

Emotional Clarity, Responses to Stress, and Mental Health

**The Influence of Responses to Stress on the Relationship
Between Emotional Clarity and Mental Health**

Kelsey Crandall

Dr. Marysia Lazinski & Dr. Nancy Newall

Brandon University

Abstract

This research explored the relationship between emotional clarity, responses to stress, and mental health in young adults. Specifically, this study examined whether adaptively responding to stress serves as a mechanism linking higher levels of emotional clarity and better mental health.

Participants were 268 young adults ages 18 to 35 ($M=23.49$, $SD=4.697$) living in the Brandon, Manitoba area. Participants' levels of emotional clarity, mental health, and use of adaptive stress responses were assessed. Results indicated that individuals with higher levels of emotional clarity have better mental health, but participants' use of adaptive stress responses did not mediate the relationship between emotional clarity and mental health as hypothesized. Among this study's sample, emotional clarity was the sole psychological predictor of young adult's mental health. Findings from the proposed study contribute to the clarification of the significance of emotional clarity as a potential mechanism for the maintenance of mental well-being and inform the development of interventions for young adults designed to reduce and prevent depression, anxiety, and stress symptoms.

Introduction

Gohm and Clore (2002) have identified four ways in which people differ in their emotional experiences: emotional clarity, emotional intensity, attention to emotion, and expression of emotions. These differences in emotional experience, i.e., how individuals identify, attend to, and respond to their emotions, can affect their mental health and overall well-being (Gohm & Clore, 2002; Saxena et al., 2011). Research examining emotional experience has classified emotional clarity (EC), specifically, as one of the primary components of emotional experience and one of the three dimensions of emotional intelligence (Jessar et al., 2017;