself to complete routine or boring tasks”, we find a significance relative to gender of \( p = 0.001 \).
- Item 42 “it is very difficult for me to sacrifice immediate satisfaction to reach a goal in the long term”, a significance difference exists of \( p = 0.001 \).
- Item 43 “When the tasks are difficult, normally I can’t persevere to complete them”, \( p = 0.002 \), which shows that a statistically significant difference exists according to gender.
- Item 44 “I can’t concentrate on anything for very long”, with a significance according to gender of \( p = 0.003 \).

Factor 4. “Emotional deprivation”. This is an important factor within the maladaptive schemas and from their analysis we can reach the conclusion that 16.8% of the sample (40 students) possesses this factor, of which 14 are female and 26 are male. As in factor 2, we find significance in the following items:

- Item 2 “For a long time in my life nobody has ever wanted to be close to me or willing to spend a lot of time with me”, where an important significance exists according to gender; \( p = 0.002 \).
- Item 3 “Most of the time nobody has really listened to me, understood me or is in tune with my actual needs and feeling”, like in the previous item, we see a statistical significant difference with respect to gender of \( p = 0.003 \).
- Item 4 “Rarely have I had a strong person giving me sound advice or direction when I was not sure of what to do”, we find a significance as far as gender, \( p = 0.002 \).

Factor 9 “Emotional inhibition”. When analysing this factor, we must mention that like in the previous cases we find that a significance exists relative to gender in item 29 "I control myself so much that others think I don't have any emotions", with a \( p = 0.000 \), relative to gender.

7. Conclusions

With this study we reach the conclusion that to a greater or lesser extent, these early maladaptive schemas are present in our youths.

We must point out that the most representative schema of our sample is factor 3 "Mistrust/Abuse", just like the findings of the Jaramillo & Hoyos study (2009). This data shows us that these adolescents are going to believe that others may intentionally harm them in some way, as stated in the factor they will develop mistrust and will become suspicious of others.

On the other hand, regarding gender we can say that no significant relevance exists between being a male or female regarding the prevalence of any of the different factors of early maladaptive schemas. We can only see that in some items gender does make a difference but it does not affect all factors that comprise these items.

Even so, in females we have identified the appearance of predominant factors, “Insufficient Self-control”, “Emotional Deprivation” and “Emotional Inhibition”, which affects the predominant factor in the total of our sample and the results of the findings of Welburn et al. (2002), where women score higher in this cognitive schema. With respect to males, the predominant factor is “Insufficient self-control”, which is also characteristic of
Based on the results of this study we can conclude that early maladaptive schemas do exist in our youths and that the best way to prevent their appearance is to reach an emotional stability by learning how to achieve emotional intelligence. We recommend that in the early childhood development stage (kindergarten) emphasis is made regarding this issue. This way in the future we will obtain healthy and stable social relationships in adolescence and adulthood (Soriano-Ayala & González-Jiménez, 2013 and González-Jiménez, 2013).

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References


