

The Use of Identity Structure Analysis (ISA) As an Aid to Assessment and Formulation of Social Anxiety

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ABSTRACT

This case study takes an approach to the assessment and formulation of social anxiety that makes use of Identity Structure Analysis (Weinreich, 2003) alongside ratings obtained from the Liebowitz Social Anxiety Scale. Identity Structure Analysis uses a socio-developmental psychological approach to identity formation that places emphasis on biographical development in socio-historical settings. In doing so it offers insights into the nature of social anxiety. More particularly, ISA reveals (at various biographical stages) construals of identities of self and of the identities of influential others in various life domains (social, home, and work). It is proposed that ISA findings offer insights that might be used alongside conventional psychometrics serving as an aid to the assessment and formulation of social anxiety for the purposes of augmented CBT.

Keywords: *Identity Structure Analysis, Social Anxiety, Assessment, Formulation, CBT*

Social anxiety is significant fear or anxiety in relation to social situations, related to a perception of scrutiny by others (APA, 2013). NICE (2013) recommends the use of psychometrics such as SPIN (Social Phobia Inventory) and the Liebowitz Social Anxiety Scale in assessment of social anxiety and individual cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) as the treatment for adults and individuals or group CBT for children, following Clark and Wells (1995) or Rapee and Heimberg's (1997) models. CBT is based on formulating and conceptualising the particular presentation of the problem, with regard to diagnostic criteria and assessment.

The current Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), (American Psychiatric Association, 2013) emphasizes the importance of developing dimensional approaches to assessment to improve accuracy and generate more information, in addition to current

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diagnostic strategies which rely on self-report and interpretation by the clinician. In addition to scores on disorder specific psychometrics such as the Social Phobia Inventory (SPIN) and the Liebowitz Social Anxiety Scale (Liebowitz, 1987), within the assessment and formulation of social anxiety (Clark and Wells, 1995; Rapee and Heimberg, 1997; Wells, 1997; Barlow, 2001) there is a focus on anxiety symptoms, avoidance, the desire to make a positive impression (with both internally and externally-focused attention), perceived judgement, rumination (pre- and post-event), processing biases, safety-seeking behaviours and early experiences (e.g. of criticism, bullying and harassment).

Identity Structure Analysis (ISA) was selected as a method that holds potential to meet the DSM call for increased granularity of assessment. In a review of identity assessment methods Passmore, Ellis and Hogard (2014) found ISA to be the only method based in multiple theories of identity and the only method for which a dedicated software, (Ipseus) has been developed. Further, ISA instruments are said to be readily adaptable to the assessment of different aspects of identity. Review of the subject matter of a compilation of ISA studies (Passmore and Weinreich, 2013) indicates that this is the case suggesting that ISA is a method that can be applied to the assessment of social anxiety.

The exploratory capabilities of ISA are presented in this work as a potential addition to the assessment of social anxiety and as means for uncovering something of its formulation. ISA analysis of 2 cases is presented below. Following the analysis, connections to key concepts within CBT models of social anxiety are drawn up: multi-dimensionality, perceived social judgement and processing of self as a social object, modelled behaviour (in relation to predisposing factors and the work of Bogels and Siqueland, 2006, Bandura, 1969 Cartwright-Hatton, et al, 2005) and competitive, affiliative and conflicted social mentalities (Gilbert, 2014).

METHODOLOGY

ISA is based in a meta-theoretical framework (the Psychodynamic approach of E.H. Erikson, Marcia's Identity Status theory, Laing's Social Psychiatry, Berne and Steiner's Translational Analysis, and too, Symbolic Interactionist approaches and Cognitive-Affective consistency theories). More to the point, the meta-theoretical framework renders ISA suited to identity assessment in ways that are sensitive to an individual's knowledge of self and the personal and contextual facets of their identity. Explanation for this sensitivity resides in the bipolar constructs and entities that make up ISA instruments.

An ISA instrument to assess social anxiety was developed. Its constructs align to themes (performance, avoidance, social comparison, self-processing, social risk-taking and gender) within social anxiety. Their poles are sensitive to tensions within the themes. Its entities (people, institutions or icons), reference life domains (home, social life, family/carer environment, negative social interactions, broader political and cultural environment) that influence social

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anxiety. Ipeus generates a matrix of these constructs and entities on the fly and at random for each person sitting an instrument. The combinations of construct and entity are then presented to a participant one at a time and in turn as per Figure 1.

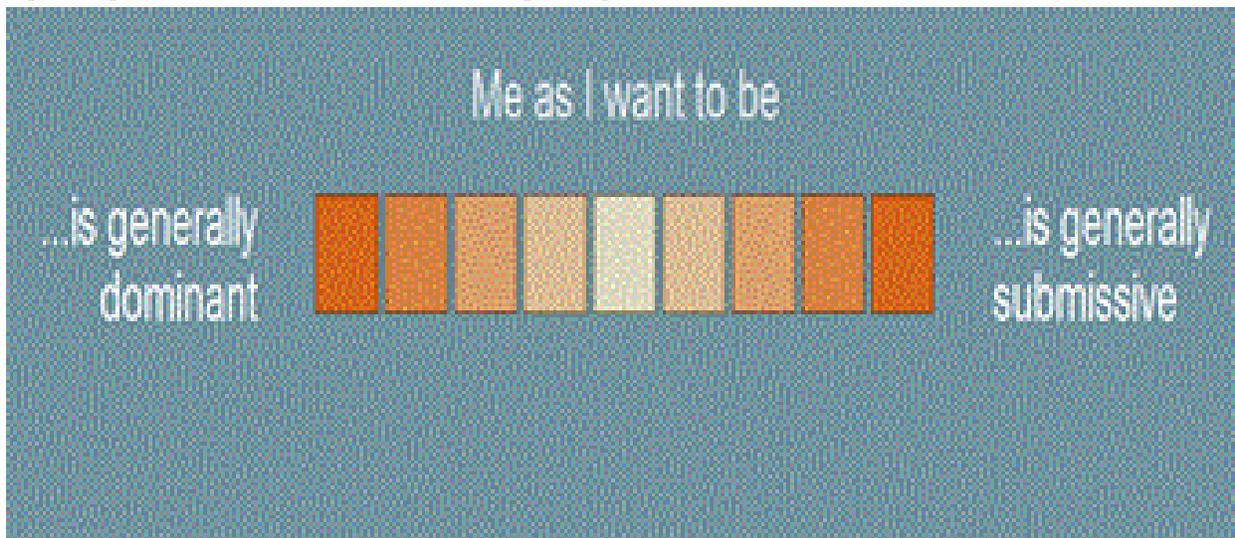


Figure 1. Presenting a combination of construct and entity in Ipeus

The first construct is rated along the 9-point zero-centre scale in the guise of the entity of that particular instance of the matrix. The second construct-entity combination is then presented for rating. The process continues until attributions are made for every construct-entity combination in the matrix. The nature of entities and bipolar constructs means that ratings along the zero-centre scale reveal a person's values and beliefs for aspects of self and influential others. Ipeus converts the inputted ratings to standard scores, and enters these into a series of formulae. The formulae are algebraic mirror images of ISA identity parameters (definitions of the parameters and their algebraic formulae are available for review in chapters 1 and 2 of Weinreich and Saunderson (2003)). The use of standard scores means that comparison of ISA parameter values is possible across groups and across individuals. ISA normalises parameters for each participant and high and low values are calculated taking the whole profile of responses into account for each person. The parameter values are made available as a 20page ISA/Ipeus report. A template to streamline the report interpretation process calls for review of the ISA parameters in the following order and manner:

1. Report core and conflicted dimensions of identity.
2. Report idealistic and contra-identifications with influential others.
3. Compare empathetic identifications for at least 2 current entities of self and one past entity of self.
4. Report identity conflicts for at least 2 current entities of self and one past entity of self.
5. Report on evaluations of and ego-involvement with influential others.
6. Report on the intersection of evaluations of entities of self and identity diffusion.

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The report template is adapted below to consider the identity structure of 2 participants who present with social anxiety.

Instrument Design

Constructs and entities chosen for the instrument were informed by the predisposing, precipitating and perpetuating factors of social anxiety. The entities are the people, institutions or icons that influence social anxiety in salient life domains (home, social life, family/carer environment, negative social interactions, and broader political and cultural environment). Note that politicians were entered as an entity as they have been identified within ISA work as the nature of the world today. The domains in which the entities are set are those that research indicates are triggers for social anxiety. Constructs were drawn from literature, models and assessment tools indicated within NICE Guidance (2013). They concern the following social anxiety related themes (performance, avoidance, social comparison, self-processing, social risk-taking and gender). Some constructs pertain to a single theme whilst others cross multiple themes. In sum the constructs capture parental and family influence, gender roles, social and cultural factors, early experiences, traumas and difficult life events such as parental neglect or criticism and bullying; trigger situations such as social situations, presentations, perceived observation or scrutiny by others and maintenance patterns such as avoidance, limiting social interaction, challenging social situations and performing in social situations, limiting eye contact, internal focus on self-perception or bodily responses, self-criticism, reassurance-seeking and external scanning for threat (Brook and Schmidt, 2008; Clark and Wells, 1995, Rapee and Heimberg, 1997). Two preliminary pilot versions of the instrument were trialled and changes were made in accordance with consultative input from Professor Peter Weinreich (personal communication).

Table 1. Entities in the social anxiety instrument

#	Domain	Label	Classification
	Mandatory Entities of Self		
		Me, as I want to be	Ideal Self
		Me, as I do not wish to be	Contra Ideal Self
		Me, as I am now in social situations with strangers	Current Self
	Home and Carer Entities		
		Me, as I am at home	Current Self
		Me, as I was as a child	Past Self
		My mother (or carer)	
		My father (or carer)	
	Social Life		
		Me, when I am anxious in social situations	Current Self
		Me, as I am now in social situations with friends	Current Self

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#	Domain	Label	Classification
		My closest friend	
		Someone (not myself) who is adept in social situations	
		Someone (not myself) who is anxious in social situations	
	Negative Social Interactions		
		A bully	
		A person whose background, knowledge and expertise intimidates me	
		Someone who sexually harasses others	
		A person who has been sexually harassed	
	Broader Political and Cultural Environment		
		The world as we experience it in these time	
		Politicians	

Table 2. Constructs (clustered) in the social anxiety instrument

#	Theme	Left Label	Right Label
	Social Comparison/Social Mentality		
	Social Comparison/Social mentalities	...sees others as a threat	...sees others as potential allies
	Social Comparison/Social mentalities	...competes with others	...makes alliances with others
	Performance		
	Performance/processing self as a social object/self under scrutiny	...is good at public speaking	...is not good at public speaking
	Performance/processing self as a social object/self under scrutiny	...works well under observations and openness	...falls apart when scrutinised
	Performance/Social Mentality	...is generally dominant	...is generally submissive
	Performance/processing self as a social object/self under scrutiny	...compares themselves with others positively	...compares themselves with others negatively
	Performance/processing self as a social object/self under scrutiny/Social mentalities	...enjoys being the centre of attention	...is content with simply being there and present
	Avoidance		
	Avoidance	...makes eye contact	...does not make eye contact
	Social Risk Taking		
	Social Risk Taking	...is innovative and takes	...is dependable and cautious

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#	Theme	Left Label	Right Label
		risks	
	Social Risk Taking/Social Mentalities	...tends to humiliate others	...fosters dignity in others
	Social Risk Taking	...is outspoken	...keeps opinions to self
	Self Processing		
	Self Processing/Social Mentalities	...is neglected and used	...is cared for and supported
	Self Processing/Social Mentalities	...makes me anxious	...reassures me
	Self Processing/Social Comparison/Alternative domain to demonstrate skill?	...excels in specialist knowledge	...prefers broad ranging interests
	Gender		
		...has masculine qualities	...is not at all masculine
		...has feminine qualities	...is not at all feminine

Design of the Study

A case study design was used, with participants completing the ISA instrument on a laptop with the researcher present. A purposive sample of 9 individuals was used. The ISA reports of 2 of the participants are presented here. Both participants were assessed as having severe social anxiety on the Liebowitz scale.

Clinical Findings

Interpretation of Liebowitz Scale Results as follows: 55-65 = moderate social phobia; 65-80 = marked social phobia; 80-95 = severe social phobia; 95+ = very severe social phobia, Participant 1 (score: 92) has severe social phobia and Participant 2 (score: 81) has severe social phobia

ISA RESULTS

Structural Pressure (SP)

Structural Pressure: Minimum value = -100, maximum value = +100

SP is an ISA parameter that reflects the consistency with which a construct is used to evaluate entities. High structural pressure is associated with constructs that are used in consistent manner to evaluate others. These constructs represent the core, stable evaluative dimensions of the identity under consideration. Low structural pressure is associated with constructs that are used to evaluate others in different ways depending on circumstance and context. Low structural pressure suggests an area of stress and indecision; a conflicted dimension liable to poor decision making. Core and conflicted constructs for both participants are presented below.

Participant 1.

Table 3. Structural Pressure Participant 1

Core Constructs		SP
Pole 1	Pole 2	
...sees others as potential allies	<i>...sees others as potential allies</i>	78.0
...makes me anxious	<i>...reassures me</i>	77.00
...is neglected and used	<i>... is cared for and supported</i>	75.0
<i>...compares themselves with others positively</i>	...compares themselves with others negatively	67.0
Conflicted Constructs		
...is generally dominant	<i>...is generally submissive</i>	-7
...enjoys being the centre of attention	<i>... is content with simply being there and present</i>	13.0
<i>...is outspoken</i>	...keeps opinions to self	13
<i>...has masculine qualities</i>	...is not at all masculine	14

Participant 1's (P1's) most stable values and beliefs (the endorsed poles are italicised, SP values are provided in the right-most column) are based in an orientation of seeing others as potential allies, being reassured by others, being cared for and supported and comparing themselves with others positively. P1 tussles over being generally submissive or dominant, being content simply being there or being the centre of attention, being outspoken or keeping opinions to self. There is a suggestion here of an affiliative social mentality, with some issues in relation to social performance and perceived scrutiny by others.

Participant 2.

Table 4. Structural Pressures for Participant 2

Core Constructs		SP
Pole 1	Pole 2	
<i>...reassures me</i>	...makes me anxious	76
<i>...makes eye contact</i>	...does not make eye contact	73
<i>...is cared for and supported</i>	...is neglected and used	66
<i>...works well under observation and openness</i>	...falls apart when scrutinised	64
Conflicted Constructs		
<i>...excels in specialist knowledge</i>	...prefers broad ranging interests	-6
<i>...is content with being simply there and present</i>	...enjoys being the centre of attention	8
<i>...has feminine qualities</i>	...has masculine qualities	9
<i>...fosters dignity in others</i>	..tends to humiliate others	13

Participant 2's (P2's) most stable values and beliefs are based in reassuring others, making eye contact with them, caring and supporting others and working well under their observation. P2 tussles over excelling in specialist knowledge or broad ranging interests, being content with

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simply being there or being the centre of attention, what to consider as appropriate contemporary gender qualities and fostering dignity in others or not. An affiliative social mentality is indicated, along with a desire to be compared positively to others. However, there is some uncertainty around values in relation to gendered identity and assertiveness, perhaps highlighting concern about impact in others as an inhibiting factor in social assertiveness.

Idealistic and contra-identifications

Idealistic Identification: minimum value =0.00, value = 1.00

Contra-Identification: minimum value =0.00, value = 1.00

Idealistic identifications (II) point to a person's role models. They indicate the characteristics a person will seek to emulate over the long term. Contra-identifications (CI) indicate negative role models. Those who possess characteristics from which a person wishes to dissociate.

Table 5. Idealistic Identifications for Participants 1 and 2

Participant 1	II	Participant 2	II
My father	0.75	Someone who is adept in social situations	0.81
My closest friend	0.75	My mother	0.75
Someone who is adept in social situations	0.75	My closest friend	0.75
My mother	0.69	A person whose background, knowledge and expertise intimidates me	0.75
	CI		CI
Someone who is anxious in social situations	0.69	Someone who is anxious in social situations	0.75
The world as we experience it in these times	0.69	A bully	0.69
Someone who sexually harasses others	0.63		
Politicians	0.63		

Participant 1. P1 shows a strong positive orientation toward, her father, her closest friend, someone who is adept in social situations and her mother. Her negative identifications are associated with anxiety, the world as we experience it in these times, someone who sexually harasses others and politicians. In a familiar context, P1 is more at ease than in a broader, less familiar context.

Participant 2. Highly regarded persons for P2 are someone who is adept in social situations, her mother, her closest friend and generally challenging people. Comparisons are drawn between self

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and socially competent others. Having her mother as a positive role model could reflect a gender identification. She wishes to dissociate from someone who is anxious in social situations and from a bully, which are towards opposite ends of a continuum of social behaviour and which could be reflecting different types of social incompetence.

Empathetic identifications

Empathetic Identification: minimum value = 0.00, value = 1.00

Whereas idealistic identifications represent long-term aspirations; empathetic identifications are of the here and now. Change in empathetic identifications across context and mood states reflect potential for change in behaviour.

Participant 1. P1's current empathetic identifications based in 'me as I am at home' are consistent with her pattern of idealistic identification (my closest friend (0.56), someone adept in social situations (0.63)) except for the case of 'someone who is anxious in social situations' (0.63). The latter finding concerns someone she wishes to dissociate from and indicates that despite some level of comfort in the home, a level of social anxiety is also experienced there.

Current empathetic-identifications based in 'me, when I am anxious in social situations' are with 'someone who is anxious in social situations (0.93),' and with 'someone who has been sexually harassed' (0.67). When she is anxious P1 empathetically identifies with entities that she wishes to dissociate from (entities with which she contra-identifies). This finding suggests that P1 will negatively evaluate herself when she is anxious, echoing Clark and Wells (1995) processing of self as a social object as an underpinning of social anxiety.

Current empathetic identification based in 'me as I am now in social situations with friends.' Someone who is adept in social situations (0.75), my closest friend (0.69), my mother (0.63). Social anxiety does not present when P1 is socialising with friends.

Current Empathetic identification based in 'me as I am now in social situations with strangers.' Someone who is anxious in social situations (0.86) and, someone who has been sexually harassed (0.57). The degree of identification with entities she wishes to dissociate from is marginally less than in social situations where P1 finds herself anxious. This is another scenario where P1 may be given to negative self-evaluation.

Past empathetic-identification based in 'me, as I was as a child' my father (0.87), a bully (0.87), my mother (0.73), the world as we experience it in these times (0.73). Retrospectively P1's identifications with her parents are consistent with her idealistic identification pattern. The presence of 'the world as we experience it in these times' is consistent with those she wishes to dissociate from (a contra-identification). Past empathetic identification with a bully indicates

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more assertiveness in childhood than in present times; it seems for P1 that social anxiety is more present now than in childhood.

Participant 2. Current empathetic-identifications based in ‘me, as I am at home.’ my mother (0.69), my closest friend (0.69), my father (0.63), someone who is adept in social situations (0.63). By and large, P2 empathetically identifies when at home with the same set of people she wishes to emulate (with the addition of her father). Her empathetic identification with someone who is adept in social situations indicates no social anxiety in the home.

Current empathetic-identification based in ‘me, when I am anxious in social situations.’ A person who has been sexually harassed (0.81), someone who is anxious (0.63). Table 5 indicates that P2 contra-identifies with (wishes to dissociate from) someone who is anxious. Participant 2 will as such be given to negative self-evaluation and self-processing when anxious in social situations.

Current empathetic identification based in ‘me as I am now in social situations with friends.’ In this scenario, P2 empathetically identifies as follows: my mother (0.69), my closest friend (0.69), my father (0.63), someone who is adept in social situations (0.63). With friends, P2 empathetically identifies with those entities she would like to emulate which is the same empathetic identification pattern she exhibits when at home. The consistent identification patterns suggest that in social situations with friends and when at home P2 will not be given to change in behaviour.

Current empathetic-identification based in ‘me, as I am now in social situations with strangers.’ Here the identification pattern is with: someone not myself who is anxious in social situations (0.56), and, someone who has been sexually harassed (0.75). With strangers, Participant 2 empathetically identifies with those from whom she wishes to dissociate but to a lesser extent than when anxious in social situations. Nonetheless the indication is that P2 will be given to anxiety in social situations with strangers and a negative self-evaluation.

Past empathetic-identifications based in ‘me, as I was as a child’ are with: a person who has been sexually harassed (0.81), and someone who is anxious in social situations (0.63). These findings indicate experiences of harassment and social anxiety in the past when a child. These childhood empathetic identifications are only apparent now when P2 is anxious in social situations and when she is in social situations with strangers. The indication is that they have been resolved for the most part.

Conflicted Identifications

Conflicted Identification: minimum value =0.00, value = 1.00

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Conflicted identification in ISA references the combination of contra- and empathetic identification with significant others; being ‘as’ another while at the same time wishing to disassociate from the characteristics that are seen to be held in common.

Participant 1. Current identification-conflict based in ‘me, as I am at home.’ Someone who is anxious in social situations (0.66), the world as we experience it in these times (0.59), politicians (0.52). P1 has identification conflicts with someone who is anxious in social situations, the world as we experience it and politicians when at home.

Current identification-conflict based in ‘me, when I am anxious in social situations.’ Someone who is anxious in social situations (0.63), someone who has been sexually harassed (0.51), the world as we experience it in these times. When P1 is anxious in social situations she has conflicted identifications with someone who is anxious in social situations, someone who has been sexually harassed and the world as we experience it in these times.

Current identification-conflict based in ‘Me, as I am now in social situations with friends.’ Someone who is anxious in social situations (0.59), the world as we experience it in these times (0.59), a bully (0.53), politicians (0.52). In social situations with friends P1 has conflicted identifications with: someone who is anxious in social situations, the world as we experience it in these times, a bully and politicians. These identifications are mostly with those entities she wishes to dissociate from and are similar to her conflicted identifications when at home and when anxious, indicative of an approach-avoidance orientation to social situations and to social assertiveness. She is not at ease with being a more prominent social character, focusing on the more negative aspects of social dominance.

Current identification-conflict based in ‘Me, as I am now in social situations with strangers.’ Someone who is anxious in social situations (0.77), the world as we experience it in these times (0.59), someone who sexually harasses others (0.56). With strangers, P1 has conflicted identifications with someone who is anxious in social situations, the world as we experience it in these times and someone who sexually harasses others. The problematic identification with someone who sexually harasses others could indicate wanting to dominate in social situations with strangers, but instead submitting.

Past identification conflict based in ‘me, as I was as a child.’ The world as we experience it in these times (0.71), a bully (0.70), someone who sexually harasses others (0.65), politicians (0.65). P1’s problematic identifications based in childhood are with perpetrators of abuse and the broader society. Again, this indicates a desire to be dominant but not acting on this desire. These problematic identifications have been resolved in current times; except with strangers. Fear of excessive social assertiveness and its negative consequences (e.g. potential oppression of others, failure, judgement and shame), perhaps, inhibits social performance.

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Participant 2. Current identification-conflict based in ‘me, as I am at home.’ P2 reveals the following pattern of identification: the world as we experience it in these times (0.53), a person who has been sexually harassed (0.53), politicians (0.50). Participant 2 has identification conflicts with the world in these times, with politicians and with someone who has been sexually harassed. These conflicts of identification are not majorly problematic but her identification conflict with someone who has been sexually harassed indicates some feelings of victimisation when at home.

Current identification-conflict based in ‘me, when I am anxious in social situations.’ Someone who is anxious in social situation (0.68) and a person who has been sexually harassed (0.68). Worthy of note is the finding that the conflicted identification with someone who has been sexually harassed is to a greater extent when anxious than when she is at home.

Current identification conflict based in. ‘me as I am now in social situations with friends.’ someone who has been sexually harassed (0.50), politicians (0.50), the world as we experience it (0.46). Since P2 is in the same experiential state when with friends as when at home, her conflicted identifications are similar. Identification conflicts with someone who has been sexually harassed and the world as we experience it in these times have decreased compared to when at home and there is the addition of conflict with politicians.

Current identification-conflict based in ‘me, as I am now in social situations with strangers.’ Someone who is anxious in social situations (0.65), someone who has been sexually harassed (0.65), the world as we experience it in these times (0.53). These findings are consistent to some extent with identification conflicts at home, when anxious, and when and with friends. Strangers seem to trigger social anxiety.

Past identification conflict based in, ‘me, as I was as a child.’ A person who has been sexually harassed (0.68), someone who is anxious in social situations (0.68), a bully (0.55). Evident are P2’s problematic identifications based in childhood with persons experiencing social anxiety and harassment. These troublesome identifications are currently seen mostly while in social situations with strangers (but also to some extent there are conflicts with these entities in other situations). Conflicted identification with the bully as a child may reflect an early experience of identification with a bully, whilst also recognising characteristics within that person that are negative. In less familiar and easily read social situations, P2 fears the shame, embarrassment and discomfort of ‘getting it wrong’.

Evaluation of, and ego-involvement with others

Evaluation minimum value = -1.00 maximum value = +1.00

Ego-involvement minimum value = 0.00 maximum value = 5.00

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Evaluation of others refers to a summation of the positive and negative scores associated with each entity. Entities as a result can have a positive or negative value for this parameter. Ego involvement refers to the overall responsiveness to an entity in terms of the extensiveness in quantity (number of characteristics possessed) and strength (where the rating of each characteristic lies along the zero-center scale) of the attributes they are rated as possessing.

Participant 1.

Entities of primary investigative interest: Evaluation of, and ego-involvement with, prototypical persons in social situations.

Someone who is adept in social situations (evaluation of: 0.49) (ego-involvement: 3.66)

Someone who is anxious in social situations (evaluation of: -0.30) (ego-involvement: 3.66)

P1 evaluates 'adept in social situations' much more highly than anxious, which she evaluates negatively; this is consistent with those she wishes to emulate. She has the same ego involvement with both persons (moderate), but a lack of compassion and acceptance for the anxious self.

Other salient entities. Evaluation of, and ego-involvement with, the intimidating well-established expert.

A person whose background, knowledge and expertise intimidate her (evaluation of: 0.23) (ego-involvement: 4.02)

P1 has a moderate regard for the knowledgeable expert and is highly ego-involved with such persons, perhaps indicating an interest in a less social domain that offers status and achievement.

Societal Institutions.

Evaluation of, and ego-involvement with, features of the broader society.

Politicians (evaluation of: -0.28) (ego-involvement: 4.46)

The world as we experience it in these times (evaluation of: -0.40) (ego-involvement: 5.00)

P1 has a negative evaluation of politicians but a high ego-involvement with them. She also has a negative evaluation of the world as we experience it (which is consistent with those she wishes to dissociate from), but a very high ego involvement.

Representative entities of special interest: Evaluation of, and ego-involvement with, perpetrators and victims of harassment.

Someone who sexually harasses others (evaluation of: -0.55) (ego-involvement: 4.46)

A person who has been sexually harassed (evaluation of: -0.48) (ego-involvement: 2.05)

A bully (evaluation of: -0.28) (ego: 4.46)

P1 evaluates victims of harassment and perpetrators negatively. Her ego-involvement with perpetrators is much higher. This relates to conflicted identifications with a bully and someone who harasses others. She has concerns about negative aspects of social assertiveness that may impact on social performance.

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Parents

Evaluation of, and ego-involvement with, parents

Mother (evaluation of: 0.28) (ego-involvement: 3.39)

Father (evaluation of: 0.40) (ego-involvement: 3.57)

P1 has a lower evaluation and ego-involvement with her mother than with her father. Evaluation of her mother is particularly low which is consistent with her seeing her father as a more positive role model.

Participant 2.

Entities of primary investigative interest.

Evaluation of, and ego-involvement with, prototypical persons in social situations.

Someone who is adept in social situations (evaluation of: 0.67) (ego-involvement: 4.91)

Someone who is anxious in social situations (evaluation of: -0.47) (ego-involvement: 3.61)

Participant 2 evaluates someone who is 'adept in social situations' much more highly than someone who is anxious. She has a stronger ego-involvement with 'someone who is anxious' but evaluates them negatively, indicating a lack of self-compassion and acceptance, as with P1.

Other salient entities

Evaluation of, and ego-involvement with, the intimidating well-established expert.

A person whose background, knowledge and expertise intimidate her (evaluation of: 0.54) (ego-involvement: 4.63)

There is high regard for the knowledgeable expert, despite intimidating aspects and high ego involvement with such persons. As indicated previously, perhaps high levels of knowledge offer an alternative domain for achievement and status to the social domain.

Societal institutions

Evaluation of, and ego-involvement with, features of the broader society.

Politicians (evaluation of: -0.10) (ego-involvement: 3.80)

The world as we experience it in these times (evaluation of: -0.15) (ego-involvement: 3.33)

Participant 2 has an extremely disfavoured evaluation of politicians but a fairly high ego involvement with them. She also has disfavoured evaluation of the 'world in these times' but is less ego-involved with this than with politicians.

Representative entities of special interest

Evaluation of, and ego-involvement with, perpetrators and victims of harassment.

Someone who sexually harasses others (evaluation of: 0.29) (ego-involvement: 4.54)

A person who has been sexually harassed (evaluation of: -0.14) (ego-involvement: 3.80)

A bully (evaluation of: -0.34) (ego: 5.00)

Victims of harassment are evaluated negatively, but the perpetrators of abuse are evaluated more positively. For Participant 2 there is a very negative evaluation of bullies and a very high ego

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involvement with them; representing that which she does not wish to be. The suggestion is that while she identifies with a bully, she recognises that there are negative associations. The suggestion here yet again is that there is a conflict around the value of social assertiveness linked to the fear of oppressing others that can then lead to a stilted and awkward social manner that then feeds into social anxiety.

Parents

Evaluation of, and ego-involvement with, parents.

Mother (evaluation of: 0.31) (ego-involvement: 4.07)

Father (evaluation of: 0.36) (ego-involvement: 4.35)

Evaluation of Participant 2's parents is similar although she has a slightly higher ego involvement with her father. This reflects the fact that she had a higher aspirational identification with her mother but had a conflicted dimension of gender qualities.

Evaluation of self, extent of identity diffusion, and identity variant

Self Evaluation: minimum value = -1.00, value = 1.00

Identity Diffusion: minimum value = 0.00, value = 1.00

Self evaluation refers to measurements wherein characteristics associated with the various entities of self (me as I was, me as I will be etcetera) are compared to characteristics associated with the ideal aspirational self (me as I would like to be). They can be positive or negative in value.

Identity diffusion in ISA is a measure of the extent of a person's conflicts of identification. Identity variants in ISA are reported in a table that places the various entities of self within an identity variant category according to their combination of self-evaluation and diffusion. The central identity variant (indeterminate) is considered optimal. Interpreting the table requires consideration of where and how the placement of the entities of self differs from the optimal.

Defensive High Self-Regard	Confident	Diffuse High Self-Regard
Defensive	Indeterminate	Diffusion
Defensive Negative	Negative	Crisis

Figure 2. Classification of identity variants

Participant 1.

Me, as I am at home.'

Self-evaluation: 0.22

Identity diffusion: 0.46

Identity variant: Diffusion

Me, when I am anxious in social situations.

Self-evaluation: -0.43

Identity diffusion: 0.46

Identity Variant: crisis

Me, as I am now in social situations with friends.

Self-evaluation: 0.06

Identity diffusion: 0.48

Identity variant: Crisis

Me, as I am now in social situations with strangers.

Self-evaluation: -0.32

Identity diffusion: 0.49

Identity variant: Crisis

Identity variant: Crisis

Me, as I was as a child.

Self-evaluation: 0.00

Identity diffusion: 0.54

Identity variant: Crisis

P1's identity diffusion is very high in all situations, indicating a tendency towards problematic issues. Self-evaluation has increased from childhood when at home and when socialising with friends. Self-evaluation has declined since childhood in social situations with strangers and in social situations when she is anxious (it is negative in both scenarios). Self-evaluation is most favourable when at home but is still relatively low; it is least favourable when anxious in social situations.

Participant 2

Me, as I am at home.

Self-evaluation: 0.65

Identity diffusion: 0.43

Identity variant: Diffusion

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Me, when I am anxious in social situations.

Self-evaluation: -0.27

Identity diffusion: 0.47

Identity variant: Crisis

Me, as I am now in social situations with friends.

Self-evaluation: 0.44

Identity diffusion: 0.41

Identity variant: Diffusion

Me, as I am now in social situations with strangers

Self-evaluation: -0.27

Identity diffusion: 0.44

Identity variant: Crisis

Me, as I was as a child.

Self-evaluation: -0.13

Identity diffusion: 0.46

Identity variant: Crisis

P2's identity diffusion is high in all situations indicating a tendency towards problematic issues. Evaluation of self has increased from past to current times when at home and when socialising with friends (being most favourable when at home). Self evaluation has declined since childhood when in social situations with strangers and when anxious in social situations. The decline reflects the crisis state as a child and significant formative experiences at that time.

SUMMARY OF ISA RESULTS

Participant 1

In current circumstances P1 is prone to social anxiety when she feels anxious, in situations involving strangers and to a lesser degree in the home. She experiences troubled identification with someone who has been sexually harassed when she is anxious with strangers, but not in the home. We suggest that in this instance ISA was able to identify social anxiety, highlight contexts that precipitate social anxiety and suggest problematic contributory identifications which may be explored in therapy. This capacity of ISA aligns to the call for methods (American Psychiatric Association, 2013) that enable individuals to provide in-depth information in different ways given that reluctance to speak out may be an aspect of social anxiety.

Participant 1's core dimensions of identity are characteristic of someone who allies themselves with others, who seeks their support and approval and reassurance so that positive comparisons with them might result. Although client confirmation would, of course, be necessary, the

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interpretation is that ISA can indicate aspects of social mentalities that mediate social anxiety. Gilbert (2014) has explored the impact of affiliative and competitive social mentalities on motivation and behaviour in social situations. Whilst P1's inclination to form supportive alliances may be a positive social strategy; making comparisons and the need for approval and reassurance may relate to a more competitive social mentality; leading to a loss of confidence and safety seeking behaviours. The ISA findings appear to provide a possible focus for exploration within therapy regarding the subtleties of Participant 1's social mentalities and associated behaviours, with a view to introducing more adaptive variants for consideration and adoption. Information is also provided here in terms of internally and externally focused attention, fear of judgement and not meeting expectations, which may be fundamental to the formulation of social anxiety for this person (Clark and Wells, 1995; Rapee and Heimberg, 1997; Wells, 1997; Barlow, 2001) and the development of a specific treatment plan. It should be noted that core aspects of identity may not be easily amenable to change; resistance on the part of P1 may however be better anticipated and addressed.

Conflicted dimensions of identity, for P1, are being generally submissive or dominant, being content at simply being there or being the centre of attention, being outspoken or keeping opinions to herself and being masculine or feminine. When she was a child, P1 exhibited empathetic identification with a bully; a finding that may speak to the struggles that dominate her conflicted dimensions of identity and reluctance to take a lead socially. As with core dimensions of identity, the results here potentially highlight cognitions and behaviours linked to affiliative and competitive approaches to social interaction, safety seeking behaviours and social strategies generally which may or may not be serving the person well. Where the dimensions are conflicted there is most readiness for change. This can give a clear focus for therapeutic work.

When at home P1 empathetically identifies with someone who is anxious and someone who is socially adept. While she experiences some level of comfort in the home, there are some experiences that engender social anxiety. Outside the home (where she has a tendency to evaluate herself negatively) she experiences social anxiety although this is not present in social situations with friends. When P1 is anxious in social situations she empathetically identifies with someone who has been sexually harassed: A pattern of identification that is not present in the home. Here again the implication is that ISA, distinguishes between contexts and situations that are more or less difficult for the person and some of the complex cognitions and schemas that may be triggered, providing additional and focused information from the assessment.

Important findings for P1 in regard to ego involvement with and evaluation of significant entities reference negative evaluation of perpetrators and victims of harassment. She has though much higher ego involvement with perpetrators. This finding relates to her conflicted identifications with a bully and someone who harasses others.

Participant 2

In current circumstances, P2 is prone to social anxiety when with strangers and there is also an indication of social anxiety in her childhood. Her problematic identifications with those who are anxious and those who have been sexually harassed in her childhood are now only triggered in social situations with strangers. Here ISA points to long term and partially or more fully resolved issues, elucidating patterns of thinking and behaving over time. The suggestion is that ISA can indicate what predisposes a person to anxiety and the areas where they have already made progress in resolving problems, demonstrating strategies and resources on which a person can build.

Participant 2's core dimensions of identity are characteristic of someone who is adept in social situations and also represent those who offer care and reassurance. This is consistent with how she sees herself in terms of being adept in social situations at home and with friends, suggesting she compares herself positively with others (she evaluates herself more positively at home than in any other context). But she evaluates herself negatively when she is socially anxious and in social situations with strangers. Potentially, we have here an effective affiliative approach in the home context in contrast to a more competitive and stress-provoking mentality in less familiar social situations. In the case of this finding, awareness, psychoeducation and consideration of alternative appraisals and behaviours can be drawn on to enhance social functioning and reduce anxiety.

Participant 2's conflicted dimensions of identity concern tussles over fostering dignity in others or not, excelling in specialist knowledge or broad ranging interests, being content simply being there or not, and what to consider as appropriate contemporary gender qualities and being reassuring or not. In regard to these constructs she is likely to behave either one way or the other from moment to moment. In similar manner to P1, the existence of conflict here points to areas possessing greater potential for change which alongside the specificity of areas of dissonance can provide an immediate focus for therapy.

Participant 2 consistently empathises with her mother, father, closest friend and someone who is adept in social situations. This is consistent with those she wishes to emulate, except for her father which is an indicator of her conflicted dimension of gender qualities. When anxious in social situations and with strangers she empathises with someone who is anxious and someone who has been sexually harassed, which is consistent with her childhood. She wishes to dissociate from someone who is anxious and a bully.

For P2, important findings in regard to ego involvement with and evaluation of significant entities are that victims of harassment are evaluated negatively, but the perpetrators of abuse are evaluated more positively. There is a very negative evaluation of bullies and a very high ego

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involvement with them; representing that which she does not wish to be. The suggestion is that while she identifies with a bully, she recognises that there are negative associations.

With these current identity processes, P2 is only anxious when in social situations with strangers, comparing self positively with others in any other occasions.

Research emphasizes the importance of modeled behavior and indicates that parental anxiety and parenting behaviours impact on anxiety in children (Bogels and Siqueland, 2006, Bandura, 1969, Cartwright-Hatton, et al, 2005). While earlier research focused on maternal influence, more recent research has indicated that fathers also affect anxiety development, sometimes more than mothers. Working with the family dynamic and behaviours via cognitive behavioural therapy has been shown to be effective. ISA allows interpretation of and insight into empathetic identification, core and conflicted dimensions of identity in these areas and in identity conflicts with others (including past self and ideal self) ISA affords detailed and complex insight into drivers of social anxiety that may persist into adulthood and related social behaviours. Additionally, the ISA instrument employed in this work uses constructs related to social skills, avoidance, judgement of self and others, scrutiny, social comparison, response to attention, risk taking versus caution, perceived expertise and gender qualities, as well as affiliative and competitive behaviours.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

For therapists using psychometrics, they gain scores and can obviously look at responses or ratings on individual items. ISA was selected for this study for its potential to provide more detailed insight into aspects of identity; context (temporal and situational), aspirations, behaviour and thinking that may precipitate or maintain social anxiety for the individual. This potential to provide such detail derives from ISA's capacity for oblique extraction of identification patterns associated with entities of self and of significant others in respect to the constructs (which were drawn from relevant literature, accepted formulations of the drivers of social anxiety and lay views) of the instrument. Further influencing the decision to use ISA is the temporal nature of its assessments: appraisals and self-concepts extracted over time and in a variety of situations make this possible. They lend a dynamic bent to the method. Finally, ISA was selected as it indicates core and conflicted constructs and where there is conflict of identification. The latter capabilities can help direct the focus of a therapeutic plan away from areas of potential resistance and toward those areas where change might be effected more easily.

The summaries of ISA findings make clear the potential that ISA might hold for use alongside psychometrics to guide the formation of therapeutic plans that consider the arenas where most resistance may be expected and where gains may more readily be made. In addition, the social anxiety instrument provided insight into the participants' evaluation of, and ego-involvement and identification with, others as well as structural pressure on constructs. The latter ISA parameters

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were not used in the summary of ISA findings for this report but they could be applied to the formation of a therapeutic plan in cases where related findings have significance.

In short this pilot work indicates that there is value in highlighting situationally, interpersonally and temporally contextualised thought processes, behaviours and social orientations. That value highlights ISA's capacity to enhance case conceptualization and treatment planning, within a collaborative framework. Future research could usefully report on the actual impact and value of ISA throughout a course of treatment.

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