

Emotional Intelligence and Personality: Prediction of the different levels of anxiety in undergraduates studying a Degree in Pre-School and Elementary Education

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Abstract

Introduction. Anxiety is an emotion which is characterized by a set of cognitive, psychophysical and behavioral symptoms, showed by a subject before some situations which are perceived as threatening or dangerous. The aim of the present work was to know the relationship between anxiety, emotional intelligence and personality, as well as the predictive capacity of emotional intelligence and personality on anxiety.

Method. To carry out this study, a sample of 140 participants aged between 19 and 28 years old ($M = 22.57$, $SD = 2.16$), belonging to Childhood and Primary Education Degrees of two Spanish universities was recruited. The study sample completed Emotional Quotient Inventory, Trait Meta-Mood Scale-24, NEO PI-R Personality Inventory and Anxiety Situations and Answers Inventory.

Results. The correlation analysis revealed the existence of statistically significant relations between the constructs evaluated (emotional intelligence, personality and anxiety). On the other hand, multiple hierarchical regression analysis showed that some of the dimensions of emotional intelligence and personality significantly predicted anxiety levels.

Discussion or Conclusion. The evaluation of the factors linked to anxiety favors the planning of programs which improve its treatment and prevention.

Keywords: anxiety, emotional intelligence, personality, undergraduates.

Resumen

Introducción. La ansiedad es una emoción que se caracteriza por un conjunto de síntomas cognitivos, psicofisiológicos y conductuales, emitidos por un sujeto ante algunas situaciones que se perciben como amenazantes o peligrosas. El objetivo del presente trabajo fue conocer la relación existente entre ansiedad, inteligencia emocional y personalidad, así como la capacidad predictora de la inteligencia emocional y la personalidad sobre la ansiedad.

Método. Para llevar a cabo este estudio se reclutó una muestra de 140 participantes con edades comprendidas entre los 19 y 28 años de edad ($M = 22.57$, $DT = 2.16$), pertenecientes al Grado en Educación Infantil y Educación Primaria de dos universidades españolas. La muestra de estudio completó el Emotional Quotient Inventory, Trait Meta-Mood-24 Scale, Inventario de Personalidad NEO PI-R e Inventario de Situaciones y Respuestas de Ansiedad.

Resultados: Los análisis de correlación revelaron la existencia de relaciones estadísticamente significativas entre los constructos evaluados (inteligencia emocional, personalidad y ansiedad). Por otro lado, el análisis de regresión múltiple de tipo jerárquico mostró que los factores claridad emocional e inteligencia intrapersonal de la dimensión inteligencia emocional, y los factores neuroticismo y extraversión de la dimensión personalidad, predecían significativamente los niveles de ansiedad.

Discusión y conclusiones. La evaluación de los factores vinculados a la ansiedad favorece la planificación de programas que mejoren su tratamiento y prevención.

Palabras Clave: ansiedad, inteligencia emocional, personalidad, universitarios.

Introduction

The disorders linked to anxiety have become one of the pathologies with the highest rate of prevalence in Spain today (From Pedro Cuesta, Ruiz, Roca, & Noguera, 2016; Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness & Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality, 2018; Ruiz-Rodríguez et al., 2017). The anxiety, as an emotional complex response, defined as a set of cognitive, psychophysiological reactions, and motors that manifest situations that the individual evaluates as threats and/or ambiguous, although objectively they may not be (Cano-Vindel, 2003). In this definition, we bear in mind two main theories: on one hand The Three-dimensional Theory by Lang (1968, 1985), establishes that these three reactions can manifest themselves partially independently from one another, although they are also highly interactive with each other. This theory has become one of the most employed paradigms when studying, understanding and treating emotions such as fear or anxiety (Lawyer & Smitherman, 2004). Their postulates have been confirmed with time and have been supported by recent investigations (Barlow, 2002; Barlow, Allen, & Choate, 2004; Martínez-Monteagudo, Inglés, Cano-Vindel, & García-Fernández, 2012). On the other hand, the variations in the levels of reactions that form the anxiety also depend on the situation that the individual is facing such as the Interactive Theory of Endler (1957) states, the most important ones are linked to the assessment, the interpersonal relationships, the phobic stimulations and the situations of daily life (Miguel-Tobal & Cano-Vindel, 1997).

One of the causes that influences in the manifest of anxiety is the personality of the individuals. In that sense, Shi, Liu, Wang and Wang (2015), in her work with Chinese Medicine students, showed that this was positively linked with neuroticism and negatively with extraversion, kindness, and opening to experience and responsibility. In the case of Spain, in the study of Caballo, Salazar, Irurtia, Arias and Guillén (2010), with a sample of Spanish undergraduates, showed the significant statistic and positive relationship with neuroticism and this was negative with the extraversion factor. Similarly, Vazsonyi, Ksinan, Mikuška and Jiskrova (2015), in a study taken from samples of students from different countries, they found that in the case of Spain the levels of anxiety were negatively linked to neuroticism but not with the other four remaining factors of the personality.

Another factor linked to the levels of anxiety is emotional intelligence, which has been defined by two different paradigms: the cognitive model and the mixed model. Following the cognitive model proposed by Mayer and Salovey (1997), the emotional intelligence is a combination of abilities to identify, understand, use and regulate emotions, which can be detected (Salovey, Mayer, Goldman, Turvey, & Palfai, 1995) or measured by specific ability tests (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2002). The anxiety, according to this model, is linked to a major emotional attention (Cazalla-Luna & Molero, 2014; Lizeretti, Extremera, & Rodríguez, 2012) and less with a clear understanding of adjustment of emotions (Bourdier, Ringuenet, Duclos, Ringuenet, & Berthoz, 2016).

On the other hand, according to the mixed model, emotional intelligence is defined as an ensemble of abilities or social capacities, emotional and personal that influence in the effectiveness to face demands and environment pressure (Bar-on, 1997). In this model, intrapersonal and interpersonal abilities are included, adaptability/ flexibility, stress management and emotional state of mind. Lu, Li, Hsu y Williams (2010), from a sample of Taiwanese adult athletes, obtained that intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence and stress management acted as predictive variables of the intensity of the response to anxiety. Equally, Killgore, Sonis, Rosso and Rauch (2016), with a sample of American adults, found that anxiety could intensify when in presence of a major sensitivity to the manifest of that emotion, as well as a minor general emotional and summarized in the following scales: intrapersonal intelligence, stress management, general mood and flexibility.

Emotional intelligence and personality are related constructors that, in occasions, have evaded or confused due to the correlation that exists between both, as well as due to the presence of similar causes in the mixed model of emotional intelligence and the elements that build the five big factors of the personality. Di Fabio and Saklofske (2014), showed in a sample of Young Italians, the existence of positive correlations and statistically significant between the five factors of the personality and the emotional intelligence evaluated in the mixed model. These results were replicated by Webb et al. (2013) in a sample of adult Americans, revealing significant statistic correlations between the different factors of the personality and emotional intelligence measured in total with a Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i; Bar-On, 2002).

Attending the results found according to the cognitive model, Salguero, Fernández-Berrocal, Balluerka and Aritzeta (2010), with a sample of Spanish teenagers, demonstrated significant statistic and positive correlations between the clarity and the emotional repair and the five factors of the personality. The factor of emotional attention correlated positively with the neuroticism and negatively with the rest of the personality factors. On the other hand, Peláez-Fernández, Extremera and Fernández-Berrocal (2014), in a study carried out by young Spanish adults, showed that kindness, extraversion, neuroticism and being open to experience interacted with the attention, clarity and emotional repair in the prediction of the assault (physical, verbal, rage, hostility and total assault).

The determination and understanding of the causes that could influence in the increase of the levels of anxiety results essential to prevent the worst disorders that can stop an individual's daily achievements (Gustems-Carnicer, Calderón, & Forn-Santacana, 2017). The studies carried out with undergraduates have focused, mainly, in the evaluation of the anxiety that shows up when examined (Álvarez, Aguilar, & Lorenzo, 2012) or in the valuation of different socioemotional profiles that are present in students of different academic titles (Castejón, Cantero, & Pérez, 2008). In this sense, the lack of investigations in the Spanish university population where the relationship between emotional intelligence, from proposed models, personality and levels of anxiety are evaluated considering the complexity of this emotional answer, justify the importance of this study. In fact, studies conducted in other context like the Australian prove that emotional intelligence predicts results related with personal adjustment, that go beyond the contribution of the personality (Bastian, Burns & Nettelbeck, 2005). The understanding of these connections results elementary in order to prevent emotional disorders linked to anxiety.

Objetives and hypotheses

Based on these theoretic considerations previously exposed, the main objective of this study is to analyse the connection between anxiety, personality and emotional intelligence measured by the cognitive model and the mixed model, as well as the predictive capacity of the emotional intelligence and the personality relating to general anxiety in undergraduates studying a Degree in Pre-School and Elementary Education Degree. We specifically expect that a) the neuroticism factor will correlate positively and significantly with the types of anxiety evaluated; b) the factors of kindness, responsibility, open-mindedness to experience and the extraversion will correlate negatively and significantly with the levels of anxiety; c) the emotional attention will correlate positively and significantly with the levels of anxiety; d) the clarity and emotional repair correlates negatively and significantly with the anxiety; e) intrapersonal intelligence, stress management, general mood and flexibility correlates negatively and significantly with anxiety; f) personality and emotional intelligence independently explain general levels of anxiety.

Method

Participants

The students this study is based on belong to Spanish Private Universities. Through an aleatory stratified sample carried out on the undergraduates of Pre-School Education and Elementary Education, the participants of this investigation were selected in a way that both universities and both studies were equally represented. The final sample was formed by a total of 140 men and women in ages between 19 and 28 years old ($M = 22.57$, $SD = 2.16$). The Table 1 shows the distribution of university students, the percentage of men and women, the rank of ages as well as the average and typical deviation according to this last variable.

Table 1. *Statistic descriptions of the samples from the Universities*

University	N	Men	Women	Rank of Ages	M (age)	SD (age)
1	70	44%	54%	19-25	22.12	2.05
2	70	42%	58%	19-28	23.27	2.59

Instruments

Inventory of Situations and Answers to Anxiety (ISRA; Miguel-Tobal & Cano-Vindel, 1997). Self-report made up of 24 answers to anxiety and 22 anxiogenic situations. The answers to anxiety are grouped in three factors: Cognitive Anxiety (mental reactions, linked to thoughts), Motor Anxiety (observable behavioural reactions) and Physiological Anxiety (reactions provoked by the Autonomous and Somatic Nervous System, some of involuntary character). The anxiogenic situations are grouped in four factors: Evaluation (anxiety that manifests itself when faced to situations where the subject feels evaluated or criticized), Interpersonal Relationships (anxiety manifests when faced with sexual situations and social interaction), Phobic Stimulations (anxiety manifests itself when faced to certain stimulus) and Everyday Situations (anxiety manifests itself when faced to daily or common tasks). Each situation is evaluated depending on the different answers offered, making a total of 224 items. The authors informed of an adequate validity of the construct and a good capacity of discrimination between groups and pathologies. This test allows an adjustment of the anxiety treatment depending on the type of manifestation and situation when it appears. The internal consistency (Alpha of Cronbach) for this study oscillated between .83-.89.

Trait Meta-Mood Scale-24 (TMMS-24; Fernández-Berrocal, Extremera, & Ramos, 2004). Inventory composed by 24 items grouped in three factors: Attention (level of attention to individual's own emotions), Clarity (ability to evaluate, discriminate and understand one's own emotions) and Repair (ability to repair one's own emotional state). This instrument allows the evaluation of the emotional intelligence perceived by the evaluated individual. Presenting good psychometric properties, the internal consistency for this study oscillates (Alpha de Cronbach) between .81-.85.

Emotional Quotient Inventory: Short Form (EQ-i:S; Bar-On, 2002). Self-report composed by 51 items derivate of the original with 133 items processed by Bar-On (1997). This instrument contains the following scales: Intrapersonal Capacity (assertiveness, auto knowledge, auto evaluation, independence and capacity to upgrade), Interpersonal Abilities (empathy, social abilities and social responsibilities), Adaptability (problem solving, real evaluation and adaptability/ flexibility), Stress Management (tolerance to stress and impulse control) and General Mood (happiness and optimism). In addition, this study includes a total score of emotional intelligence and a scale of social desirability. High scores in the scale

reflect high levels of social and emotional competitiveness. The internal consistency (Alpha de Cronbach) for this study oscillates between .77-.86.

Personality Inventory NEO revised (NEO PI-R; Costa & McCrae, 1992). Instrument formed by 240 items grouped in five grand factors of the personality: Neuroticism (level of emotional instability), Extraversion (level of sociability, audacity, tendency to be with others, etc.), Open to Experience (open to change, imagination, curiosity, etc.) Responsibility (level of planning, auto control, organization) and Kindness (interpersonal tendencies of positive character). The intern consistency (Alpha of Cronbach) of the test for this study oscillated between .76-.83.

Process

Once the selection process of the sample of participants was finalised and after obtaining the informed consent of each participant, we proceeded with the test management. For this, a notebook was elaborated with four measure instruments, in order to facilitate the subject's task and to avoid lost or incomplete surveys.

The application of the test was done collectively in the classrooms. The tests were provided in two sessions each lasting one hour during two consecutive days, in order to avoid the participant's exhaustion and to get their full attention when completing the instruments.

Once the tests were completed, we expressed our joint gratitude for collaborating and participating in this project and assured the delivery of the results to everyone that had previously requested it. Similarly, the researchers offered to resolve any existing doubts and two intervention sessions to improve the emotional intelligence and confrontation to anxiety problems.

Research Analysis

The intern consistency of the obtained results with the different instruments was calculated by the coefficient Alpha by Cronbach. George and Mallery (2003) suggested the following recommendations in order to evaluate these ratios: less than 0.5 is considered unacceptable, between 0.5 and 0.6 is poor, between 0.6 and 0.7 is questionable, between 0.7 and 0.8 acceptable, between 0.8 and 0.9 is good and equal or superior values to 0.9 are considered excellent.

In order to analyse the correlations between both factors of the IAEP, the correlation ratios product-moment of Pearson were calculated. For correlation ratios, Cohen (1988) suggested that results equal or superior to .10 and inferior to .30 indicated a relationship of small magnitude, results superior to .30 indicated a moderate magnitude, while results superior to .50 indicated correlations of an elevated/ high magnitude.

Finally, to examine the influence of personality and emotional intelligence of the levels of scholar anxiety, a multiple regression analysis was employed through a hierarchical method that allowed to determine the specific contribution of possible predictive variables over a variable criterion, controlling the effect of variables previously introduced in the equation. This way, the variables that were introduced in the first place will act like covariant of the ones that are included afterwards in a way that, only in the last step, we could include a unique contribution to the explanation of the criterion variable. The decision to introduce some variable before others, depends on the assumed theory. In this study the diagnosis for the independence of the mistakes was acceptable ($DW = 2$) and the co-linearity was adequate ($FIV = 1.9-5.6$), which gives validity to the following research. For the proposed data research, the statistic package SPSS 22 was used.

Results

Correlation Analysis

Table 2 shows the different correlations between the studied variables. The analysis of the connections between anxiety factors (ISRA), the personality factors (NEO PI-R) and the emotional intelligence scales included in the TMMS and EQ-I; S, revealed the existence of significant statistic correlations of moderate- high rank in some of the scales of the stated instruments. The different anxiety dimensions (situational and answers) correlate positively and significantly with the Neuroticism factor, with a low- moderate magnitude of the stated connection ($r = .38-.70$). The Extraversion factor correlates negatively and significantly with all the types of anxiety, oscillating between a small and moderate magnitude ($r = .39-.73$). Likewise, the Factor Intrapersonal stands out and it correlates negatively and significantly with all the anxiety dimensions. The magnitude of these correlations oscillates between a low level ($r = .43$) and a moderate level ($r = .62$).

Table 2. Correlation between the different anxiety factors (IAEP), personality (NEO PI -R) and emotional intelligence (TMMS y EQ-i:S)

	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6	V7	V8	V9	V10	V11	V12	V13	V14	V15	V16	V17	V18	V19	V20	V21	V22	
1. Cognitive A.	1.00																						
2. Motor A.	.74**	1.00																					
3. Physiological A.	.83**	.64**	1.00																				
4. Evaluation A.	.90**	.76**	.86**	1.00																			
5. Interpersonal A.	.78**	.68**	.82**	.73**	1.00																		
6. Phobic A.	.75**	.69**	.81**	.71**	.63**	1.00																	
7. Daily A.	.73**	.76**	.73**	.72**	.64**	.53**	1.00																
8. Total A.	.95**	.86**	.90**	.93**	.83**	.82**	.81**	1.00															
9. Neuroticism	.64**	.65**	.55**	.70**	.53**	.38*	.57**	.67**	1.00														
10. Extraversion	-.62**	-.61**	-.56**	-.59**	-.73**	-.39*	-.52**	-.66**	-.63**	1.00													
11. Openness	-.23	-.17	-.32*	-.17	-.36*	-.20	-.12	-.26	-.37*	.59**	1.00												
12. Kindness	.10	-.19	-.01	-.05	-.03	.03	-.07	-.01	-.24	.05	-.06	1.00											
13. Responsibility	.12	-.10	.21	.08	.13	.03	.02	.09	.07	-.13	-.28	.24	1.00										
14. Attention	.03	-.03	-.21	.13	-.001	-.01	.25	.07	-.03	.27	.39*	.20	.22	1.00									
15. Clarity	-.34*	-.18	-.33*	-.36*	-.33*	-.10	-.29	-.32*	-.53**	.53**	.37*	.23	.05	.15	1.00								
16. Repair	-.15	-.18	-.12	-.22	-.13	-.02	-.16	-.16	-.54**	.50**	.34*	.40**	.24	.38*	.59**	1.00							
17. Intrapersonal	-.62**	-.51**	-	-.56**	-.45**	-.43**	-.43**	-.59**	-.63**	.51**	.46**	-.16	.04	.52**	.18	1.00							
18. Interpersonal	.20	-.03	-.34*	.21	.05	.32*	.17	.19	-.02	.21	.07	.45**	.33*	.34*	-.01	.50**	-.22	1.00					
19. Stress Management	-.31*	-.33*	-.25	-.23	-.20	-.30	-.22	-.33*	-.46**	.05	.09	.34*	.04	-.05	.11	.12	.35*	-.003	1.00				
20. Adaptability	-.14	-.03	.23	.17	.11	.12	.03	.13	.22	-.06	-.33*	.17	.55**	.02	.20	.01	-.21	.34*	-.17	1.00			
21. Humour	-.40**	-.30	-	-.47**	-.29	-.26	-.28	-.43**	-.60**	.52**	.49**	.19	-.21	-.02	.56**	.58**	.41**	.03	.20	.19	1.00		
22. EQi_TOTAL	-.45**	-.52**	-.31	-.41**	-.34*	-.27	-.33*	-.47**	-.66**	.52**	.36*	.37*	.24	.12	.43**	.55**	.61**	.38*	.61**	.20	.62**	1.00	
M(N=140)	85.00	54.88	51.10	84.38	22.83	47.33	18.55	190.98	36.25	40.53	39.25	41.63	40.80	24.48	24.35	26.40	33.88	39.35	27.80	25.33	34.88	32.25	
DT	38.59	27.49	29.16	34.73	14.81	30.66	13.74	87.10	6.72	6.66	8.40	6.49	5.91	5.67	4.32	6.07	5.12	4.12	4.87	3.79	4.60	2.27	

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; A = Anxiety; V = Variable; Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Kindness, Responsibility (NEO-personality); Attention, Clarity, Repair, (TMMS); Intrapersonal Intelligence, Interpersonal Intelligence, Stress Management, Kindness, Humour, EQi Total (EQi)

Hierarchical Regression Analysis

Table 3 shows the results referring to the multiple regression analysis, taking as a criterion the total score of anxiety.

Firstly, the equation includes the whole segment of variables of the five factors of the personality (neuroticism, extraversion, being open to experience, kindness and responsibility). The contribution of this segment to the anxiety prediction was statistically significant ($R = .77$, $F = 9.88$, $p < .001$). With the introduction of the second segment, in which the variables included were related to emotional intelligence according to the cognitive model (TMMS) and to the mixed model (EQ-i:S), obtaining again results that manifest a significant contribution of the predictive variables to the explanation of the variable criteria ($R = .88$, $F = 7.15$, $p < .001$). The percentage of the explanation of the variance of the criteria variable in the first segment was statistically significant ($R^2 = .59$, $p < .001$), also increasing in a significant manner with the incorporation of the second segment related to emotional intelligence ($R = .78$, $\Delta R^2 = .18$, $p = .022$).

Table 3. Analysis of the Hierarchical Regression for General Anxiety.

Variable	R	R ²	B	SEB	β	F	p
Step 1	.77	.59					
Neuroticism			6.17	1.90	.47**	9.88	<.001
Extraversion			-6.50	2.13	-.49**		
Open to experience			2.29	1.46	.22		
Kindness			1.77	1.58	.13		
Responsibility			.33	1.73	.02		
Step 2	.88	.77				7.15	<.001
Neuroticism			2.66	2.58	.38**		
Extraversion			-11.18	2.23	-.43**		
Open to experience			2.18	1.57	.21		
Kindness			-1.90	1.94	-.14		
Responsibility			-3.20	2.19	-.21		
Emotional Attention			1.11	2.00	.07		
Emotional Clarity			6.42	3.38	-.31*		
Emotional Adjustment			2.23	3.12	.15		
Intrapersonal Intelligence			-2.44	3.21	-.34*		
Interpersonal Intelligence			7.36	3.16	.14		
Stress Management			-1.74	2.27	-.09		
Adaptability			2.56	3.02	.11		
General Mood			-3.04	3.05	-.16		

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .001$; $\Delta R^2 = .18$, $p = .022$

However, we must consider, after the first segment's introduction, only the neuroticism factor ($\beta = .47$, $p = .003$) and the extraversion factor ($\beta = -.49$, $p = .004$) made a significant contribution to explain anxiety. Consecutively, when including the segment referring to emotional intelligence, emotional clarity (TMMS) ($\beta = -.34$, $p = .031$), intrapersonal intelligence (EQ-i:S) ($\beta = .34$, $p = .028$) and neuroticism and extraversion that are part of the factors of the personality ($\beta = .38$, $p < .001$; $\beta = -.43$, $p < .001$) continued to explain the anxiety in a significant manner.

Discussion and Conclusions

The main objective of this study was to analyse the connection between anxiety, personality and emotional intelligence measured with the cognitive model and the mixed model, as well as the predictive capacity of the emotional intelligence and the personality relating to general anxiety in undergraduates studying a Degree in Pre-School and Elementary Education.

The first hypothesis confirmed what was expected, the neuroticism correlates positively and significantly with the different forms of anxiety evaluated. These results are similar to the ones obtained in previous studies where the neuroticism, also named emotional instability, is a variable that is negatively associated with mental health and, therefore, positively with disorders such as anxiety or depression (Caballo et al., 2010; Shi et al., 2015; Vazsonyi et al., 2015). The magnitude of correlations (low-moderate) confirms that we speak of associated constructors but different from each other. This way the increase in the levels of neuroticism would also increase the probability to manifest anxiety in its different dimensions.

The second hypothesis, where it is expected for the factors of extraversion, kindness, responsibility and being open to experience correlate negatively and significantly with the levels of anxiety was partially confirmed. The results show the existence of a negative statistically significant correlation and in the different forms of anxiety and the factor of extraversion, as well as in the factor of being open to experience and physiological anxiety and anxiety in interpersonal relationships, with the absence of statistically significant correlations between the rest of the anxiety factors and the personality. These results, however, are coherent with what was found in previous research (Caballo et al., 2010; Shi et al., 2015), what indicates that the level of extraversion and being open to experience could improve the individual's mental health when associated to a reduction of the anxiety levels. The low-moderate magnitude of these correlations would indicate that the increase or decrease of the levels of anxiety does not only depend on the mentioned factors, although they result important in the variation. Equally, the absence of connection with the rest of the personality's factors, could be due to the characteristics of the sample and the fact that the factors such as kindness or responsibility are not that decisive in the appearance of anxiety, such as previous investigations in this field have shown (Vazsonyi et al., 2015).

The third hypothesis, according to which it was expected that the emotional attention would correlate positively and significantly with the anxiety, was not confirmed. These results, although they contradict previous research (Cazalla-Luna & Molero, 2014; Lizeretti et al., 2012), also result coherent with other studies where anxiety and emotional attention are not significantly linked (Bourdier et al., 2016). In this sense, it is possible that individuals that manifest high levels of anxiety are those that present major rates of attention or emotional and general hypervigilance (Bourdier et al., 2016; Grills-Taquechel, Fletcher, Vaughn, Denton, & Taylor; 2013), while low or moderate levels of anxiety would not have to be associated to an increase in emotional attention, which is the case of the sample of the study.

The fourth hypothesis, where it was expected that the clarity and emotional repair should correlate negatively and significantly with the anxiety, was partially confirmed. That is to say, the emotional clarity factor correlated negatively and significantly with the cognitive anxiety, physiological anxiety, anxiety of being evaluated, anxiety of interpersonal relationships and total anxiety, being coherent with other relevant investigations concerning this subject (Bourdier et al., 2016; Cazalla-Luna & Molero, 2014). The low magnitude of the correlations and the absence of significant correlations between the different factors of anxiety and emotional adjustment can be due to the fact that the sample presents medium levels of anxiety, which would not interfere in the adjustment that can be done in their own emotions (Martínez-Monteaudo, Inglés, Granados, Aparisi, & García-Fernández, 2019).

The fifth hypothesis, where it was expected that the intrapersonal intelligence, stress management, the general mood and flexibility to adapt would correlate negatively and significantly with anxiety, was partially confirmed. The results showed existing negative and significant correlations between the intrapersonal intelligence factor and all the anxiety dimensions, between the cognitive anxiety factors, motor and total anxiety with stress management, between the cognitive anxiety factors, physiological, anxiety to being evaluated and total anxiety with the general state of mind and the absence of connections with kindness. The low- moderate magnitude of the existing connections shows the importance of these implications but, at the same time, the possible presence of other variable mediators and the existing difference between anxiety and variables linked to emotional intelligence. The connections mentioned result coherent with research concerning this subject, as well as the positive relation with emotional intelligence measured in total by the mixed model (Killgore et al., 2016). The absence of connections in some of the cases studied prove that not all the

dimensions belonging to emotional intelligence are decisive in the presence of anxiety in adults (Lu et al., 2010).

Finally, the sixth hypothesis, where it was expected that the personality and the emotional intelligence would explain independently the levels of general anxiety manifested by the sample of students, was confirmed for some of the introduced factors in the model. The analysis of hierarchical regression showed that higher rates of neuroticism and less of extraversion, clarity and intrapersonal intelligence, predict significantly major levels of general anxiety. These results indicate that, although the personality and the emotional intelligence are intimately related constructs according to the cognitive model (Peláez-Fernández et al., 2014; Salguero et al., 2010) and the mixed model (Di Fabio & Saklofske, 2014; Webb et al., 2013), the truth is that they are independent (Pytlik-Zilling, Homenover, & Dienstbier, 2002). Therefore, we can establish that emotional intelligence predicts results in the relation of personal adjustment that go beyond the contributions carried out by the personality (Bastian et al., 2005).

After the results obtained, we can affirm that some of the factors that form the constructs of personality and emotional intelligence from the models studied (cognitive and mixed), present significant correlations with anxiety highlighting, moreover, that emotional intelligence can predict anxiety regardless of the conducted contributions by the personality, thereby verifying the hypothesis raised and contributing to a theoretic foundation about the definitions of emotional intelligence and personality.

Nonetheless, despite the results that confirm the hypothesis and those that contribute to new ideas to the study of relations with anxiety, personality and emotional intelligence, we can't forget the limits that this study presents, those that must be taken into account in future investigations. Firstly, we allude to the selection of the universities due to their accessibility. Samples of probabilistic type by conglomerates, with a major number of participants and including different titles, offered more concrete results that would allow to keep on studying the connection between the established variables. Secondly, it is possible that the findings influence foreign variables of psych educative character that should be controlled in order to increase the validity and reliability of this project. Thirdly, it would be necessary to assume a multimethod perspective with the purpose to contrast the obtained results through diverse perspectives, instruments or techniques that increase the information found. Lastly, it would

be convenient to add an analysis of structural equations that would allow to analyse, in a comprehensive and pertinent way, the different explanatory models of anxiety, allowing to establish connections of natural cause. These aspects should be considered in studies that extend the results of this investigation.

Despite the limitations and posterior considerations, this study reveals the importance to include emotional intelligence as an explanatory variable of anxiety and it allows to acquire a more profound knowledge of those variables related to the maintenance, increase and decrease in the Spanish University population, particularly in undergraduates studying a Degree in Pre-school and Elementary Education. The study of these variables results essential to avoid psychological discomfort in an adult population (Gustems-Carnicer et al., 2017; Ruiz, Suárez-Falcón, Riaño-Hernández, & Gillanders, 2017). Moreover, we must not obviate that the presence of anxiety disorders has considerably increased in the Spanish population during the last years (de Pedro Cuesta, Ruiz, Roca, & Noguer, 2016; Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness & Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality, 2018). These findings provide a more exhaust knowledge of the variables that can influence and predict anxiety in the different manifests, which would help in the design of preventive programs, working on aspects linked to emotional intelligence such as personality, according to the dimensionality of the mentioned constructs.

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