



ABSTRACT

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to identify and manage one's own and other's emotions. Research has indicated that high EI can lead to life satisfaction, positive affect, and success in academics. However, research exploring the possible relationship between EI and responses to ostracism seems to be lacking. In the current study, EI was measured and then participants were led to believe that they were participating in a group study. Through interactions with the supposed other group members, the participant was eventually ostracized from the group. After, need to belong, state self-esteem, and general reactions to the ostracism were measured. Results indicated that EI was significantly positively related to perceptions of sociability, perceptions of likeability, state self-esteem, state performance self-esteem, state social self-esteem, and state appearance self-esteem. EI was not related to feeling bad after experiencing ostracism. Additional analyses indicated significant differences between males' and females' reactions to ostracism.

HYPOTHESIS

We hypothesized that individuals with higher emotional intelligence would not be as negatively impacted by ostracism as individuals with lower emotional intelligence.

INTRODUCTION

Emotional Intelligence

- Research has indicated that emotional intelligence is predictive of satisfaction with life, positive affect (Gallagher, 2008), and success in academic and work settings (Carmeli, 2003).
- In addition, low emotional intelligence has been significantly associated with negative health outcomes, maladjustments, and negative behaviors in college-aged males (Brackett, 2004).

Ostracism

- Ostracism via bullying can lead to many different negative outcomes including negatively impacted psychological health and well-being (Einarson, 2003), and feelings of belongingness which can result in lower performance and withdrawal (O'Reilly, 2009).
- Ostracism occurring via a computer has also been shown to have negative impacts. Specifically, lower levels of belonging, control, self-esteem, and feelings of a meaningful existence (Zadro, 2004).
- No known research has examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and reactions to ostracism.

METHOD

- 91 Ohio University students completed a study entitled "Working Together".
 - 11 participants were eliminated due to issues such as correctly guessing the true hypothesis, failing to following instructions, or qualifying as an outlier. This left 80 participants (48 female, 78.8% White) for all analyses.
- Participants were asked to first create a profile about themselves that they were told would be viewed by the group members later in the study. Part of the profile involved completion of the EI scale
- Participants were then led to believe they were completing a group task with 5 other participants.
- After the group task task, participants were asked to read and review the profiles of the five other group members. They were then instructed to vote for the four individuals that they would like to move on to the second task with.
- All participants were told that they received the least amount of votes and would not be asked to continue on to the second group task.
- Instead, they were asked to complete measures for an unrelated study. The unrelated study involved the state self-esteem and need to belong scales. Participants were then asked questions about their reaction to the group's decision.
- Finally, participants were probed for suspicion and then fully debriefed about all deception.

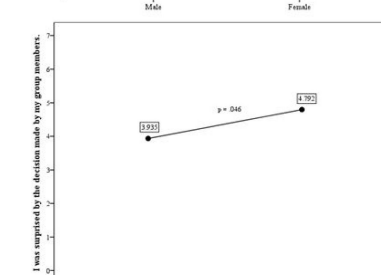
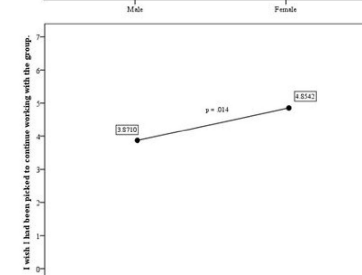
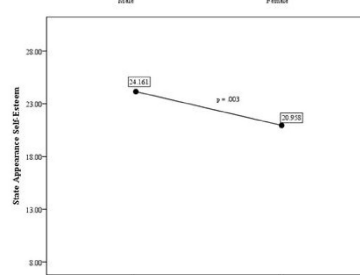
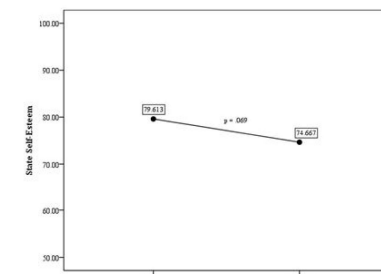
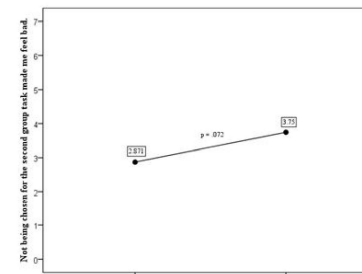
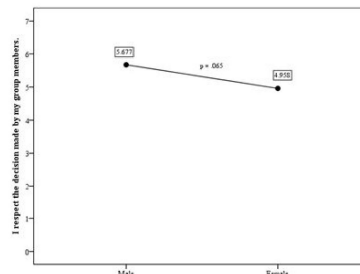
RESULTS

Table 1
Correlations Among All Variables of Interest

	EIQ	Sociability	Peer Eval	Likeability	Bad Feelings	Respect of Decision	Surprised by Decision	Desire to be Chosen	State SE	Performance SE	Social SE	Appearance SE	Need to Belong
EIQ	1	.401**	-.111	.454**	-.174	.085	.187	.076	.378**	.277*	.291**	.366**	-.092
Sociability		1	.277*	.462**	.080	-.026	.204	.211	.140	.104	.095	.149	.191
Peer Eval			1	.052	.227*	.046	-.033	.206	-.375**	-.259*	-.426**	-.243*	.444**
Likeability				1	-.121	.071	.098	.093	.372**	.279*	.294**	.348**	-.006
Bad Feelings					1	-.379**	.438**	.582**	-.584**	-.502**	-.504**	-.445**	.560**
Respect of Decision						1	-.307**	.279*	.335**	.099	.265*	-.187	
Surprised by Decision							1	.442**	-.167	-.197	-.130	-.090	.164
Desire to be Chosen								1	-.404**	-.245*	-.385**	-.367**	.545**
State SE									1	.797**	.851**	.832**	-.631**
Performance SE										1	.524**	.473**	-.384**
Social SE											1	.578**	-.593**
Appearance SE												1	-.580**
Need to Belong													1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).



DISCUSSION

Limitations

- There was a slight ceiling effect with the EI scores which may partly explain the lack of a relationship between EI and negative feelings after ostracism.
- Failure to fully deceive some participants may have impacted results.
- The correlational nature of the study may limit the extent of the conclusions that can be made.

Future Research

- Future research could use an experimental design to directly compare reactions between ostracized and non-ostracized participants.
- In addition, the ostracism could occur in an in-person format versus the online format used in the current study. This may bolster the deception and result in a stronger effect.
- Finally, future research could use a behavioral or implicit outcome measure to combat socially desirable responding.