

Peculiarities of Predictive Activity of Persons Who Have Neurotic Disorders with Various Intensity of Religious Activity

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Abstract: The article presents the results of the research of the peculiarities of predictive activity (anticipation) depending on the intensity of religious activity during neurotic disorders. The religious structure of the sick suffering neurotic disorders has proven differences. It was revealed that religious activity in a group of tested people suffering neurotic disorders has its own particularities. Special ideological mindset is typical of the tested persons with intensive religious activity. It was revealed that the tested persons with intensive religious activity usually have affection disorders. It was shown that the predictive activity of persons who suffer neurotic disorders is connected with religious activity and has some peculiarities. It was revealed that religiously inactive persons maintain their ability to evaluate their previous experience adequately and to anticipate their future reasonably.

Key words: Predictive activity • Anticipation • Religious activity • Neurotic disorders • Religious mindset • Religious ideology

INTRODUCTION

The science has accumulated vast experience in comprehension of the phenomenon of religiosity. The problem of religiosity in its function as a complex multilevel establishment is the subject of research in philosophy, sociology, pedagogy, psychology and psychiatry. However, currently the following contradiction occurred within the scientific space: on the one hand, religious belief is typical of any regular person to a different extent; it is "associated with the concept of the highest Divine that controls humans and the world..." [1], plays the most important role in the emotional sphere, thinking and behavior of a human; and on the other hand, despite the fact that "religion does not have any influence on mental disorders by itself" [1], the religious activity plays an important role in formation of pathologic changes of mindset and behavior.

Religious activity is a concept that is extracted from the category of the activity, which describes a person as an independent source of initiative

(subject) in the global relationship with the reality [2]. The role of forestalling and prediction of life situations is deemed very important within this context.

Within the aspect of religious activity, religiosity is treated as not just a property or a feature, but the initiating instance of a subject, which directs him to the special transcending contact with the surrounding and internal realities [2].

Therefore, the study of peculiar features of the predictive activity (anticipation) in its function as a condition of successful adaptation, ability to simulate the "required future", forecast the probability of its implementation [3] and the religious activity in its function as a property of a personality, which determines the relationship between an individual and the surrounding reality, is topical for the contemporary science and practice. Besides, the etiologic and pathologic role of predictive incompetence (anticipation inconsistency at neurotic disorders) is also renowned [4, 5].

Research Methods: The target of the research is to study the peculiarities of predictive activity (anticipation consistency) depending on the intensity of religious activity at neurotic disorders. Female and male tested persons between 30 and 50 years of age who were being treated at Bekhterev Republican Clinical Psychiatric Hospital in Kazan took part in the research. Totally, there were 80 tested persons.

The following diagnostic instruments were used in the research: Methodology of Studying Religious Activity (MIRA), developed by D.O. Smirnov, which included the following elements: religious ideology, religious motive, religious ideology [6], religious feelings, the test for anticipation consistency by V.D. Mendelevich [5], the modified version of the methodology of frustration tolerance by Rosenzweig, the Time Perspective Evaluation questionnaire by P.G. Zimbardo [7]. The research was carried out in two stages. At the first stage of the experiment, after the test diagnostics using the Study of Religious Activity methodology, all tested persons were divided into the following sub-groups: atheists, i.e. people who stated their ideology as atheistic and who had at that very low results by the MIRA methodology; believers, i.e. those who claimed to be Christian or Muslim and who had high results under the MIRA methodology. At the second stage of the experiment, the peculiarities of predictive competence depending on the intensity of religious activity were studied and a comparative analysis was carried out. In the result of the research, it was stated that the distribution by the scales of religious activity in sub-groups differed from each other. The differences in religious activity within the studied groups are provided visually in Figures 1 and 2:

Research Results: Figure 1 shows that 80.2% of the tested believers expressed asthenic experiences characterized by the feeling of their imperfection, inferiority, shame, nothingness, reacts of self-accusation, repentance, fault in front the God, desire to sacrifice oneself to God and autodestruction. 98.7% of tested believers experienced prayer ecstasy, delight, admiration of touching the Divine (high values on the scale of sthenic experiences). We need to note that the values on the scale of internal and external motivation coincide in both sub-groups. The psychological essence of this scale comprises the following sensual constructs; assurance of oneself that "there is God and I can appeal to him at any time. I feel him in my life". High rates (99.9%) in the sub-group of believers by the scale of religious and natural ideology point out to the mythological thinking (the tested persons perceived religious signs –the Heaven, the Hell, devil as something really existing). The low values of 95.5% of religiously inactive tested persons on this scale indicate their natural scientific ideology, proneness to explain strange phenomena from the perspective of science, rationalism, perception of religious symbols as a product of subjective experiences of believers, or as a fantasy that is far from the reality. The high value (85.2%) in the sub-group of religiously active tested people indicates their personal involvement in ceremonies and practical abidance by religious principles. The fact also attracting our attention that half of the religiously active tested persons noticed their paranormal physical and spiritual experiences and events, which they could "explain only by involvement of supernatural forces" evidences their effort to explain psychological or metaphysical phenomena using the

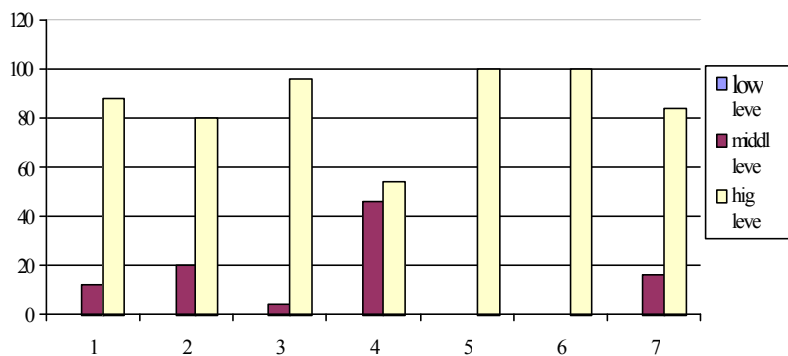


Fig. 1: Ratio of religious activity in a group of religiously active tested persons, in percentage.

* designation of scales: 1 - the scale of religious experiences, 2 - the scale of asthenic experiences, 3 - the scale of sthenic experiences, 4 - the scale of pre-religious experiences, 5 - the scale of internal and external religious motivation, 6 - the scale of religious and natural sciences ideology, 7 - the scale of religious actions.

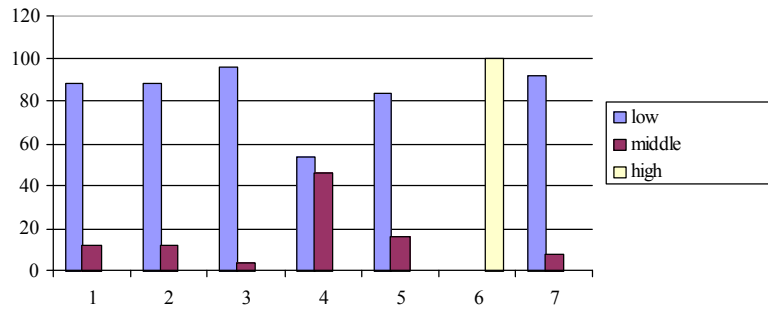


Fig. 2: Ratio of religious activity in a group of religiously inactive tested persons, in percentage.

* designation of scales: 1 - the scale of religious experiences, 2 - the scale of asthenic experiences, 3 - the scale of sthenic experiences, 4 - the scale of pre-religious experiences, 5 - the scale of internal and external religious motivation, 6 - the scale of religious and natural sciences world outlook, 7 - the scale of religious actions.

religious feelings (the expressed indicator on the Pre-Religious Experiences scale). The intensive values on the scales of religious and natural ideology and "pre-religious experiences" evidence the fact that the tested persons were guided by literal interpretation of commandments and prohibitions, excessive self-exactingness and readiness to suffer the feeling of guilt. Belief in miracles, denial of worldly blessings (prohibition of entertainments), beneficence and asceticism are not only the means of their self-affirmation, but they also help to avoid difficulties in the routine life.

The results of the temporal perspective estimation study by P.G. Zimbardo allow to conclude that the tested persons with expressed religious activity demonstrate high scores on the scale of the fatalistic present combined with low scores on the scales of the hedonistic present and the negative past.

Orientation to the fatalistic present of 37.8% of the tested people with intensive religious activity assumes its evaluation from the perspective of risky actions and impulsivity and absence of clear temporal perspective and orientation to the goal. This temporal orientation includes the proneness to rely on the fate, the conviction that the future is determined and it cannot be influenced, while the present is to be accepted sturdily and with submissiveness. The tested persons in this sub-group saw everywhere the will of Heaven. The religiously active tested persons (with intensive values on the scales of sthenic religious and pre-religious experiences) were determined to be submissive with respect to the fate and their submissiveness transformed to fatalism. They saw their destiny only in the context of the "penance idea" – their readiness to make satisfaction for sins by sacrificing themselves.

The high scores on the scale of the negative past combined with the low scores on the scale of the positive past combined with the low scores on the scale of the positive past of 43.3% of the tested persons with religious activity with expressed scores on the scale of asthenic experiences evidence the perception of life as a heavy burden. This assessment of the temporal perspective of the religiously active tested persons evidences the hopelessness, the absence of belief in the future and the inability to see any perspective in life and to forestall events, to become the basis of their life perception. Orientation to the negative past assumes assessment by the tested people with intensive religious activity of the past from the perspective of regret – it is considered as containing pain and sorrow. The following peculiar feature was revealed in the course of interpreting the results of the research: 28.3% of the non-religious tested people with high values on the scale of religious and natural ideology and orientation to the negative present and the positive future describe their theopathy as not conditioned by church canons. And despite the perception of their own life and the previous experience as "hard", they maintain optimism and belief in their power, the ability to invent and to control the aspects of difficult circumstances. 35.6% of non-religious tested people assessed their past as positive and the present – as negative. Obviously, in case of orientation to the past, the positive reassessment of the situation takes place – the positive past acts as a resource for forecasting of the present and the future. 38.0% of the religiously inactive tested people had the following ideological mindset: the real life cannot be realized completely and the worse the position is now, the more probably there will be a rise in the future.

Table 1: Comparison of the results by the types of stochastic forecasting in the group of tested persons:

Type of stochastic forecasting	Religiously active tested persons		Religiously inactive tested persons		Standard margins	t-em; t-kr=2.7 $\alpha=0.01$
	Average	Average deviation	Average	Average deviation		
	1.4	0.39	1.99	0.63	2 – 3	3.01

It is a known fact that "any interaction of a human with the world assumes interrelation of the past and the future through the present, which means that the goal of an activity implicitly includes the assumption of the result integrated through the choice of an adequate strategy of the interaction process" [3, 5], the temporal perspective distributes the life experience between the past, the present and the future and allows to develop an adequate individual life strategy [8-10]. Therefore, we can assume that the religiously active tested people demonstrate their inability to revise the past experience, to assess adequately the present and to provide reasonable anticipation of the future. Assessment of the results, which characterize anticipation consistency within a group of the tested people, showed the following: In a sub-group of the religiously active tested people, the group average value of the total anticipation consistency remains within the normal value. But the group average values of the elements of the anticipation consistency (personally situational and spatiotemporal elements) indicate prominent tendency to worsening. Analysis of the results proves that the tested people in this sub-group face difficulties in their efforts to forecast events and situations in life, coordinate their own moves, show motor agility, forecast the mainstream and apportion the time precisely. The religiously inactive tested people have better ability to forecast events, situations and their own behavior during them.

Analysis of answers timing in the group had the following results: when choosing the tactics of monovariant forecasting and before giving the answer, the tested people required a short period after they were presented a subsequent pictorial situation and later, they were unable to provide any other version. However, we determined the following peculiar feature: the sub-group of the religiously active tested people aggressively rejected any suggestion to consider other variants of the test situation ("everything needs permanence", "I will keep to my point...", "there is nothing to change... what was said was right..."). The sub-group of the religiously inactive tested people made efforts to find other variants of solution of the pictorial situation, but in all cases, they returned to the initially suggested variant after some time. At the "standard variant" type of stochastic forecasting, the tested people generated 2-3 answers for each

frustrating situation after equal periods. At the "polyvariant" type of stochastic forecasting, the tested people from all groups gave numerous various answers for the suggested situations and faced difficulties in selecting the variant, which was proper according to their opinion.

The analysis of the received results allows to identify the differences in the studied groups by the types of stochastic forecasting and points out some peculiar features of the anticipation of religiously active tested persons. As distinct from the religiously inactive tested persons, for the religiously active respondents in the circumstances of uncertain situations, the "monovariant" type of stochastic forecasting prevails, which evidences its rigidity, orthodoxy and the dogmatic style of thinking.

The correlative analysis stated the reverse and negative interrelations between the predictive (anticipation) consistency and religious experiences: the asthenic religious experiences ($r=-0.363$), the sthenic ones ($r=-0.426$), pre-religious experiences ($r=-0.421$), the internal and external motivation ($r=-0.403$), the religious and natural science ideology ($r=-0.62$) and the religious activity ($r=-0.57$). I.e. the higher the level of anticipation consistency is, the lower the intensity of religious activity is and vice versa.

CONCLUSION

The accomplished research brings us to the following conclusions: the religious activity of believers with neurotic disorders is based on the combination of extremely affective experiences and the desire to purify, submissiveness and self-denial. Religion attracts the tested persons with intensive religious activity with its idea of salvation and with the fact that the feeling of sinfulness typical of them can be treated as vanity from the religion point of view. It was determined that asthenic experiences of the tested persons bring them to religiously mystical feelings, to the feeling of overall connection and unity with the people around, which they try to achieve through their exercises and meditation. Their religious experiences are associated with the belief in the personal God who loves them. The God takes the central place as a value within this group of tested

persons. The tested persons with low religious activity demonstrate skeptical attitude to religion and to religious exercises. The anticipation consistency within the sub-groups indicated its own peculiarities. People with intensive religious activity demonstrated inability to assess the future and the past through their present. The main reaction type with respect to the frustrating situation was the monovariant type of reaction. It was revealed that as religious activity increased, the degree of anticipation consistency declined.

Summary: People with neurotic disorders and intensive religious activity demonstrated specific peculiarities of the structure of religious activity, which made them different from the people with weak religious activity, on the one hand and from each other, on the other hand.

It was revealed that the tested persons with intensive religious activity were characterized by the dominance of affection disorders, autoaggressive reactions, expressed type of intrapunitive reaction, shortage of positive emotions and proneness to pseudo-abstractness and escape reactions (escape from the social reality). It was determined that the typical features of this group of tested persons are religious syncretism, influence on their ideology of standards and ceremonies of alternative religions as well as strict abidance by all religious canons. The tested persons with low religious activity appeal to religion only in critical circumstances. The motives encouraging the weakly religious tested people to appeal to God are the need to find support in their belief, the hope for normal earthly life, suppression of the fear of the future.

It was shown that the predictive activity in sub-groups of the tested people had its own peculiarities. The experimentally psychological research proved that patients with neurotic disorders and intensive religious activity more often had the monovariant type of stochastic forecasting, at which the patients tended to forecast rigidly and dogmatically only one variant of the result of the course of events. It was revealed that the ability of religiously active patients to forecast events tended to decline because of development of the polyvariant type of stochastic forecasting and dissolution of forecasts in the large number of the hardly probable ones.

The assessment of anticipation mechanisms of the sick people with neurotic disorders in the context of religious activity gives reason to say that for the tested persons with intensive religious activity, the specific ideological mindset (perception of their own disease as a

punishment, recompense for their sins, or God's test) and low predictive competence are common. It was revealed that the higher the anticipation consistency (both itself and its elements) is, the lower the intensity of religious activity is. It was revealed that religiously inactive tested persons maintain their ability to evaluate their previous experience adequately and reasonably anticipate their future.

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