

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS BETWEEN RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES IN PSYCHOLOGY AND CONSCIENIOLOGY ON IMPOSTOR SYNDROME

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Abstract. This article presents an analysis about how a same object of study, in this case the Impostor Syndrome, has different research methodologies in Psychology and Conscientiology, even when it is a matter of the research of the consciousness. It shows that among the differences the main one is the focus of the research, because while in Psychology the scope is often epidemiological, in Conscientiology the focus is on the researcher himself. Beyond the differences, this article also evaluates the similarities, such as the relevance of bibliographical research on Impostor Syndrome when researching oneself,

Keywords: Psychology, Conscientiology, Methodology, Impostor Syndrome.

INTRODUCTION

Psychology “is a science that studies human behaviour, the conditions of a person’s psychic development and the modalities of life in different social situations on which they influence, even if in variable measures, economic aspects and cultural values proper to each civilization.” (De beni, Bommassar & Grossele, 2004, p. 14).

Delimitation. Delimitating exactly what will be considered as the science Psychology in this article is very difficult, as there are several very different theories on the subject, but as this study will focus on the Impostor Syndrome, we will analyse how this psychopathology is studied, without going further on a deeper analysis of the various schools of Psychology.

Complexity. Dittrich et al. (2009) discusses that the relation between the researcher and the object to be researched would already be the very topic of study in Psychology, which, concerning this complex science already would be an interesting analysis among all different schools that evaluate the thematic of Impostor Syndrome. This demonstrates the complexity of the theme explored in this article, which aims to compare research methodologies in Psychology and Conscientiology in the same object of study, the Impostor Syndrome.

Positivism. The psychological articles regarding the Impostor Syndrome analysed in this work follow a positivist line, in which the observation is a requirement (Dittrich et al., 2009). The positivist line uses quantitative research to obtain

quantifiable data that is expressed numerically through statistical, physical and mathematical models (Córula, 2015), as present in epidemiological articles, for example.

Conscientiology. The other science to be studied in this article is Conscientiology, a science applied to the study of the consciousness in a comprehensive, integral, multidisciplinary, multicultural and multitemporal way; considering several dimensions, several existences in this dimension and the interactions with energies, besides several states of manifestation (Vieira, 2013, p. 3.275).

Consciousness. In this article the term *consciousness* is synonymous to 'being, soul', i.e. the intelligent principle, the subject. Therefore, the same theme, the Impostor Syndrome, will be analysed through Conscientiology and Psychology, which has different methods of studying the consciousness, the human being.

Structure. The article begins with the differences and similarities between the research carried out in Psychology and in Conscientiology, followed by the specific thematic of the Impostor Syndrome and ends with a Discussion and Conclusion session.

Method. The research of this article was done through the analysis of articles and books on Impostor Syndrome in the two sciences, Psychology and Conscientiology, as well as bibliographical references about these sciences.

I. DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

Differences

Object. In the consciential paradigm (Zaslavsky, 2013, p. 28), the main focus of research is the researcher by himself in order to increase its' perception of reality and to optimize evolution consciously (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 26), which differs from Psychology, since the object of study is not the researcher himself. This difference led to the need of introducing a new concept, self-consciousness, existing in Conscientiology, but not in Psychology.

“Self-scientificity is the quality of self-knowledge and of the systematic and theoretical method of acquiring it, without beliefs or dogmatisms, acquired through continuous investigation of one's own consciousness, focusing on a multidimensional, multivehicular, multiexistential, cosmoethical and pro-evolutionary approach, using self-research and conscientiometric techniques with methodological rigor” (Kauati, 2012, p. 1.364).

Quantity. The research object being the researcher himself leads to another differential, the number of individuals participating in the study. While it is common in Psychology studies with several volunteers and present results in statistical terms, in Conscientiology the study with a population (n) greater than 1 is rare.

Statistics. Statistics is not neglected in Conscientiology, but it is recommended more as a motivational factor, as seen in the Encyclopaedia's entry *Motivating Statistics* (from the Portuguese "Estatística Motivadora") (Vieira, 2013b), with epidemiological researches not being common. A rare example is the research on penta practice (*tenepes*) carried out online (Habib, 2011).

Difference. This difference in the quantity of participants always leads to the questioning of the research's quality (scientificity), but it is emphasized that in Conscientiology self-scientificity is a primordial factor, since the main objective of this science is personal evolution.

Parapsychism. Another important point in self-scientificity is parapsychism (see Kauati, 2015, p. 8-12), as the basis of the consciential paradigm is the existence of other dimensions, some self-research data may come from parapsychic perceptions. Parapsychism involves not only communication with consciousnesses from other dimensions, but also the perception of energies coming from beings and environments. In Psychology, no scientific production was found in which data came from parapsychic perceptions. It is worth mentioning that the research on the existence of parapsychic phenomena is not being addressed, but rather the use of information derived from parapsychic perceptions in research.

Validation. One of the major challenges in Conscientiology is the validation of data, especially those of parapsychic origin, although it is emphasized that self-validation is most important. Self-validation does not mean lack of scientificity, but rather that comparisons are made with oneself to see if there is an evolution of one's own condition. In this case, the scientific character is in the measurement instruments and used techniques.

Instruments. Among the measurement instruments used in Conscientiology, the *Conscientiogram* (Vieira, 1996) is one of the largest, with 2.000 questions for the analysis of the consciousness.

Techniques. Carvalho et al. (2018) present an overview of the publications on the techniques of Conscientiology, of which stands out the book *700 Experiments of Conscientiology* (Vieira, 1994) and the *Encyclopaedia of Conscientiology* (Vieira, 2013), with various techniques described.

Seriality. Another important differential between the paradigms of these sciences is the focus of multiple existences of the consciousness in this dimension approached by Conscientiology, while no mention was made of other lives in the research of Impostor Syndrome in Psychology. In the article *Self-Research Method of Consecutive Personality* (Kauati, 2015, p. 69-82) the author presents a research method to identify past existences in this dimension. Already assuming there are past lives, unlike researches such as that of the psychiatrist Ian Stevenson (American Society for Psychical Research. *Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation*, 1966), which aim to establish whether the existential seriality exists in this dimension or not based on third-party research and not the author's own. It should be

noted that in this case the data is based on memory and birthmarks in the body of individuals, that is, there's no data coming from parapsychic phenomena.

Similarities

Similarities. Because both are sciences that research the consciousness, there are similarities in both research methodologies, of which the following stand out: (1) Bibliographic research; (2) Evaluation instruments; (3) Techniques and (4) Confidentiality.

Bibliography. All scientific work starts with bibliographical research, because in this way it is possible to take advantage of pre-existing knowledge in order to add something new to the literature. But although this similarity is present in both sciences here discussed, in Conscientiology the bibliographic research is not restricted to the scientific material produced by this science. It searches in other sciences and non-scientific journals and magazines. This research technique is called *Cosmogram* and has the intention of analysing facts that occur on the planet.

“The *cosmogram technique* is a set of routine procedures of reading, selecting and analysing published material in national and international media, from all political-party inclinations, and subsequent classification and archiving according to the central fact exposed (*materthosene*), stated by the multidimensional principles of Conscientiology, aiming in the long run to reach a cosmovision of the human holothosene and of the realities of the Universe, by the exercise of maximum association of ideas, cosmoethical self-criticism and personal interassistentiality” (Belo, 2015).

Instruments. Instruments for the evaluation of the consciousness are necessary in any science, but as the result of the main focus in Conscientiology it is self-research and in Psychology, heteroresearch (third-party research), both applied differently. While in the consciential paradigm the important thing is self-assessment, the instruments are self-applicable and easily acquired, the already cited in this article, *Conscientiogram* (Vieira, 1996) is one of them. Meanwhile in Psychology, self-application is not encouraged without being accompanied by a professional, for example, Beck's Anxiety Inventory (Cunha, 2001) is not widely available for anyone to use.

Techniques. Techniques are what underpin sciences. Thus, both Psychology and Conscientiology have techniques such as e.g. in Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy there is the AWARE (Beck & Emery, 1985, apud Beck, 2013, p. 219) to respond to automatic thoughts consisting of acceptance (A-Acknowledge), observation (W-Watch), action (A-Act), repetition (R-Repeat) and hold (E-Expect). In Conscientiology, an example of technique is the BME (Basic Mobilization of Energies) that can be performed following the steps: 1. Circulation of energies along

the body in a closed circuit flow of energies from feet to head and returning from head to feet. 2. Energy externalization throughout the holosoma. 3. Absorption of energies throughout the body.

Confidentiality. An important point to highlight in the case of consciousness research is the confidentiality of information, because in any paradigm this aims to protect the subject of study. In Conscientiology, even though the method is self-research, care must be taken when publishing data involving third parties and of personal information that may be used against the self-researcher. In addition, the level of exposure in self-research publications depends on how well the scientist is able to deal with criticism, which may be personal in this case.

II. IMPOSTOR SYNDROME THEME RESEARCH

Evolution. The knowledge about this psychopathology has evolved over the years of research and the previous definition is no longer adequate, since according to Harvey and Katz (1984) it occurs in both men and women, young and elders, and members of any race.

Definition. Sustained by the researches in Psychology and on self-research, Kauati (2012, p. 1.364) defined in Conscientiology as follows:

“The Impostor Syndrome is the condition of the intraphysical consciousness (conscin)¹, man or woman, to consider oneself not deserving of success, for imagining oneself to be short of the capacity of realization, without admitting one’s own strong traits, in opposition to the facts and perceptions of other consciousnesses, living in fanciful fear of discovery of undeserved consciential achievements.”

Interparadigmatic. This is a case of interparadigmatic extrapolation, as the concepts and techniques of a science of a given paradigm, Psychology, were used in the research in another paradigm, Conscientiology (Kauati, 2016, p. 14). Despite the definition itself, besides the neologisms, there are no great differences, it is in this way of studying the topic that the differences are found.

Statistics. Analysing the case of the research of Impostor Syndrome, statistical data and heteroresearch stand out in Psychology, seeking to understand the functioning of the psychopathology in groups of people. For example, Chrisman et al. (1995) validated the Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale in a study of 269 participants. Another study found was the Holmes et al. (1993) in which 62 individuals participate to compare the Clance and Harvey impostor syndrome scales, with results suggesting that Clance’s scale would be more sensitive and reliable.

Self-esteem. Another study found in literature was that of Cozzarelli & Major (1990), comparing a group of students with Impostor Syndrome and another

¹ Intraphysical consciousness (conscin) is the human personality.

one without the psychopathology, separated according to Clance's scale. Volunteers also completed the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Inventory, the Optimism-Pessimism Prescreening Questionnaire (OPPQ) and 16 items of self-esteem measure. The authors concluded that students with Impostor Syndrome presented more anxiety before exams than non-syndromic students, despite having the same academic history. In case of failure in examinations, the Impostor Syndrome group felt worse than the control group. But they did not show differences in self-esteem in case of success.

Relations. Ross and Krukowski (2003) studied the relationship between the Impostor Syndrome and personality disorders, according to the DSM-III-R, finding a positive relation with the characteristics of the Avoidant and Dependent Personality Disorder. Corroborating with Clance & Imes (1978) that the feelings of self-efficacy depend a lot on the evaluation of others on their abilities and value.

Impostorism. A comprehensive study, based on several articles on the Impostor Syndrome, was conducted by Sakulku & Alexander (2011). The analysed studies showed that if the family sends confusing or invalidating signs over the achievements, this can be a predisposing factor for the pathology. The authors concluded that there are negative effects of the syndrome on a person's psychological health and well-being.

Focus. The several articles found in literature of the science of Psychology are heteroresearches (i. e. researchers that study phenomenon that happen outside themselves or their lives), generally aiming to trace the characteristics of the Impostor Syndrome in populations, as well as its possible origins, for a greater understanding of this psychopathology. To achieve such goals, the studies are carried out with a large number of volunteers in an attempt to analyse the behaviour of the population and not the very subjective characteristics of each individual.

Individual. In contrast, in the paradigm of the science Conscientiology, the publications are based on personal experience. In the case of this psychopathology, only one researcher's publication was found, a fact that often occurs at the beginning of the research in a new thematic. Although the Impostor Syndrome has been known in Psychology since the publication of Pauline R. Clance and Suzanne A. Imes (1978), it still is understudied in Psychology and even less in Conscientiology due to its self-research character.

Self-researches. However, there are other syndromes studied in Conscientiology, of which there are specific books on the subject: Ostracism Syndrome¹ (Haymann, 2011) and Foreigner Syndrome² (Balona, 2006).

2 "Ostracism Syndrome is the morbid state resulting from the loss of some kind of human power and consequent anonymity, isolation, social exclusion, political exile, economic bankruptcy, artistic invisibility or scientific destitution." (HAYMANN, 2011, p. 21).

3 "Foreigner Syndrome is a behavioural disorder, characterized by a morbid state of alienation, strangeness to the environment and/or people, maladaptation, acute melancholia, apathy, depression, sometimes accompanied by anorexia, which may lead to premature desoma" (BALONA, 2006, p. 23-4).

Utility. Data collected from many individuals is also useful in self-research. A study by King & Cooley (1995) with 127 volunteers, 75 women and 52 men concluded that high scores on the Family Environment Scale were associated with higher levels of Impostor Syndrome and more time spent on academic efforts by women. Another study by Clance & Imes (1978) with 178 participants, concluded that women with feelings of deceit were divided into two groups, one that the family considered to be brilliant and another that the family considered to be sensitive and charming, being that in the first group the women discovered that they were not so intelligent and those in the second group tried to prove that they were more than just sensitive and charming. These data may lead the self-researcher to the reflection about his own family and evaluate his personal case.

Culture. Following the line that research with several participants is useful to self-research, the results of O'Connor (2010) was used in self-research. O'Connor (2010) evaluated 29 papers regarding perfectionism and suicide and concluded that there is considerable evidence that self-criticism relates to perfectionism (i.e., socially prescribed perfectionism, the self-criticism, the concern with mistakes and doubts about actions) is correlated with suicidal tendency. Thus O'Connor (2010) raised the hypothesis of the influence of the Japanese culture in the development of Impostor Syndrome, since perfectionism is present in this culture and self-criticism in exacerbated in the studied syndrome.

Academia. Another study on the manifestation of the Impostor Syndrome, temporarily or permanently, was carried out by Laursen (2008) in the academic environment, mainly among graduate students, *stricto* and *lato sensu*, also a focus of attention of this conscientiological researcher. The observation of events that took place in the academic environment and also the self-research of this author corroborates the results of Laursen (2008) and the study was published in the article *Impostor Syndrome and Academic Life* (Kauati, 2013).

Casuistry. Considering the aforementioned articles about mesological influences on the Impostor Syndrome, the author analysed this influence in herself through the following self-research, extracted and synthesized from the book *Impostor Syndrome: Overcoming Through Self-Scientificity* (Kauati, 2017):

1. **Objective:** Analysis of the mesological influence on the Impostor Syndrome.
2. **Hypothesis:** The family and academic environment contributed to the development of the Impostor Syndrome.
3. **Method:** Retrospective analysis.
4. **Results:** High correlation between traits related to the Impostor Syndrome and a Japanese family, and also military and academic backgrounds with which lived in this life.

Parapsychism. In addition to the research though retrospective analysis of this author, parapsychism was also used to evaluate the need for suffering that the

Impostor Syndrome reinforces. The following excerpt from an experiment using parapsychism for self-research was taken from the same book (Kauati, 2017, p. 97-8):

Casuistry. An example of self-research carried out by this author in order to understand the religious origin in the personal manifestation is presented, briefly, in 6 stages:

1. **Objective.** Find out why you suffer so much.
2. **Method.** Experimental method with the use of BME (Basic Mobilization of Energies) and the *Tabula rasa* technique⁴.
3. **Experiment.** Perform BME and reassure body and mind. Through the *flat board technique*, without preconceived ideas ask the question, for example: “For whom do I suffer?” The answer can come in several ways, such as insights⁵, retro-cognitions⁶, clairvoyance⁷ or clairaudiences⁸.
4. **Result.** Visualization of the word “Jesus” on the mental screen and an image seeming to be dressed like a nun.

Reinforcement. In the same week, while reporting the performed experiment to conscientiotherapists⁹ in a conscientiotherapeutic setting, they saw extraphysical consciences (consciexes)¹⁰ dressed as nuns. In addition, an autobiographical study revealed other facts and parafacts¹¹ reinforcing the hypothesis of previous religious lives. ...”

Multixistentiality. The clipping of the report of this self-research experiment shows an example of how prior existences can be used in the investigation of the consciousness, bringing auxiliary information to self-diagnosis.

Synthesis. It is worth mentioning that the experiments presented in the book were intended to give practical examples of how to do self-research and were presented in a summarized way, an excerpt of the process. For example, the research of hypotheses regarding previous religious lives were carried out for more than six years, with several experiments, studies and development of self-research techniques.

⁴ *Tabula rasa technique* consists in emptying the mind of any preconceived idea so as to facilitate the formation of new ideas. [N.T.: *Tabula rasa* in Latin means a flat surface.]

⁵ *Insight* is a new idea or sudden comprehension of something.

⁶ *Retrocognition* is the phenomenon of remembering something of previous lives in this dimension or of the period re-lived in the extraphysical dimension before rebirth.

⁷ *Clairvoyance* is the phenomenon of seeing something from another dimension.

⁸ *Clairaudience* is the phenomenon of hearing something from another dimension.

⁹ *Conscientiotherapists* are specialists in the science of Conscientiology who assist in the remission of some psychopathological aspect of the consciousness.

¹⁰ *Extraphysical consciences* (consciexes) are consciences that manifest themselves in other dimensions.

¹¹ *Parafacts* are facts that occur in other dimensions.

Hypothesis. The hypothesis of religiosity being one of the causes of the Impostor Syndrome was brought by the author due to her self-researches, reinforced by the idea that in some religions it is not well seen to publicly admit personal qualities. This is a differential of self-research, because even without epidemiological study of case reports indicating this, the self-researcher can elaborate hypothesis to be studied through his/her experiences.

Table. Tables 1 and 2 present summaries of the differences and similarities, respectively, between the research of the Impostor Syndrome in Psychology and in Conscientiology.

Characteristic	Conscientiology	Psychology
Epidemiology	Not usual in Conscientiology and no epidemiological article about the Impostor Syndrome was found.	Several articles found in literature.
Focus of the research	The researcher himself.	Third-parties.
Parapsychism	Use of parapsychic perceptions is part of the research method.	No article was found with the use of parapsychism by the researcher.
Validation	The researcher himself evaluates the results of the research.	Validation is made by the researcher who is not included in the research, comparing results with different groups of people.

Table 1. Differences between the research of the Impostor Syndrome in Psychology and in Conscientiology.

Common characteristics
Confidentiality about third-party research participants
Literature review
Use of evaluation tools
Use of methods and techniques

Table 2. Similarities between the research of the Impostor Syndrome in Psychology and in Conscientiology.

III. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Difficulties. The research of the consciousness in any science is a great challenge, mainly because it is a very recent object of study in science and the techniques are still being elaborated and tested.

Complexity. In addition, the consciousnesses are complex with very specific individual characteristics, which makes it difficult both the sample surveys with large number of participants in the search for mapping a pattern, and for individual self-researches in an attempt to self-understand and overcome one's own psychopathologies.

Epidemiological. Although epidemiological research is not common in Conscientiology, beginning that the main focus is to self-research up until the fact that there are few cases of a same problem to be studied, it is wise to take advantage of results of other researches with large numbers of people to use in self-research. This can be done by conducting self-experiments and self-investigations based on the instruments and results published in scientific articles. Science grows precisely through the use, by scientists, of the already done and published research.

Use. The same theme researched by different sciences has similarities and differences. The search for ideas and the use of research done by other researchers from other paradigms broadens the overall vision and helps develop innovative solutions.

Self-research. The results obtained by academic research with numerous people were considered by Kauati (2013 and 2017) to conduct self-researches, from answering validated questionnaires to taking into consideration factors studied as influencers of the Impostor Syndrome.

Continuity. A proposal to deepen this work would be the comparison of research methodologies of the consciousness in different schools of Psychology with Conscientiology.

CURRENTLY, IN THE XXI CENTURY, VARIOUS SCIENCES INVESTIGATE THE SAME OBJECTS OF STUDY. TO EXPAND THE VISION OF THE PROBLEM AND SEARCH FOR INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS, THE RESEARCHER WOULD BENEFIT FROM UNDERSTANDING DIFFERENT SCIENCES AND PARADIGMS.

Questionment. Have you tried to study different sciences, other than the ones you are used to? Have you used the knowledge of several sciences to solve a problem?

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