

SCALE OF MYTHS IN DUEL. RELATIONSHIP WITH AVOIDANT COPING STYLE AND PSYCHOMETRIC VALIDATION

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Extended Summary

The loss of a loved one always implies a further stage of adaptation. This stage is called duel and it is a normal and necessary process (Howarth, 2011). However, there are many factors playing an important role in the elaboration of grief. Cultural beliefs, myths about death and mourning, a coping strategies may have a strong weight on it.

Given that death has a social and cultural dimension that varies according to the historical moment, customs, beliefs and society where it happens (Azulay, 2000), it is necessary to know how this social influence can affect persons in the elaboration of the duel. To do this, it is necessary to analyze in greater depth the beliefs (wrong or not) that may condition, in a concrete person, adaptation in their grief process. For this reason, on one hand, there is the need to deepen on the study of the concept of mourning and possible is conceptions that handles the population (Barreto & Bayes, 1990).

On the other hand, personal characteristics will also, as have been defined in the literature, influence the elaboration of grief. Coping style, level of education, previous experience of loss of a beloved one, the relationship with the deceased, the cause of death, age and sex have been studied (Bermejo, Magaña, Villacieros, Carabias, & Serrano, 2012). We hypothesize that avoidant coping style obstacles the healthy duel process being part of the explanation of a wrong concept about duel.

In order to be able to analyse it the dimensionality of the scale of myths in duel (SMD) (Amurrio & Limonero, 2007) was established and a regression analysis was performed, with SMD scores as the dependent variable. The scores associated with the styles of coping, socio-demographic variables and those on the personal experience of deaths were included as independent variables.

Of a population of 400 attendees at a Grief Workshop organized at a healthcare center of Madrid, 265 people responded to the survey, 81 % (208) women, mean age 39.24 years ($DT = 13.562$), university level of training 59.1 % (149). Of them, 62.5 % (162) declared having suffered the death of a love done. The cause of death was disease in 79.6 % (125) of the cases, and the rest was violent or not expected. Level of closeness was first degree in 32.7 % (52) –parent, partner and friend– and second degree in 67.3 % (87) –grandparent and others–.

The design of the study provided a valid and reliable SMD to assess the level of myths about duel including two dimensions; it is better not to remember and it is better not to express.

The explanatory capacity of the independent variables was demonstrated. Regression equation resulted as follows: $SMD = 28.058 + 1.926$ (Avoidant coping style) $+ 3,646$ (men) $+ 5.590$ (no university training) $+ 4.309$ (proximity of second grade level).

The coefficient of determination R^2 value was 0.31, the variability obtained in SMD score is explained in a 31 % by avoidant coping style, being a man, the absence of university training and losing someone of a second-degree level of closeness. A significant and direct corre-

lation was found between SMD and avoidant style of coping.

In conclusion; the dimensionality of SMD has been established showing adequate psychometric properties and its scores are explained by the avoidant coping style, being man, the absence of university training, and having suffered a death of a family member of second grade. Contribution of these variables reaches up to 31 % of SMD scores.

We point the importance of understanding the concept of mourning and style of coping that manages each aching, in order to anticipate and establish a preventive intervention. We underscore so, the importance of specific psycho-education in treatment of grief and the need to develop and/or validate short instruments to measure this type of variables with precision and simplicity.