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PREDICTIVE VALIDITY OF THE BRIEF FEAR OF NEGATIVE EVALUATION SUBSCALES

Gavin Rackoff

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The Brief Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale (BFNE) is widely used in social anxiety research. Previous studies have demonstrated that the BFNE consists of two factors; the BFNE straightforward subscale (BFNE-S) and the BFNE reverse-scored subscale (BFNE-R). The BFNE-S has proven more internally consistent and predictive of trait, but not state, social anxiety. This study compared the BFNE subscales' ability to predict trait and state social anxiety in two samples using multiple outcome measures. Whereas the BFNE-S significantly predicted all outcome measures, the BFNE-R predicted none. The BFNE-S was significantly more predictive of trait social anxiety in both samples and more predictive of state social anxiety in one sample. A post-hoc test supported path invariance across the two samples, suggesting that the state anxiety comparison lacked significance in one sample due to insensitive measurement. Findings support the validity of the BFNE-S and demonstrate that the reverse scored items add negligible utility.