

Cognitive components of anxiety: A comparison of panic disorder and generalized anxiety disorder

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Comparative assessment of cognitive components of anxiety in patients with panic disorder and generalized anxiety disorder encountered in an Arab culture was attempted with the aim of detecting possible differentiating characteristics. A sample of patients diagnosed as panic disorder (N = 20) and generalized anxiety disorder (N = 13) were subjected to a standardized interview eliciting information as regards the content of thoughts associated with anxiety, the intensity of anxiety associated with each content, the most prominent of these contents and the types of situations or contexts provoking or accentuating the anxiety. The interpretation of the findings from an evolutionary perspective supports the differentiation between the two disorders, as it suggests that panic disorder represents a more primitive or regressive pattern of psychopathology.