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Knowledge and Perception of the Present Moment and Emotions

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Introduction

- Emotional intelligence (EI):
 - The ability to understand and regulate emotions and to precisely perceive and think about emotions (Mayer et al., 2001)
 - Relates to many characteristics of emotional experience, including higher empathy and identification of emotions (Kang & Shaver, 2005)
- Mindfulness:
 - Kabat Zinn (2012) defines mindfulness as “paying attention in a sustained and particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally”
 - Two main components: present moment awareness and acceptance
 - Related to positive effects on psychological health (Keng, Smoski, Robins, 2011)
- Previous research has found a positive relationship between EI and mindfulness
 - Those who scored high on mindfulness have lower levels of emotional reactivity and less emotional lability (Hill & Updergraff, 2012)
 - Mindfulness related to better emotional regulation and higher levels of emotion differentiation (Hill & Updergraff, 2012)
 - Greater awareness is associated with better ability to describe emotional experiences (Mandal, Arya, & Pandey, 2014)
 - To date, all research examining the relationship between mindfulness and EI have only used self-report measures of EI

- The current study will build upon existing research by utilizing two behavioral measures of EI measuring emotion differentiation and emotional range

Research Question/Hypothesis

- This study investigated whether students with higher mindfulness will have higher levels of EI
 - Higher scores on both behavioral measures of EI will be related to higher mindfulness scores
 - Higher scores on the self-report measure of EI will be related to higher mindfulness scores

Measures

- EI Measures: Behavioral
 - **Emotional Range Test** (Sommers, 1981)
 - Consists of a short description of three situations in which participants are instructed to label emotional states; greater emotional responses indicates greater emotional range
 - **Emotion Differentiation Card-Sorting task** (Shaver et al., 1987)
 - Measures the ability to distinguish emotional terms; greater number of categories indicates greater emotion differentiation.
- EI Measures: Self-Report
 - **Assessing Emotions Scale** (AES; Schutte et al., 1998)
 - Measures ability to reflect upon emotional experience and functioning based on Mayer & Salovey’s (1990) original model of emotional intelligence; higher scores reflect more characteristic emotional intelligence
- Mindfulness
 - **Philadelphia Mindfulness Scale** (PHLMS; Cardaciotto et al., 2008)
 - Assesses present-moment awareness and acceptance; higher scores indicate higher levels of mindfulness, awareness and acceptance

Participants & Procedure

- Participants were students recruited from undergraduate psychology courses
- Participants completed the self-report and behavioral measures on Qualtrics
- Received extra credit in one psychology course as compensation
- 128 individuals participated; only 85 completed all four measures and were included in data analyses (Mean Age=21.91 [6.30])

Gender	
Female	83.5%
Male	15.3%
Transgender	1.2%

Ethnicity	
Not Hispanic or Latino	78.8%
Hispanic or Latino	21.2%

Race	N (%)
White	43 (50.6%)
Black / African American	10 (11.8%)
Asian	9 (10.6%)
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	1 (1.2%)
Other/ Unknown	14 (16.5%)
More than 1 race	8 (9.4%)

Results

Means, Standard Deviations (SD), and Published Norms of Measures

	MEAN	SD	NORMS
PHLMS Total Score	63.41	8.71	Means not reported for this scale
PHLMS Awareness	36.37	5.69	Mean = 36.65 (SD = 4.93)*
PHLMS Acceptance	27.32	6.45	Mean = 30.19 (SD = 5.84)*
Emotional Range	4.35	2.59	Mean = 2.19 (SD = .65)**
Card Sort Total	9.75	8.74	Mean = 10.93 (SD = 4.61)***
AES Total	128.29	14.62	Mean=129.46 (SD=14.21)****
AES Perception of Emotions	38.13	4.83	Means not reported for this scale
AES Managing Own Emotions	34.96	6.18	Means not reported for this scale
AES Managing Others’ Emotions	31.66	3.98	Means not reported for this scale
AES Utilization of Emotions	22.96	3.43	Means not reported for this scale

*Cardaciotto et al., 2008; ** Iancu et al., 1999
 Kang & Shaver, 2005; *Van Rooy et al., 2005

Correlations between PHLMS and AES

	PHLMS Total	PHLMS Acceptance	PHLMS Awareness
AES Total	.39**	.21	.41**
AES Perception of Emotions	.45**	.28**	.43**
AES Managing Own Emotions	.31**	.19	.28*
AES Managing Others’ Emotions	.27*	.14	.31**
AES Utilization of Emotions	.20	-.003	.31**

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

Results (cont’d)

Correlations between PHLMS and EI Behavioral Measures

	PHLMS Total	PHLMS Acceptance	PHLMS Awareness
Emotional Range	-.26	-.23*	-.18
Card Sort Total	-.20	-.20	-.08

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Correlations between AES and EI Behavioral Measures

	Emotional Range	Card Sort Total
AES Total	-.06	.02
AES Perception of Emotions	.02	-.09
AES Managing Own Emotions	-.19	-.02
AES Managing Others’ Emotions	-.01	-.02
AES Utilization of Emotions	-.001	.13

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Discussion

- Higher mindfulness was related to higher self-reported EI
- Participants who scored higher on the PHLMS Acceptance subscale had a lower emotional range score
 - The PHLMS acceptance subscale focuses on the non-judgmental state where one experiences events with openness—there is no attempt to change, avoid, or escape a situation (Cardaciotto et al., 2008)
 - Suggests that participants who experience events openly tend to label emotional experiences less
 - However, acceptance was not related to the ability to manage own emotions, manage others’ emotions, or utilize emotions during situations
- Higher PHLMS Awareness and PHLMS Acceptance subscale scores were related to higher perception
 - This supports previous research that focused on mindfulness and the emotions perception subset of EI
- The significant relationship between the PHLMS Awareness subscale and the AES can be attributed to the idea that these measures are similar in terms of measuring awareness of one’s experiences
- The AES did not correlate with the EI behavioral measures, suggesting a lack of correspondence between EI self-report and behavioral measures

Limitations/Future Directions

- Sampling an undergraduate population from a private, catholic university and from psychology courses limits generalizability of results
- Future research should utilize newer EI behavioral measures with tested psychometric properties to further examine its relationship with mindfulness