

**PROLOGUE:
ASPECTS OF THE “PSYCHOLOGICAL”
PERSPECTIVE IN CURRENT SOCIAL
PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN GREECE:
INTRODUCTION TO SPECIAL ISSUE**

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Abstract: This special issue of the Hellenic Journal of Psychology is the second part of an initiative to capture part of the current social psychological research activity in Greece. Articles published here cover a variety of topics on the common ground of a “psychological” approach in social psychology. The special issue hosts five empirical research articles, which along with those published in the first part of this editorial attempt (Hellenic Journal of Psychology, vol. 14, issue 3), point that social psychological research in Greece follows two distinct disciplinary paths, namely, the “social” and the “psychological”. The articles included deal with the role of familiarity in the attributional process, the role of parental acceptance-rejection in the social anxiety of young adults, the construction of social knowledge of primary education students, the social representations of in-service early educators about their professional identity, and the acceptance of cyberbullying myths by parents of adolescent students.

Key words: Cyberbullying myths, Familiarity effects in voting, Parental acceptance-rejection, Social knowledge, Social representations of professional identity

INTRODUCTION

This Introduction constitutes the sequel of the Introduction appeared in the special issue of the Hellenic Journal of Psychology entitled “Aspects of the social perspective in current social psychological research in Greece”. That issue hosted articles by Gardikiotis, Xanthopoulos, Katsaounidou, Papasarafianou, and Fourkalidou (2017), Iatridis (2017), Digidaki and Baka (2017), Sapountzis and Papanikolaou (2017).

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These articles dealt with issues such as social psychological processes and media framing in the support of critical national policies, individual diversity and lay representations of racism, attitudes toward prostitution and multiculturalism, and cultural diversity as conceived by primary educators. Both the topics and the standpoints of these articles are closer to the “social” perspective of social psychological research.

In this special issue five research articles are hosted. A common thread of all five is that they approach their research interests from a “psychological” viewpoint in the context of social psychological theory (see, Lampridis, 2017a). Specifically, although all articles do not follow a quantitative methodological path characteristic of the “psychological” perspective in social psychological research to investigate their research questions, the nature of the topics they deal with is representative of the socio-cognitive approach in social psychological science. Furthermore, the fact that in two articles the authors choose to apply qualitative methods for the study of topics that have been widely examined through quantitative methodology could be considered as a challenging perspective, in terms of both methodological design and theoretical conceptualization. By doing so, the authors manage to highlight the fruitful and innovative spirit of the Greek social psychological thinking which directly corresponds to the ongoing global discussion nowadays about the interchangeability of epistemological and methodological approaches (e.g., Power, Velez, Qadafi, & Tennant, 2018). All articles present original empirical research that can be briefly described as follows:

The first article by Abakoumkin is entitled “Play it, Sam”, again and again: Further instances of familiarity effects in the Eurovision song contest”. The author wishes to pinpoint the crucial role that familiarity plays in an attributional process (Abakoumkin, 2011). In doing so, he employs a positively surprising example: The voting preferences in the Eurovision Song Contest. Both correlation and regression analyses support Abakoumkin’s main hypothesis that familiarity is a crucial element in an attributional process. In fact, data provided by the author suggest that songs from countries familiar to voters did better than songs from non-familiar countries. In the second article, Giotsa, Kyriazos, and Mitrogiorgou investigate parental acceptance-rejection and social anxiety in young adults. Having the Interpersonal Acceptance-Rejection Theory (Rohner, 2016) as their theoretical basis the authors strive to explore the role that social anxiety plays in young adults who are or not involved in a close relationship. The hypothesis was that the degree of social anxiety experienced in the present is an outcome of perceived parental acceptance or rejection during childhood. Data were collected through self-report questionnaires. Contrary to previous findings participants experienced similar levels of social

anxiety in the context of their intimate relationships, regardless of their gender. It is also noteworthy that parental acceptance was found to be negatively correlated to social anxiety of young adults in the context of intimate relationships, while parental rejection was positively correlated to social anxiety.

The third article by Geka and Gregoriadis is entitled “In-service early educators’ and student-teachers’ social representations about their professional identity in the Greek early childhood education settings”. Social representations theory (Moscovici, 2001) serves as the theoretical basis on which the authors attempt to study the construction of the professional identity of early childhood educators (in-service teachers and undergraduate students). Also, the authors are interested in clarifying the effect that teaching experience and initial training would have on the formation of such social representations. Interestingly, data were selected based on free associations methodology. The authors point out that professional identity of early childhood educators is shaped by representations formed by both personal memories and experiences, on the one hand, and emotions about their professional role on the other. This exceptional blend of cognitive and emotional aspects of the past and the present seems to be formed through participants’ teaching experience but also by a constellation of factors that contribute to the formation of the professional identity of early childhood educators.

The fourth article by Panagiotopoulou is entitled “Social knowledge of primary education students in Greece about family, religion and physical and mental health”. The main aim of this study was to identify critical components of the social knowledge of primary education students and use this valuable information as a methodological means for the formation of a research tool for the study of social axioms. Despite the fact that research presented here seems to be an intermittent stop in a course targeting a conceptually larger end the findings highlighted by the author are valuable. Notably, 62 semi-structured group interviews were conducted. Thematic analysis revealed the important role that school books play in the construction of social knowledge regarding family, religion, physical and mental health. At the same time, the findings regarding students’ social knowledge enlighten the content of values students have. Moreover, the findings clarify the crucial role that the content of Greek primary education plays in the formation of young students’ future personal and social values hierarchies.

The fifth article by Lampridis investigates the acceptance of cyberbullying myths by parents of adolescent students. The study presented here is the third part of a broader research project designed by the author to map stereotypical beliefs regarding cyberbullying. In two related studies published recently, Lampridis (2015, 2017b) presented data regarding university students and in-service educators, respectively. In this article the author presents findings concerning parents. Psychometrically speaking, the data presented here support the validity of a recently introduced measure regarding

the acceptance of cyberbullying myths (Lampridis, 2015). The methodological choice to capture stereotypes regarding cyberbullying by ranking cyberbullying forms in terms of their severity proved to be a successful innovation. The results underline that fathers tend to accept cyberbullying myths more than mothers and that the older a parent is, the more one uses ICT daily and the more one feels confident about their knowledge of ICT use and risks from it, the more they tend to accept cyberbullying myths.

Hoping that scholars would find the articles hosted in this special issue interesting and useful to their research endeavors the present issue is now trusted in their hands.

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