
Anger and personality test : A psychological investigation

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Abstract

To understand how individuals interact with their environment, it is now well admitted that their cognitive abilities but also their emotions have to be taken into account. The relation between emotion and cognition has already been investigated and provides interesting results. For instance, Havas, Glenberg and Rinck (2007) induced participants to either smile or frown while judging the emotional valence of sentences. They observed that individuals in the smiling condition were faster to make judgments about positive sentences, while frowners were faster with negative sentences. In summary, as predicted, smiling or frowning influences individuals' emotional state, which in turn influences cognitive processing abilities. In line with this kind of studies, Wingrove and Bond (2005) assumed that personality trait should be taken into account when studying higher-order skills like reading comprehension. They hypothesized that trait anger could be associated with general faster processing of sentences describing angry-provoking situations. One personality test was used to assess individuals' trait anger. The results showed that those who have angrier dispositions as indicated by their score to the personality test, tended to read narratives dealing with anger-provoking situations more rapidly. Overall, individuals with trait anger showed a processing advantage for angry reaction relative to alternative reactions. In a recent paper entitled "the biological basis of anger", Reuter et al. (2009) found a significant association between one gene and trait anger. Taken together, these two sets of studies offer promising perspective for future research with the general objective to combine genetic and psychological approach of human.

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