

Distinguishing cognitive and somatic dimensions of state and trait anxiety: development and validation of the State-Trait Inventory for Cognitive and Somatic Anxiety

Melissa J. Ree

The Marian Centre and the University of Western Australia

Davina French, Colin MacLeod and Vance Locke

The University of Western Australia

Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapy, 2008, 36, 313–332

Abstract. To date, little research has endeavoured to discriminate between cognitive and somatic dimensions of trait anxiety and, consequently, it remains uncertain whether these anxiety dimensions can be reliably distinguished at the trait level. The four studies presented here support the validity of the distinction between cognitive and somatic anxiety at both state and trait levels. The research involved the development and validation of a self-report questionnaire, the State-Trait Inventory for cognitive and somatic anxiety (STICSA). The nature of the anxiety dimensions assessed by this new measure was then investigated. The results indicate that the *state* scales of this new measure assess the degree of cognitive and somatic anxiety experienced at a particular point in time. The *trait* scales of the STICSA predict the *situations* in which different individuals will display elevations in cognitive and somatic state anxiety. Trait cognitive and somatic anxiety are indeed distinct constructs that can be reliably and validly assessed. Theoretical and applied implications of this finding are discussed.