The Existential Anxiety and Identity Distress Relationship

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Study 2

**Results**

- A series of Pearson’s correlations indicated that the IDS is the stronger indicator of a relationship with at least 1 domain of existential anxiety, followed by the EAQ.

- EAQ also showed a strong relationship with all 3 domains of existential anxiety, but correlation coefficients were slightly lower than the IDS.

**Discussion**

- The relationship between EA and ID was significant for both anxiety and distress as assessed by the IDS and EAQ. However, the strength of the relationships varied depending on the measure of anxiety and distress.

- The EAQ may be more sensitive to individual differences in existential concerns, while the IDS may provide a more global assessment of distress related to existential concerns.

- Future research should continue to investigate the relationship between EA and ID, using a more comprehensive measure of both anxiety and distress, and exploring potential moderators of this relationship.

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**Introduction**

The Existential Anxiety (EA) construct has been associated with identity-related distress (Berman, Crook, & Surace, 2006). However, the relationship between EA and identity distress has not been thoroughly examined. The current study aimed to investigate the association between EA and identity distress in a diverse sample of university students.

**Methods**

- **Sample**: The sample consisted of 353 university students (78% female) from diverse backgrounds.

- **Measures**: The Identity Distress Scale (IDS; Berman, Montgomery, & Kurtines, 2004) and the Existential Anxiety Questionnaire (EAQ; Weems, Costa, Dehon, & Berman, 2004) were used.

- **Procedure**: Participants completed a survey assessing EA and ID.

**Results**

- A higher level of existential distress (as assessed by the IDS) was significantly correlated with at least 1 domain of existential anxiety (EAQ; see Table 4).

- Pearson’s correlation coefficient revealed a strong association (r = 0.57; p < 0.01) between the IDS and EAQ.

**Discussion**

- The results support the notion that EA and ID are related constructs, with EA being more strongly associated with ID.

- Future research should continue to explore the nature of the relationship between EA and ID, considering potential moderating or mediating factors.

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**Table 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain of Existential Anxiety</th>
<th>Pearson’s Correlation (r)</th>
<th>p Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fate</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emptiness &amp; Meaninglessness</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guilt</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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