

Social Anxiety Connection with Individual Characteristics: Theory of Mind, Verbal Irony Comprehension and Personal Traits

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Abstract : Social anxiety disorder (SAD) is one of the most common mental health problems not only in adults but also in adolescents. Individuals with SAD exhibit difficulties in interpersonal relationships, understanding emotions and regulating them as well. For social and emotional adaptation, it is crucial to identify, understand, accept and manage emotions correctly. Researchers actively learn those factors that contribute to the development and maintenance of this condition. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to acquire knowledge about the association between social anxiety and individual characteristics, such as the theory of mind (ToM), verbal irony comprehension and personal traits. 112 adolescents aged from 12 to 18 were selected for this research. 15 of them are diagnosed with Social anxiety disorder. Statistical analysis was performed on the entire sample and furthermore, two groups, adolescents with and without a social anxiety disorder, were compared separately. Social anxiety and personal traits were assessed by questionnaires. Theory of mind and comprehension of verbal irony was measured using tests. Statistical analysis indicated a positive relationship between social anxiety and comprehension of ironic criticism. Moreover, social anxiety was significantly positively correlated with neuroticism and isolation tendency, whereas it was negatively related to extraversion and frustration tolerance. On top of that, statistical analysis revealed a positive relationship between ToM and verbal irony comprehension. However, the relationship between social anxiety and ToM was not statistically significant. In conclusion, the current research expands knowledge about social anxiety and supports the results of some previous studies.

Keywords : personal traits, social anxiety, theory of mind, verbal irony comprehension

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