Abstract

Social anxiety constitutes a major public health problem among our college students, because their high prevalence and negative personal, academic and work consequences. Evidence from other countries suggest that certain demographic (gender, job and couple status) and psychological characteristics (specific cognitive distortions and emotional dependence) are related to social anxiety. The main objective of present study was to relate and compare by gender and social anxiety among Mexican university students. A total sample of 103 volunteers from a Mexican University (Universidad Iberoamericana) complete following measures: 1) Fear of negative evaluation BFNE-II, 2) Emotional dependence measure, 3) Social phobia diagnostic scale MINI-SPIN, and 4) Liebowitz’s social anxiety scale. Prevalence of social phobia was 3.9%. Single students presented more phobia avoidance ($t=2.21, gl=97.42, p=.02$). Non-job participants had highest MINI-SPIN ($t=-1.91, gl=101, p=.05$). Positive, moderate and significant correlations between BFNE-II and emotional dependence, and between MINI-SPIN and avoidance and fear Liebowitz’s subscales were founded. Women demonstrated mayor BFNE-II ($t=2.03, gl=100, p=.045$) and emotional dependence scores ($t=1.17, gl=94.89, p=.032$) compared to men. We conclude that social anxiety is a common mental health problem among Mexican university students, that is related to couple and job status, and with “fear of negative evaluation” and “emotional dependence”, both characteristics that were more frequent among women.

Keywords

Social anxiety, gender, dependence, cognition, adolescence.