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<u>TOP</u> > <u>Available Issues</u> > <u>Table of Contents</u> > <u>Abstract</u>

ONLINE ISSN: 1349-6174 PRINT ISSN: 1348-8406

The Japanese Journal of Personality

Vol. 16 (2007), No. 2 (2008) pp.171-184

[PDF (342K)] [References]

Structure of Trait Guilt in Adolescents: Conceptualization of Guilt and Development of Trait Guilt Scale Based on Psychoanalytic Theory

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(Received: 2006/10/31) (Accepted 2007/09/05)

First, the present study examined pre-existing guilt scales, and determined the aspects of trait guilt to be measured. Then, Trait Guilt Scale (TGS) was developed to measure the multiple aspects, and the scale's reliability and validity examined. Four components of trait guilt were hypothesized based on psychoanalytic theory: intra-psychic guilt, guilt of excessive gain, guilt of refracted "amae," and guilt for relation maintenance, and items for each were collected. A trait guilt questionnaire was administered to a total of 793 university students. Results of factor analysis supported the four factor model for the questionnaire. TGS, with 26 items, showed high internal consistency and good test-retest reliability. In addition, good concurrent validity for TGS was found in terms of the correlation with PFQ-2-Shame scale, Indebtedness Scale, and the Self-rating Depression Scale, and discriminant validity in terms of the correlation with Situational Guilt Inventory.

Keywords: psychoanalytical conceptualization of guilt, trait guilt, Trait Guilt Scale (TGS), reliability, validity

[PDF (342K)] [References]

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To cite this article:

Masafumi Ohnishi, The Japanese Journal of Personality, Vol. 16, p.171 (2008).

doi:10.2132/personality.16.171

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