Alexithymia is associated with Identity Disturbance in Personality Disorders

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Statement of the Problem: Alexithymia describes an impaired ability to recognize, identify and describe one's emotions. Despite the high prevalence in borderline personality disorder (BPD), less is known about the relationships between alexithymia and individual BPD symptoms. Given the variability of the BPD diagnosis, understanding which symptoms are related to alexithymia provides a more specific target for intervention. This study explored the associations between alexithymia and DSM-5 BPD symptom criteria to elucidate which aspects of BPD are most strongly correlated with alexithymia.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: 478 outpatients (n=146 with BPD, n=196 with other personality disorder (PD), n=136 with no PD) were assessed using the Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-IV (SCID) and Structured Interview for DSM-IV Personality Disorders (SIDP). BPD symptoms were dichotomized as present if scored>=1 (definitely present). Alexithymia was measured using the Toronto Alexithymia Scale (TAS-20). Logistic regression was used to examine specific relationships between alexithymia and BPD symptom criteria in each group.

Biography

Jasmine Modasi is a PhD student in Clinical Research at the Icahn School of Medicine. Her research interests include alexithymia, identity disturbance, and psychological trauma in personality disorders, particularly borderline personality disorder. Her background in cognitive neuroscience and clinical research provides a unique perspective and foundation to contribute to the world of translational research and advancing medicine by bridging the gap between research and practice. She is passionate about understanding and improving care for people living with psychiatric illness with the ultimate goal of lead investigations in emerging and underrepresented areas of borderline personality disorder research, introducing novel perspectives on existing problems and partaking in multidisciplinary collaborations.

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