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**Title:** Intolerance of Uncertainty, Worry, Negative Affectivity and Emotional Regulation in Major Depressive and Generalized Anxiety Disorders

## **ABSTRACT**

**Background:** One of the ultimate goals in the field of clinical psychology is to identify risk factors or cognitive vulnerabilities that may predispose certain individuals to develop psychological disorders. It is important to identify such risk factors both for prevention purposes and to help develop better more efficient treatments that target key components of a psychological disorder. If psychologists can find cognitive vulnerabilities and risk factors of psychological disorders, then they can formulate behavioural interventions targeting those factors. Thus, the present research was designed to investigate certain cognitive vulnerability factors, such as, intolerance of uncertainty (IU), worry, negative affectivity (NA), and emotion regulation (ER) in people with the principle diagnoses of major depressive disorder (MDD), generalized anxiety disorder (GAD), and demographically–matched non–clinical control (NCC) group.

**Method:** For tapping intolerance of uncertainty, worry, negative affectivity, and emotion regulation, a battery of self-report measures were administered to a clinical sample of 120 patients, and 60 demographically–matched non–clinical control (NCC) participants, aged 30–40 years.

**Results:** Results revealed statistically significant differences among patients with the principle diagnoses of MDD, GAD, and NCC group in almost all the studied vulnerability factors. For example, Pot–hoc analysis, using Tukey HSD, revealed that IU and worry was

substantially higher in GAD followed by MDD and NCC group, whereas self-blame, rumination, and catastrophizing dimensions of ER, as well as ER as a unifactor was observed significantly more in MDD followed by GAD and NCC group. Although, MDD and GAD did not show significant differences in NA and other-blame dimension of ER, however, they scored substantially higher than NCC group. With respect to gender of the participants, results revealed that women relative to men reported substantially higher levels of these vulnerability factors. Finally, results also indicated statistically significant interaction between group by gender in most of these vulnerability factors. Furthermore, correlation analysis revealed statistically significant association among all the measured variables.

**Conclusions:** Overall, previous studies confirm the role of these common factors in psychopathology of emotional disorders and support the results of the present study. Taken together, it can be concluded from the current study that the aforementioned vulnerability factors may predispose certain individuals to develop a full range of psychological disorders, specifically, GAD and MDD. The results are discussed in the light of previous researches and current theories. Clinical implications and suggestions for future research are discussed.

**Keywords:** Intolerance of uncertainty, Worry, Negative affectivity, Emotion regulation, Major depressive disorder, Generalized anxiety disorder