### 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

**Mini-International Personality Item Pool Inventory (MPIP; Donahue et al., 2008)**

- 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-Construal 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

### PARTICIPANTS

- Participants were 155 adult students
- Mostly women (n = 102; 66%)
- Caucasian (n = 91, 59.1%), 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
- For figures, the maximum likelihood estimator was used to report standardized path estimates

### 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**

- Independent 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

**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

### 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.