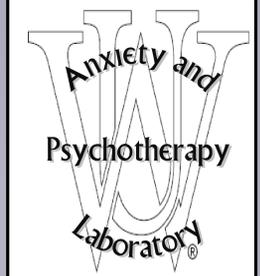




The Relationship between Self-Constraint and Social Anxiety: Considering Personality*



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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION: Self-construal has been identified as a potential means to explain cultural differences in social anxiety. We tested for mediation and moderation regarding self-construal, social anxiety, and the big five personality traits.

RESULTS: Our results indicated that the relationship between social interaction anxiety and extraversion and neuroticism was partially mediated by independent self-construal. In addition, the relationship between social anxiety and interdependent self-construal was moderated by neuroticism.

DISCUSSION: Interventions that consider the interplay between self-construal and personality may be helpful in decreasing social anxiety. Interventions could focus on self-construal, rather than personality, which may open a new avenue of treatment options

MEASURES

Social Interaction Anxiety Scale (SIAS; Mattick & Clarke, 1998)

- Describes anxiety-related reactions to a variety of social situations
- Good to excellent reliability, and good construct and convergent validity (see Heimberg & Turk, 2002, for a review)
- For analyses, the reverse-scored items were dropped (Rodebaugh, Woods, & Heimberg, 2007)

Mini- International Personality Item Pool Inventory (MINI-IPIP; Donnellan et. al, 2006)

- 20-item short form measure of five basic factors of personality: extraversion, neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness.
- Based on the International Personality Item Pool (Goldberg, 1999)

Revised Self-Constraint Scale (SCS; Kwan, Bond, & Singelis, 1997)

- 30-item measure on a 7 point scale
- Two 15-item subscales: Independent & Interdependent
- Measure has been shown to be adequately reliable and valid (Moscovitch, Hofmann, & Litz, 2005)

RESULTS

Zero-Order Correlations

- SIAS was correlated with independence ($r = -.44, p < .001$) and interdependence ($r = .24, p = .007$)
- Independence was related to extraversion ($r = .42, p < .001$), openness ($r = .34, p < .001$), and neuroticism ($r = -.30, p < .001$)
- Interdependence was associated with agreeableness ($r = .30, p < .001$) and conscientiousness ($r = .19, p = .025$)

Mediation Analyses between Personality and Social Anxiety

- Independence carried the indirect effects of extraversion and neuroticism on social anxiety
- The 95% confidence interval for the indirect effects of extraversion was -.399 to -.076
- The 95% confidence interval for the indirect effects of neuroticism was .002 to .278
- Because neither of these confidence intervals included 0, the indirect effects were statistically significant at $p < .05$

INTRODUCTION

- Self-construal: A constellation of thoughts, feelings, and actions concerning one's relationship to others as well as one's self-identity in relation to others (Singelis, 1994)
 - Independent self-construal: A view of the self that focuses on internal attributes and uniqueness of the self
 - Interdependent self-construal: focus on the social connectedness of the self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991)
- Social anxiety has a negative relationship with independent self-construal and a positive relationship with interdependent self-construal (Dinnel, Kleinknecht, & Tanaka-Matsumi, 2002; Moscovitch, Hofmann, & Litz, 2005)
- Cultural differences in social anxiety were fully mediated by independent self-construal and partially mediated by interdependent self-construal (Hong & Woody, 2007)
- However, little research has explored the relationship between the big five personality traits and self-construal

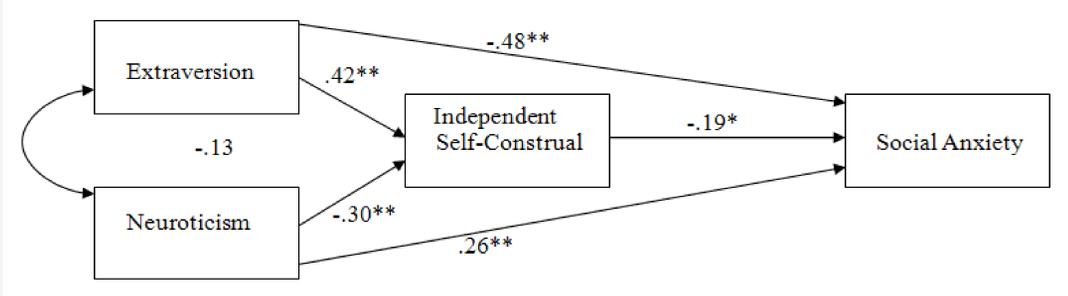
PARTICIPANTS

- Participants were 155 adult students
 - Mostly women ($n = 102; 66\%$)
 - Caucasian ($n = 91, 59.1\%$), Asian/Asian American ($n = 46, 29.9\%$), African-American ($n = 10, 6.5\%$), Multi-racial ($n = 6, 0.6\%$)
 - Median age was 19.82 ($SD = 1.74$)
 - Most ($n = 132, 85\%$) were U.S. citizens
 - Ranged in generational status from first to fifth or more generations
 - Mean generational status of 3.19 generations ($SD = 1.52$).
 - English as the primary language spoken in home ($n = 121, 78\%$)
 - Chinese ($n = 15, 9.7\%$), Korean ($n = 14, 9.1\%$), and other ($n = 4, 2.6\%$) as the primary language

ANALYSES

- Tests of indirect effects (i.e., mediation) were conducted using bootstrapping in the Mplus program Version 5.21 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2009)
- For figures, the maximum likelihood estimator was used to report standardized path estimates

Figure 1. Model of relationship between extraversion, neuroticism, independent self-construal, and social anxiety. Standardized Coefficients are shown. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$



Moderation By Personality

- Interaction between neuroticism and interdependent self-construal significantly predicted social anxiety (part $r = -.19, p = .011$)
- Individuals who had higher levels of interdependency and lower levels of neuroticism reported higher levels of social anxiety

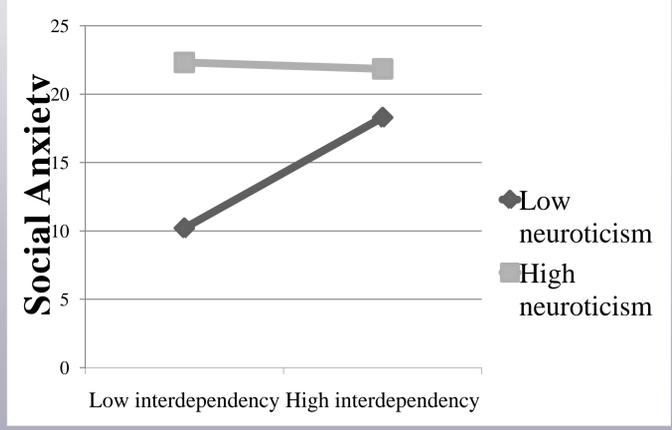


Figure 2. Social anxiety predicted by the interaction between interdependency and neuroticism.

DISCUSSION

- Personality should not be ignored when considering social anxiety and self-construal
- Independent self-construal partially mediates the relationship between personality and social anxiety
- Interdependence only confers additional social anxiety risk for individuals who are lower in neuroticism
- Interventions could focus on self-construal, opening a new avenue of treatment options

*This poster was previously entitled "The Relationship between Social Anxiety and Self-Constraint: Mediated and Moderated by Personality"