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Cognitive and personality characteristics of Sasang constitution using neuropsychological and personality tests

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Statement of the Problem: Sasang constitutional medicine (Sasang typology) is one of the characteristics of Korean traditional medicine, and it classifies human beings into four constitutional types; Taeumin, Taeyangin, Soyangin, and Soeumin. Sasang constitutional medicine shares the same concept of the personalized medicine that even same drug causes different drug reactions or effects depending on his or her Sasang constitution classification. Therefore, the classification of the constitution is very important in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the personality traits and cognitive characteristics of the Sasang constitution by comparing the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ), Temperament and Character Inventory (TCI), Continuous Performance Test (CPT) and Stroop Test.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: 106 healthy subjects (age 20 to 40) were analyzed; 45 Taeumin, 30 Soyangin and 31 Soeumin. The Sasang constitution was diagnosed by a Sasang constitutional medicine specialist based on the results of Two Step Questionnaire for Sasang Constitution Diagnosis (TS-QSCD). The results of the EPQ, TCI, CPT and Stroop test were compared between Sasang constitutions.

Findings: Among the seven dimensions of EPQ, Taeumin and Soyangin scored significantly higher than Soeumin in Extraversion. Soyangin scored significantly higher than Soeumin in Impulsiveness. Among the four temperament dimensions of TCI, Taeumin and Soyangin scored significantly higher than Soeumin in novelty seeking, reward dependence and persistence. Soeumin scored significantly higher than Taeumin and Soyangin in harm avoidance. Among the three character dimensions of TCI, Soyangin scored significantly higher than Taeumin in self-transcendence. The results for CPT showed no significant differences between Sasang constitutions. Taeumin had a significantly higher color score in the Stroop test than Soeumin.

Conclusion & Significance: The personality tests showed significant differences between Sasang constitutions, but the neuropsychological test did not show any differences.

Biography

Lakhung Kim is a Doctor of Korean Medicine and treats patients with neurocognitive disorders and psychiatric disorders. He has conducted many studies about the psychological and behavioral characteristic of each type in Sasang Constitutional Medicine for over 10 years. He has used personality psychological tests such as TCI, EPQ and computerized neurocognitive tests.

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