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Examining the relationship between emotional dysregulation and temperament profiles in children with ASD

**Background**

Temperament
- a biologically based characteristic describing an individual's patterns of feelings and behaviour
  
  3 dimensions:
  - Effortful control
  - Negative affect
  - Surgency

Emotional regulation
- the ability to monitor and modify one's emotions
  
  2 subscales:
  - Reactivity
  - Dysphoria

**Research question**

Is there an association between the temperament profile and emotional regulation capabilities of children with ASD?

**Methods**

Sample
- 51 children with ASD diagnosis
  - Age of 7-14 (11.06 ± 2.3)
  - 9 females, 42 males
  - Full Scale IQ ≥ 85

Protocol
- Parents completed two measures:
  1. Temperament in Middle Childhood Questionnaire
  2. Emotion Dysregulation Inventory

Analysis
- Linear regression used to examine the association between the 3 dimensions of the TMCQ and the 2 EDI subscales
  - Covariates: age, gender, and Full Scale IQ

**Results and conclusion**

There is a significant positive association between the Negative Affect factor of the TMCQ and emotional dysregulation in children with ASD.

1. Reactivity vs. Negative Affect
   - ...the Reactivity dimension of the EDI.
   - \( R^2 = 0.28; p = 0.00003 \)

2. Dysphoria vs. Negative Affect
   - ...the Dysphoria dimension of the EDI.
   - \( R^2 = 0.23; p = 0.0003 \)

Gender, age, and Full Scale IQ do not play a significant role in these relationships.

**Relevance and applicability**

These results help us better understand contributors to emotional dysregulation by suggesting that in children with ASD, there is an association between:

Negative Affect, a dimension of biologically based temperament

Functional manifestations of emotional dysregulation

**References**