

THE ROLE OF SOCIALIZATION, SOCIAL RELATION AND SENSATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF TEACHER CANDIDATES

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Abstract: The study presents the results of a research that is part of the research of the Ratio Research Group of J. Selye University among teacher candidates. The research team is focused on exploring the circumstances of dropout. An integral part of this is searching about students' opinions, attitudes, abilities, and social relationships. The research is used several measuring tools. This paper analyzes the results of the Sensation Seeking Scale. A total of 161 teacher candidates were enrolled in this study (full-time 117, 44 correspondents). The questionnaire analyzes the student opinions in 4 dimensions: 1) Thrill and Adventure seeking (SSS-TAS) - searching for fast and dangerous sports, activities, 2) Experience seeking (SSS-ES) - longing for a new, non-conforming lifestyle with senses or unique vitality, 3) Disinhibition (SSS-DIS) - in which the strongest factor is a dive into drug and sex adventures, and 4) Boredom Susceptibility (SSS-BS) - avoidance of repetition, routine and dull people, intolerance of the tension of invariance. The results are shown: 1. How high is the degree of experience seeking, what is the intensity of experience seeking among the students? 2. Are there students who seek experiences more intensively than others? 3. In which dimension is the frequency of experience seeking most common? 4. Are there any prominent differences between each dimension?

Keywords: experiential pedagogy, teacher training, personality, research, sensation seeking scale, social relation

1 The antecedents of the research the sensation seeking scale

The study presented here and its results form part of the research among the students of the Faculty of Teacher Education of J. Selye University, which focuses on the study of the causes and background of a dropout.

Data collection is performed partly by standardized tests, questionnaires, and partly by self-developed tests. What has been achieved and received so far is pointing out students' fears and expectations about university life. We carry out our longitudinal research with the help of eleven, partly self-developed and partly adapted measuring instruments, which we carry out in four Hungarian-language higher education institutions.¹

The most important feature of our research strategy is that we examine dropout in a broader context, in addition to getting to know the students' personalities, we also analyze the characteristics of the social environment. We look for connections between background factors, logical thinking, emotional intelligence, attitudes (teacher career, teacher role), teacher competencies, stress tolerance, and learning style, among others. We continuously compare our results with the relevant indicators of the latest domestic and international studies.²

In the 2019/2020 academic year, we expanded our measurement tools with the Sensation Seeking Scale. We do this in order to obtain additional information about the students' personality profile, values, needs, expectations, and to achieve our objectives outlined above.

From our preliminary research results, the present study focuses on our findings on students' personality and mental state, which, in line with international results, show that students have significant mental and emotional problems (Twenge 2017; Robinson – Aronica 2016). They are insecure in themselves, they have fears about learning, their lack of abilities, they are anxious about the failure to complete their studies and their

physical-mental-emotional-spiritual world is full of contradictions.³

In the academic year 2019/2020 we included the Sensation Seeking Scale as one of our measurement tools. The psychometric features of the questionnaire allow us to obtain data on the personality traits of the participants in the study aimed at gaining intense experiences and new, varied experiences.

1.1 The test sample

Candidates of the J. Selye University took part in the research. 27% of the students are full-time and 73% are correspondent (Figure 1).

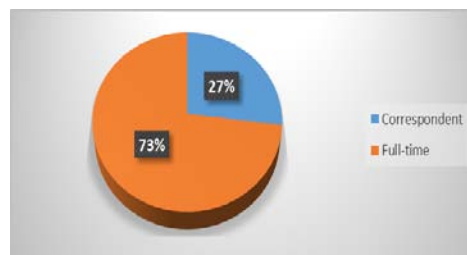


Figure 1: Distribution of the sample by type of training.

The data of the 161 students participating in the study were grouped according to further detailed background analysis (Table 1). N = 161, Cronbach's Alpha: 0.754 (Figure 2).

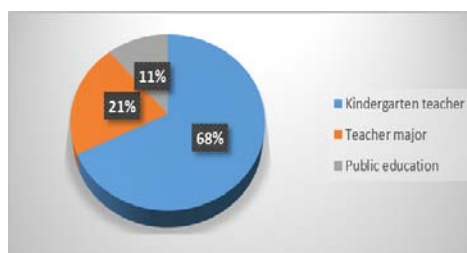


Figure 2: Distribution by specialties

1.2 Characteristics of sensation seeking scale

'Sensory search for experience is one of countless personality traits. Yet its presence or absence is not negligible, as it affects many areas of our lives. It affects what activities we prefer, what sports we choose, what foods we prefer, how we dress, or what kind of people we feel comfortable with' (Mayer et al. 2012: 298.) Sensory search for experience is a personality trait from which the risk of problematic behaviours such as excessive alcohol and other pleasure consumption, illegal substance use, unrestricted sexual behaviour, uncontrolled gambling etc (Andó et al. 2009).

Our research team used the most commonly used 40-item Sensation Seeking Scale, which has excellent reliability and validity indicators (Zuckerman 1978).

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² Csehi, A. – Kanczné Nagy, K. – Tóth-Bakos, A. 2020, Horváth, K. – Tóth, P. 2019, Kanczné Nagy, K. – Csehi, A. 2018, Kanczné Nagy, K. – Csehi, A. 2021, Kanczné Nagy, K. – Tóth, P. 2018, Nagy, M. et al 2018, Nagy, M. et al 2019, Tóth-Bakos, A. – Tóth, P. 2018, Faria, C. et al 2012, Frey, A. et al 2014, Jungert, T. et al 2015, Robinson K. – Aronica L. 2016, Şahin, M. 2014, Stiburek, Š et al 2017, Twenge, J. M. 2017, Wudu M., Getahun F. 2009;

³ As a result of our efforts to resolve the situation, we have included a personality development pedagogy course in the training of our students, which is an optional subject for the would-be kindergarten teacher and teacher students. The course uses the possibilities of activity- and experience-focused and experiential pedagogy that can be adapted in many ways. Our goal is to strengthen students' attachments to university and university studies, to help build different relationships (peer-to-peer and student-teacher), to help overcome learning insecurities and fears, and thus to contribute to the positive development of their personalities.

The questionnaire consists of 40 pairs of statements. For each statement pair, the person completing the questionnaire should decide which member of the statement pair he or she can best agree with.

The study was conducted along 4 dimensions:

1. Excitement and adventure, namely the extent to which the respondent is looking for fast and dangerous sports and activities.
2. Searching for experience, namely the degree of openness to new experiences that excite the senses or the mind, travel and non-conformal lifestyle.
3. The strongest factor in the dimension of unbridledness is immersion in drug and sex adventures.
4. And the boredom tolerance dimension examines the extent to which repetition, routine, the presence of boring people, and invariance create tension in the person.

Thus, determining the extent of the search for experience can provide important information for a more thorough understanding of the students' personality profile and the realization of our objectives outlined above.

1.3 Criterias of the investigation

The aspects of the study were as follows:

- I. Intensity of sensation seeking.
- II. Frequency of experience search.
- III. Comparison of the results of the 4 dimensions.
- IV. Students, who looking for experiences in an extreme way.

Formulated were 4 research questions:

1. How high is the degree of experience seeking, what is the intensity of experience seeking among the students?
2. Are there students who seek experiences more intensively than others?
3. In which dimension is the frequency of experience seeking most common?
4. Are there any prominent differences between each dimension?

The study was performed in two phases.

1.4 Results of the first phase: frequency and intensity of sensation

We began to examine the frequency of experience search in dimensions by summarizing students' responses. We then percentage the students' choices per dimension in each of the 10-10 statement pairs. In the following, we examined the choice rates of the experience-seeking statements. Quantitative categories of experience search frequency were determined in the following based on research methodological considerations. If the respondents chose the statement of the pair of statements expressing the search for a sensory experience to be less than 20%, the degree of search for experience is low, if the choice was more than 60%, the degree of search for experience is high. The distribution of the selection rate of 10-10 pairs of statements measured in four dimensions is illustrated in Figure 3.

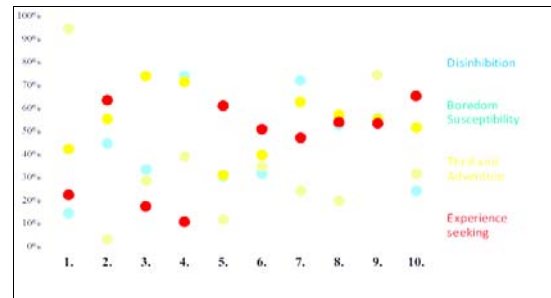


Figure 3: Distribution of the choice rates of the 10 question pairs belonging to each dimension

Based on the responses, it can be concluded that high frequency is present in a higher proportion among students than low frequency. High-frequency responses occur in all four dimensions, while low-frequency responses occur only in the Boredom Susceptibility and Experience seeking dimensions. Table 1 illustrates the percentages of high-frequency statements and their remarkable content.

Statements:	Dimension:	Choice rate:
'For the sake of the God, I would not even watch a movie I have seen before.'	Boredom Susceptibility	94,4%
'I love people who honestly state what they think even when it's sometimes hurtful.'	Boredom Susceptibility	74,50%
'I love having new, exciting experiences, even if they're a little scary, unusual, or illegal.'	Disinhibition	73,90%
'I would love to learn to water ski.'	Thrill and Adventure	73,90%
'It would be advisable for everyone to have the right amount of sexual experience before marriage.'	Disinhibition	72%
'I would love to try wind sailing.'	Thrill and Adventure	71,40%

Table 1: Incidence rate of high frequency responses

Based on the examination of the intensity of experience search, we can state that the proportion of students seeking sensation with high (22.36%) and low (19.25%) intensity is similar among our students. As a result of our analysis of the full range of intensive experience search indicators, we found that 3 students search for sensory experiences with extreme, almost extreme intensity.

From the results, we concluded that the exploration of the causes of intensity among students with a different opinion from the majority (58.39) requires further research.

The four dimensions - Thrill and Adventure seeking, Experience seeking, Disinhibition, Boredom Susceptibility - were analyzed separately. We calculated the proportion of students who represented their positions in a different way than the average, and analyzed the content of the statements they chose. 8.7% of students surveyed feel best when they've been drinking a little and love wild house parties where nothing is forbidden. 2.8% of them will be restless if they have to sit at home for a long time and get terribly bored when the host projects and shows travel photos or movies and thinks the main sin in social contact is when someone is boring. And the most extreme students (1.86%) would try mind-altering, hallucinatory drugs and had already smoked drug cigarettes or would like to smoke it.

Summarizing this part of the study, it can be concluded that high-frequency responses occur in all four dimensions, while low-frequency responses are present only in the Boredom Susceptibility and Experience Seeking dimensions.

The statement 'I wouldn't watch a movie I've seen once before' reached a significantly higher frequency (94.4%). Furthermore, above 70%, so exceptionally high values, the following two statements were produced: 'I love people who honestly state what they think even when it is sometimes hurtful'; 'I love

having new, exciting experiences, even if they are a little scary, unusual or illegal.'

Students' opinions are most different in the Thrill and Adventure seeking dimension. The greatest consensus among them is in the Boredom Susceptibility dimension. The enjoyment of extreme sports mostly shares their opinions (average rate: 55% & 45%). However, there is not always a consensus in the dimension of Boredom Susceptibility in the search for sensory experience. The security of the usual old friendly environment is important and not boring for 96.9% of the respondents. 80.1% like to spend time with friends.

These results support our preliminary research that interpersonal relationships play a very important role among students.

2 Comparison of dimensions

To examine each dimension, we revealed the differences in the choice rates between the members of the statement pairs (referring to experience search or refusing to search for experience). For each pair of statements, we calculated the difference between the members of the pairs in terms of the choice rate. The closer the difference is to zero, the more divided the respondents in judging the statement pairs, as this means that 50% of the respondents chose one member of the statement pair and 50% the other. The closer the difference is to 100, the greater the consensus among respondents, as this means that one member of the statement pair was chosen by no or very few, while the other member was (almost) chosen by everyone. The differences in the selection rate of the 40 pairs of statements in the four dimensions are illustrated in Figure 4. The figure shows well that students are most divided in the Thrill and Adventure seeking, and the greatest agreement among them is in the Boredom Susceptibility.

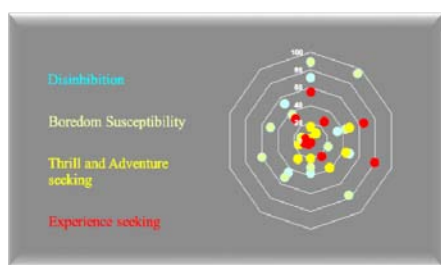


Figure 4: Differences in the choice rate of question pairs in the four dimensions examined

The degree of division and agreement was determined as follows: in the case of a difference of 0-15 percentage points, the division is strong, and between 50-100 percentage points there is an agreement, the strength of which increases to 100. We revealed the greatest division in the Thrill and Adventure seeking, as here 5 statements are below 15 percentage points, or around it. The pairs of statements that shared the students were as follows. 'I would love to try bungee jumping,' said 57.1% of teacher candidates. In contrast, 42.9% agreed with this statement: 'It repels the feeling of me jumping from a height. I don't even approach places like this.' 44.7% thought that 'Sensible people avoid dangerous activities.' The opposite was chosen by 55.3% of the respondents. 'Sometimes I like doing things that are a little scary.' The following statements made the biggest difference. 'Downhill skiing on a steep mountain slope is a great way to find yourself in plaster' (48.4%). 'I think I could really enjoy a quick descent down a steep mountain slope' (51.6%). There are yet two strongly divided pairs of statements in the Thrill and Adventure seeking dimension. 'I would love to be a climber' (42.2%). 'I can't understand why some risk their lives climbing' (57.8%). The next pair is 'It is reckless to sail far with a light small sailboat' (44.7%) and 'I would like to sail far into the sea with a light but well-built sailboat' (55.3%).

We found the greatest degree of agreement among respondents in the Boredom Susceptibility dimension. Here 6 statements are above 50 percentage points. However, in this dimensions, consensus there was not always in the sensory experience search (Table 2).

The statements of the sensory experience search	Statement of avoiding sensory experience
'I get bored when I have to see the same old faces' (3.1%).	'I like the comfortable acquaintance of old friends' (96.9%).
'For the sake of the world, I wouldn't even watch a movie I've seen before' (94.4%).	'There are movies that I like to watch twice or even three times' (5.6%).
'It is terribly boring when the hosts show travel pictures or movies to their guests' (11.8%).	'I enjoy watching photos or movies of my trip at home on Facebook or Instagram' (88.2%).
'The main sin in social contact is when someone is bored' (19.9%).	'The main sin in social contact is rudeness' (80.1%).
'I will be restless if I have to sit at home for a long time' (24.2%).	'I like spending my time at home in a familiar environment' (75.8%).
'I like people who honestly state what they think even when it is sometimes hurtful' (74.5%).	'I don't like people who take pleasure in hurting others' (24.8%).

Table 2: Agreed statement pairs in the Boredom Susceptibility dimension

3 Conclusion

Based on the responses, it can be stated that high-frequency responses occur in all four dimensions, while low-frequency responses occur only in the Boredom Susceptibility and Experience seeking dimensions.

The statements with the highest frequency are:

1. 'I would not watch a movie I have ever seen for the world.'
2. 'I love people who honestly say what they think ever when it is sometimes hurtful'
3. 'I love having new, exciting experiences, even if they are a little scary, unusual, or illegal.'

Students are most divided in the Thrill and Adventure seeking dimension.

The greatest agreement is in the Boredom Susceptibility dimension.

The enjoyment of extreme sports mostly shares their opinions - average rate: 55%; 45%.

In the dimension of Boredom Susceptibility, there is not always agreement on sensory experience seeking. The security of the usual old friendly environment is important and not boring for 96.9% of the respondents. 80.1% like to spend time with friends. These results support our preliminary research: interpersonal relationships play a very important role among students.

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