
Emotional Intelligence and Clinical Symptoms in a Sample of Young Adults from the LGB Community

Inteligencia emocional y sintomatología clínica en una muestra de jóvenes adultos de la comunidad LGB

Eddiel Hernández-López & Caleb Esteban-Reyes

Ponce Health Sciences University

ABSTRACT

Studies have shown that Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual (LGB) adults are more likely to report higher levels of clinical psychological symptoms (CPS) [depression, anxiety, and stress]. Literature stipulates that Emotional Intelligence (EI) is associated with a reduction of CPS in heterosexual individuals. However, there is a lack of literature regarding the association of EI, as a potential protective factor, and CPS among the LGB community. This study aimed to preliminarily explore the association between EI and CPS among a sample of LGB adults in Puerto Rico. We did a secondary data analysis of a quantitative method project from the Psychosocial Research Network on Health Disparities database. 36 participants (7=lesbian, 15=gay, 14=bisexual), within an age range of 21-40 years old were considered. To examine the variables, four instruments were implemented: 1) Andújar Emotional Intelligence Inventory (Emotional Intelligence), 2) Participants Health Questionnaire-8 (Depression), 3) Generalized Anxiety Disorder-7 (Anxiety), and 4) Perceived Stress Scale (Stress). Statistical analyses using Spearman's rank correlation were implemented to evaluate the associations. Results showed no significant correlation between EI and anxiety symptoms [$r(34) = -.27, p = .114$]. Nonetheless, results showed a moderate negative-correlation between EI and depressive symptoms, [$r(34) = -.48, p = .003$], and a moderate positive-correlation between EI and stress symptoms [$r(34) = .38, p = .024$]. These results suggest that EI is associated with CPS. Specifically decreasing depressive symptoms, as reported in literature. Paradoxically, an increment in stress was related with higher EI. Thus, we will explore this association further with a larger sample.