Reviews

K. J. Ripall-Núñez, A. L. Comunian, & C- M. Brown (Eds.) (2012). Expanding Horizon. Current Research on International Acceptance. Selected Papers from the Third International Congress on Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection. Padua, July, 2010. Boca Raton, FL: Brown Walker Press. ISBN: -13: 978-1-6123-571 (paper); ISBN: -13: 978-1-6123-572 (ebook).

To fully appreciate the volume, it is appropriate to consider it from different points of view: first, the relevance of the study area; then, we pay attention that the volume contains selected papers from the Third Congress of the International Society staff officer with and regional Representatives, to specific research center, and its own schedule of commitments. Third, we can consider the contents of selected papers and finally to mention the quality of the research presented.

The volume covers interpersonal acceptance and rejection. Leary (2001) summarizes the work of conceptualization of this study area: "Human beings are an exceptionally social species with a strong need to belong and an even stronger aversion to being rejected. We not only spend most of our lives in proximity with other people – living, working, playing, talking, eating, sleeping, and sometimes just "hanging out" with them – but also typically want those individuals to accept us at some minimal level. We know that not everyone will necessarily like us, but we usually hope that they will at least not find us so deficient or aversive as social interactants that they reject us outright. And when rejection does occur – when lovers leave us, friends drift away, potential employers decline to hire us, coaches deem us unsuitable for the team, strangers snub us, and so on – the experience is typically quite distressing. As a result, most people occasionally worry about refection and generally try to avoid being rejected" (p. 3).

In order to develop the study of this area, there is need to consider acceptance and rejection as relational evaluation. Existing theory and research relevant to the topic of interpersonal rejection – says Leary inter alia - have focused on specific manifestations of rejection, such as ostracism., stigmatization, betrayal, unrequited love, rejection sensitivity, poor rejection, parental neglect, and so on. Unfortunately, there has been

relatively little cross-fertilization among these topics possibly because we lack an overriding conceptualization of acceptance and refection that would allow us to move easily back and forth among various rejection-related phenomena. Most writers tend to use the terms "acceptance", "rejection", and their synonyms as if they reflect a dichotomy, juxtaposing the experience of "rejection" (exclusion, ostracism, neglect, and so on) against the experience of "acceptance" (inclusion, attention, approval, love, etc,). Furthermore, treating acceptance-rejection as a dichotomy makes it very difficult to talk about degrees of acceptance and rejection. People obviously accept some individuals more fully and unconditionally than they accept others, and likewise they more strongly and actively reject certain other individuals. Yet acceptance, rejection, and most: terms that refer to them seem absolute: an individual is either accepted or rejected and it seems awkward to talk about a person being partially rejected or mostly ostracized, or to regard one person's love as more or less requited than another's.

Leary also attempted to describe shades of acceptance and rejection by proposing a seven category index of inclusionary-status (Leary, 1990). For the same requirement, under the theory of relational competence, I faced the same problem (Cusinato and L'Abate, 2012) by creating and validating a model of similarity-difference comprising six levels. Beyond this theoretical and methodological problem of no small importance, it is worth to highlight how the area is of great relevance in order to deepen and to find intervention ways in many aspects of individuals and social groups: difficulties of school integration, attitudes and behaviors expansion of bullying, obstacles to marital and parental intimacy, psychosocial risk for self-identity, multiple forms of stigma and depressive sorties in growth, identification of resilience forms for coping rejection attitudes. For all these topics, the volume deserves to be well taken into consideration.

As already mentioned, the volume contains selected papers from the Third Congress of the International Society for Interpersonal Acceptance on and Rejection (ISIPAR). Therefore, the book shows a stage in a process of the Association started in 2006 and projected into the future. In fact, the Society has made three international conferences (Istalbul (Tukey), 2006; Crete (Greece), 2008; Padua (Italy) 2010) and announced three more meetings (Chardigarh (India), 2013; Chisinau (Moldova), 2013), Madrid (Spain), 2016). The website ISIPAR indicates an efficient organizational structure with precise objectives and clear objectives. The current officers come from the USA, Columbia, and Turkey. Its ten regional areas covering all the continents: Central & South Africa, Europe, Insular Pacific & Australia, Mexico, Central America & the Caribbean; North Africa &

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Middle East, North America, South America, Southeast Asia. The Society aims to support and encourage research and practice related to issues of interpersonal acceptance and rejection, including but not limited to parental acceptance-rejection, peer acceptance-rejection, acceptance-rejection in intimate adult relationships, and acceptance-rejection in other attachment relationships throughout the lifespan. The Center for the Study of Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection Research (CSIAR) and Related Projects, University of Connecticut (USA), is the engine that supports and stimulates the Association: researchers, clinical practitioners and other professionals are using Parental Acceptance-Rejection Theory (PARTheory) measures in the study and practice of parent-child relationships, intimate adult relationships, peer and sibling relationships , and other areas. Faculty and staff are also actively engaged in identifying new external funding sources for future research. We can therefore say that ISIPAR is an association well structured with scholars around the world and with a qualified research center. If we compare his associates and the contributors of the volume, we note that the latter come primarily from Europe (22 of 42) and that only 7 are staff members and/or regional representatives. It thus appears that the contributions' papers collect only a partial view of the world on this specific study area.

Let's say something about the contents. The book is divided into four sections. The first section comprises seven chapters that focus primarily on the relation between acceptance-rejection experienced in significant relationships and individuals-psychological adjustment. The second section (five chapters) regard acceptance-rejection in educational contexts, and individuals with developmental problems. The third section (four chapters) is devoted to methodological issues for validity and reliability of self-report measures typically used in cross-cultural research on interpersonal acceptance-rejection. The fourth and last section (two chapters) is comprised of two comparative studies that deal with differences between ethno-racial groups in specific nations.

If we compare the contents of this volume with the corresponding figure of the first meeting (2006), we can verify see the volume in 2012 is almost neglected area of therapy and neuroscience studies; at the same time, it is very diminished attention to different cultural contexts. The volume of 2008 focused specifically different areas not represented in the book 2012: family functioning, adult intimate relationships, policies and practices, interfaces of social science disciplines such clinical psychology, anthropology, special education, and sociology. The papers inserted in methodological issues (third section) reveal some limitations about

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appropriateness factor structures, internal consistency, proven reliability, and convergent validity.

I think quite rightly, as part of the ISIPAR, it is to be commended the initiative of the Rohner Center concerning the creation of the University of Connecticut Rohner Center Awards for Distinguished Contributions to Theory, Research, and Practice on Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection. The awards are intended to encourage and outstanding recognize contributions in the field of interpersonal acceptance and rejection. Researchers, scholars, and practitioners worldwide are encouraged to submit theory, research, or practice-based manuscripts on any topic relevant to interpersonal acceptance and rejection. Certainly, this input will stimulate the growth of studies in this relevant area and will improve the quality of research, with the hope that, at the same time, ISIPAR will continue particularly to stimulate and encourage scholars and researchers from developing countries as ISIPAR has done so far and for this it earns deserved applause.

References

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