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# Emotional Intelligence and Coping Styles: Exploring the Relationship Between Attachment and Distress

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UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND COPING STYLES: EXPLORING THE  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ATTACHMENT AND DISTRESS

By

Victoria L. Burns

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty  
of the University of Miami  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Coral Gables, Florida

August 2011

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Emotional Intelligence and Coping Styles:  
Exploring the Relationship Between  
Attachment and Distress.

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The current study examined the roles of emotional intelligence (attention, clarity, and repair) and coping styles (reactive and suppressive) in the relationship between adult attachment and interpersonal and psychological distress. Participants were 233 undergraduate students from a Southeastern university who completed a battery of self-report questionnaires, including the *Outcome Questionnaire-45.2* and the *Inventory of Interpersonal Problems*. This study utilized latent structural equation modeling in order to explore the well-established link between adult attachment and distress. Results support the notion that both emotional intelligence and coping styles are important variables to include when conceptualizing the relationship between attachment style and psychological and interpersonal distress. Whereas avoidant attachment was found to distinctively relate to emotional intelligence, anxious attachment uniquely related to coping style. Lastly, emotional intelligence and coping styles directly related to psychological and interpersonal distress. Research and clinical implications are discussed.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF FIGURES .....	iv
LIST OF TABLES .....	v
Chapter	
1 INTRODUCTION .....	1
2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE: .....	3
Models of Attachment.....	3
Models of Emotional Intelligence.....	5
Models of Coping Styles.....	8
Psychological and Interpersonal Distress .....	11
Attachment and Emotional Intelligence.....	12
Attachment and Coping .....	14
Emotional Intelligence and Coping .....	14
Emotional Intelligence and Distress .....	16
Coping and Distress .....	18
Current Study .....	19
3 METHODS .....	23
Participants and Procedure.....	23
Measures .....	24
Analysis.....	30
4 RESULTS .....	33
Structural Equation Modeling.....	33
Measurement Model .....	35
Structural Model .....	36
5 DISCUSSION.....	39
Synopsis of Findings.....	39
Limitations .....	45
Implications for Future Research.....	46
FIGURES .....	51
TABLES.....	56
REFERENCES .....	62

## LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
FIGURE 1.1 .....	51
FIGURE 1.2 .....	52
FIGURE 4.1 .....	53
FIGURE 4.2 .....	54
FIGURE 4.3 .....	55

## LIST OF TABLES

	Page
TABLE 4.1 .....	56
TABLE 4.2 .....	57
TABLE 4.3.....	58
TABLE 4.4 .....	59
TABLE 4.5 .....	60
TABLE 4.6 .....	61

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Attachment has been linked to a number of interpersonal and psychological patterns that stem from early infancy and persist into adulthood (Bowlby, 1969). Infants develop internal working models (i.e., expectations, beliefs, and scripts) about themselves and others based on how secure they feel relying on their caregiver for basic needs (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters & Wall, 1978). A large body of research on attachment styles in adolescents and adults has found that insecure attachment styles are significantly related to overall distress and disruptions in daily functioning. Specifically, insecure attachment dimensions have been found to have a significant and positive relationship to psychological distress (Besser & Priel, 2005; Braver, Bumbery, Green, & Rawson, 1992; Lopez, Mitchell, & Gormley, 2002), anxiety (Lopez, Mauricio, Gormley, Simko, & Berger, 2001; Mikulincer, Florian, & Weller, 1993; Wei, Heppner & Mallinckrodt, 2003), and depression (Murphy & Bates, 1997; Wei, Mallinckrodt, Larson, & Zakalik, 2005; Wei, Shaver, Young, & Zakalik, 2005; Wei, Mallinckrodt, Russell, & Abraham, 2004; Wei, Heppner & Mallinckrodt, 2003). In addition, studies have found that insecure attachment negatively affects one's ability to tolerate interpersonal disputes or relational dynamics (Allen, Porter, McFarland, McElhaney, & Marsh, 2007; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Besser & Priel, 2009; Creasey & Hesson-McInnis, 2001).

Research has also examined other factors that are linked to attachment and psychological and interpersonal distress. Emotional intelligence has been cited as the “emotional correlate” of the attachment construct (Kafetsios, 2004; Kim, 2005; McCarthy, Moller, & Fouladi, 2001), and has been found to predict an individual's level

of psychological and interpersonal distress (Brackett, Rivers, Shiffman, Lerner, & Salovey, 2006; Rude & McCarthy, 2003; Salovey, Stroud, Woolery, & Epel, 2002). Further, coping style has been identified as a crucial link between attachment style and distress levels (Lopez, Mitchell, & Gormley, 2002; Lopez, Mauricio, Gormley, Simko, & Berger, 2001; Wei, Heppner, & Mallinckrodt). Despite the clear conceptual and empirical links among these constructs, there has yet to be a cohesive model that has explained the relation of all of these constructs (attachment, EI, coping, distress) when considered together.

The purpose of this current study is to evaluate a conceptual model that includes the role of emotional intelligence and coping style in the link between attachment and distress (See Figure 1.1). Although prior researchers have examined aspects of this model- for example, linking attachment with coping styles and distress, attachment with emotional intelligence, emotional intelligence with coping, or emotional intelligence with distress - this is the first attempt to examine a comprehensive model of individual differences delineating the relation among all of these variables related to attachment and distress. As depicted in Figure 1.1, attachment is believed to indirectly be related to distress through the pathways of emotional intelligence and coping.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

#### Models of Attachment

In historical research designed to further differentiate forms of attachment, Ainsworth et al. (1978) conducted studies using the “strange situation task.” This involved observing infants’ reactions to the separation from their caregiver in a structured lab. The authors identified three categories of attachment: secure, anxious-resistant, and anxious-avoidant. Secure attachment included mother-baby dyads where the mother was attentive to the baby’s needs and the baby was able to safely explore the environment. Babies were thus upset by their mother’s separation, and content upon her return. Anxious-resistant attachment included mothers who were inconsistent- they interfered with the baby’s exploration, yet ignored them at the same time. This inconsistency resulted in uncertainty in the baby. These babies became upset with the absence of their mother, and demonstrated both a desire for closeness and anger with her return. Anxious-avoidant attachment described mothers who consistently rejected their baby. These babies were unbothered by the separation from their mother and avoided her upon her return.

A more recent conceptualization of attachment was proposed by Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991). These authors examined attachment in young adults and highlighted four categories: secure attachment, preoccupied attachment, fearful attachment and dismissing attachment. These authors based their model of attachment on two orthogonal, bipolar (high - low) dimensions: (1) internalized evaluation of self and

(2) internalized evaluation of others. Similar to Ainsworth et al. (1978), these authors posited that securely attached individuals (high evaluations of self and other) develop a positive sense of self worth and expect others to care for them. All other attachment styles (preoccupied, fearful, and dismissing) are clustered together and labeled as forms of insecure attachment (Bartholomew, & Horowitz, 1991). Preoccupied attachment (low self-evaluation, high evaluation of others) is characterized by low self-esteem and high need of support and approval from others. Fearful attachment (low self-evaluation, low evaluation of others) is marked by a sense of unworthiness and mistrust of others. Dismissing attachment (high self-evaluation, low evaluation of others) is defined by a persistent avoidance of others in favor of the self.

In a related investigation (Brennan, Clark and Shaver, 1998; Wei, Russell, Mallinckrodt, & Vogel, 2007) focused their attention on insecure attachment and proposed that it be viewed along two dimensions, attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance. Similar to Horowitz (1991) model, evaluation of self and other was deemed important. Attachment anxiety is considered to manifest from a negative working model of self as unworthy of love. When the attachment system is activated, anxiously attached individuals engage in a hyperactivation strategy in order to cope. These strategies include but are not limited to rumination, intense observation of attachment figures for indication of abandonment, an intensification of feelings of distress, and behaviors associated with maintaining closeness with this figure which often involves intense emotional reactions (Lopez & Brennan, 2000; Mallinckrodt, Porter, & Kvlighan, 2005). On the other hand, attachment avoidance is considered to manifest from a negative working model of others as untrustworthy. When the attachment system is activated, avoidantly attached

individuals utilize a deactivation strategy in order to cope with stressful feelings (Fraley, Davis, & Shaver, 1998; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). This involves distancing themselves from the attachment figure, and suppressing any negative emotional reactions that may initially become activated. Individuals may exhibit high levels of anxious attachment, high levels of avoidant attachment, high levels of both anxious and avoidant attachment, or low levels of anxious and avoidant attachment. Individuals who are low in both anxious and avoidant attachment are considered as having a healthy and secure attachment to others (Brennan et al., 1998; Wei et al., 2007).

### Models of Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Emotion plays a part in every aspect of human functioning that begins since a child is born. An infant at birth has a fully formed amygdala that enables the infant to experience emotion and to create and store emotional memories (Power & Dalgleish, 1997). While some theorists regard emotional reactions as indicators of a person's relation to their changing environment (Lazarus, 1991), others view emotion as discrete episodic constructs such as happiness or fear. Still, others view emotions on a dimensional plane that lies on a continuum from one extreme to the other, such as positive and negative affect (Power & Dalgleish, 1997). While individuals may have differing opinions on how to conceptualize emotion, it can generally be understood as an individual's "experience and expression of affective information" (Greenberg & Safran, 1987).

The conceptualization of how to understand one's emotional capabilities becomes important to delineate. Individuals vary in their understanding and capability to express their own affective states and to reflect on their emotional material, which has short and

long-term effects (Salovey, Mayer, Goldman, Turvey, & Palfai, 1995). Furthermore, one's ability to reflect on their feelings has been cited as a crucial cornerstone in assisting people in refining their goals, beliefs, life choices and decisions (Salovey, Stroud, Woolery, & Epel, 2002). A useful way to conceptualize a person's ability to reflect on their feelings is to assess emotional processes that appear to be stable indicators of emotional experience. This variation has been captured in a term deemed "emotional intelligence."

Emotional intelligence has been operationalized in a multitude of different ways in the literature. In fact, researchers posit that the term 'emotional intelligence' can be confusing unless proper conceptualization and explanation of the construct frequently occurs (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2008). Initial conceptualizations of EI appeared to focus on using one's emotional capabilities to make sense of their own and/or others' emotional experience (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). As the concept of EI became more popular in the field, many theorists and researchers began to include personality traits and competencies and deemed these as part of the EI definition. Some examples of these constructs are assertiveness, persistence, adaptability, and impulsivity (Bar-On, 1997; Goleman, 1995; Petrides & Furnham, 2003). Furthermore, emotional intelligence by definition should be distinct from other types of intelligences and competencies (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2008) such as social intelligence, personal intelligence, cultural intelligence, social competence, social effectiveness, emotional competence, and interpersonal competence. However, researchers appear to use these terms interchangeably in the literature.

While some individuals measure emotional intelligence via nonverbal communication and the way a person behaves (Halberstadt, 1986; Notarius & Johnson, 1982), some use ability or performance tests (Mayer & Salovey, 1997), and others utilize the subjective perception of emotional intelligence, which is understood through the lens of the person experiencing it and may be deemed trait or perceived EI (Salovey, Mayer, Goldman, Turvey, & Palfai, 1995; Schutte, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden & Dornheim, 1998; Quinton & Wagner, 2005). While it is clear that objective assessments of emotional intelligence may give information related to that person's capacity or ability to utilize emotional properties (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2004; Salovey & Grewal, 2005) it is crucial to first assess the way that person perceives their own emotional intelligence. One's perception of their own abilities carries with it important implications for their relationships with self, others, and their ability to function in various environments and conditions (Cherniss, 2000). For example, a person's belief that they are adept at ascertaining what they are feeling in certain instances increases their self-efficacy in relation to their emotional experiences and increases accuracy in the future. Furthermore, subjective tests that measure one's perceptions of their abilities have been shown to translate into behavioral indices that reflect accuracy of one's perceptions. For example, people who reported devoting greater attention to their emotions appeared to pay more attention to the emotion words in a Stroop task (Coffey, Berenbaum, & Kerns, 2003). This finding supports the notion that self-report questionnaires that ask participants to report their perceived emotional capabilities can accurately reflect reality. Therefore, while there are many reputable ways to measure emotional intelligence, there is strong evidence that prediction and explanation of emotion-laden constructs is uniquely

understood through a person's perception of their own internal experiences (Wester, Vogel, Pressly, & Heesacker, 2002).

In addition, self-report EI has been found to be consistently related to self-reported coping styles and specific indices of psychological distress (e.g., depression). Alternatively, performance-based measures of EI have been less consistent with such attributes, but more so related to personal identity dimensions such as age and education (Goldenberg, Matheson, & Mantler, 2006). Performance-based EI measures may depict what a person is capable of doing, whereas self-report EI may reflect what a person actually does (Petrides & Furnham, 2000). A consistently useful tool for capturing perceived EI has been the Trait Meta Mood Scale (TMMS) which specifically measures awareness of one's emotions [attention], the ability to identify and discern amongst various emotions [clarity], and the capability to regulate one's emotions [repair] (Salovey et al., 1995). The TMMS is used in the present study in order to further understand the relationship between attachment styles and the subsequent effect on distress outcomes.

### Models of Coping Styles

Coping has been conceptualized in a multitude of different ways. Early theorists thought about coping in terms of primary and secondary appraisal (Lazarus, 1966; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). In primary appraisal, a person initially establishes whether a stimulus was stressful and might actually be threatening to that person. Secondary appraisal consists of the process of a person gauging the actual resources and abilities they possess in order to deal with that stressful and threatening stimulus. Secondary appraisal processes often inform primary appraisal processes. If an individual is confident in the resources and options available to them in coping with a stressful encounter, they

will likely appraise that problem as less harmful or less threatening. Therefore, an individual's perception of their own resources and abilities seems to be a significant aspect of the coping process in this conceptualization. Alternatively, stress appears to result from a person's perceived lack of resources when they are in the face of a difficulty that they deem harmful.

A predominant conceptualization of coping processes operationalizes coping into problem-focused and emotion-focused coping (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980; Lazarus, 1993). Problem-focused coping is utilized when the individual is trying to alter the problem at hand, while emotion-focused coping appears to focus efforts on managing the emotions and distress that results from the stressor. Individuals are purported to utilize problem-focused coping when they perceive the stressor or problem as manageable and changeable. On the other hand, individuals who perceive their stressor or problem as unmanageable and out of their control would be more likely to utilize emotion-focused coping. Some theorists have felt that the distinction between problem-focused and emotion-focused coping have been too simple (Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub, 1989). Carver et al. (1989) included a multitude of new variables into the problem-focused and emotion-focused conceptualization in order to gain more specificity in the constructs. While problem and emotion-focused coping were the basis of the conceptualization, researchers seemed to include a wider range of coping activities. Furthermore, it was deemed important to try to identify not only which coping responses were utilized and whether they were adaptive or maladaptive, but also if that behavior might be deemed emotion-focused in one situation yet problem-focused in another.

It is also important to note the difference between dispositional coping styles and situational coping styles. Dispositional coping styles are conceptualized as coping styles that are generally and commonly used across different stressors and situations. Situational coping styles are often thought of as specialized coping responses that are utilized based on the situation or stressor at hand (Carver & Scheier, 1994; Carver et al., 1989). Some theorists (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980, 1985) argue that coping is a dynamic process. This view considers the idea that certain coping strategies might be employed during certain stressful events, and that these strategies might also be shifted depending on what level of the stressful event the person is currently experiencing. Carver and Scheier (1994) explored this topic and found evidence of a large number of correlations among dispositional and situational coping styles. The overarching conceptualization that developed was that although there will always be new and stressful situations that come about, there appears to be a basic, foundational approach to coping with new situations.

Problem-solving coping has also been theorized to include reflective, reactive, and suppressive coping styles which are utilized in regulating an actual problem (Heppner, Cook, Wright, & Johnson, 1995). Reflective coping style is defined as examining and planning in a systematic fashion. Reactive coping style involves emotional and cognitive items that involve distorting the individual's ability to cope by depleting their resources and acting impulsively. Suppressive coping style is defined as denying problems and thus not engaging in coping processes. Despite the presence of these three factors, it appears that Suppressive and Reactive coping uniquely add to the complex conceptualization of problem-solving coping (Heppner et al., 1995). The Reflective style does not appear to add unique understanding to this coping

conceptualization, especially when considering certain distress outcomes (Heppner et al., 1995) and thus is not included in a multitude of studies examining the relationship of problem-solving coping to multiple correlates (Lopez, Mauricio, Gormley, Simko, & Berger, 2001; Lopez, Mitchell, & Gormley, 2002; Wei, Heppner, & Mallinckrodt, 2003).

While previous coping research has had a clear delineation among problem and emotion-focused coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), Heppner et al. (1995) made efforts to broaden the definition of coping by including affective items in addition to behavioral and cognitive items into their coping conceptualization. It can be understood that there are important affective-related phenomena that exist when a person is utilizing a problem-focused approach and it is important to pay attention to the interrelationship of problem and emotion-focused coping processes (Carver et al., 1989). In addition, short-term consequences of the person's coping efforts were included in an effort to eliminate any lack of clarity that might occur with vague items. By including these short-term consequences, one is able to differentiate coping responses as having either a positive or negative effect on the individual. Furthermore, Heppner et al. (1995) conceptualized coping from a dispositional approach, asserting that individuals possess some form of a stable coping approach that is likely present in new stressful encounters.

#### Psychological and Interpersonal Distress

Psychological and interpersonal distress is often heavily correlated with diagnosable mental illness (Hoeymans, Garssen, Westert, & Verhaak, 2004) and mental illness is often predictive of disability and difficulties in social functioning (Miller, 2006; Melzer, Fryers, Jenkins, Brugha, & McWilliams, 2003). For example, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (1999), mental health problems are the

second leading cause of disability. College-age adults appear to be more likely to have a mental illness than at any later time period in their adult lives (Berger, 2007).

Furthermore, college-aged adults are facing unique developmental challenges as they transition from emerging adulthood into actual adulthood (Berger, 2007). Although exposure to new stressors (leaving home, making new friends, financial responsibility, etc.) appears to increase distress for college students, those subsequent increases in distress also negatively affect those exact stressors they are trying to manage (Lavikainen, Lahtinen, & Lehtinen, 2000; Talala, Huurre, Aro, Martelin, & Prattala, 2008). According to Erikson (1963), young adults have an extremely powerful desire to build intimacy and form strong bonds with important people in their lives. Therefore, one would assume that difficulties in establishing these important interpersonal relationships would have detrimental effects on young adults. Furthermore, distress has been negatively associated with social support, physical health, and socioeconomic status (Gadalla, 2009). Especially in young adults, psychological distress has been associated with increased suicide attempts and actual completed suicide (Weissman, Wolk, Goldstein, Moreau, Adams, Greenwald, et al., 1999). Given the unique vulnerability for this age group, an investigation into the emotional and coping capabilities of college students becomes an important endeavor.

#### Attachment and Emotional Intelligence

The development of a child's emotional life is related to the type of attachment a child forms to parents. Attachment experiences set the stage for internalized working models for perceiving and managing emotions that occur on a daily basis (Ainsworth, 1989; Shaver, Collins, & Clark, 1996) and persist throughout a person's lifetime

(Bowlby, 1969). Furthermore, attributes typically seen in insecure attachment (hypervigilance, rumination, denial, etc.) have been conceptualized as “defenses” that directly impact and often interfere with efficient processing of emotional information (Fuendeling, 1998; Kafetsios, 2004). In this way, EI has been conceptualized as an “emotional correlate” or actual emotional consequence of the attachment style construct (Kafetsios, 2004; Kim, 2005). Research has supported the notion that each style of attachment has a unique relationship to the different aspects of EI.

Higher levels of attachment to parents have been associated with greater levels of attention, clarity and repair of emotion (McCarthy, Moller, & Fouladi, 2001; Kim, 2005; Searle & Meara, 1999). Secure attachment has also been associated with greater ease in general emotional regulation (Simpson, Collins, Tran & Haydon, 2007). Insecure attachment, on the other hand, has been linked to difficulties with emotion regulation (Lapsley, Rice, & Fitzgerald, 1990). In particular, individuals who are anxiously attached actively attend to their experience of distress which further heightens their emotional distress, whereas avoidantly attached individuals inhibit their feelings of distress and deny the presence of negative affect (Fuendeling, 1998; Lopez, Mauricio, Gormley, Simko, & Berger, 2001). Insecure attachment has been linked to inattention, or low emotional awareness (Mallinckrodt & Wei, 2005; Searle & Meara, 1999). Specifically, individuals with anxious attachment have been found to have difficulties with awareness of their actual feelings (Mallinckrodt & Wei, 2005). Still, other research has reported anxious attachment to be associated with an increase in awareness of feelings (Collins, 1996; Fraley & Shaver, 1997; Fuendeling, 1998), while other literature has cited awareness to be unrelated to attachment (McCarthy et al., 2001) or Individuals with

avoidant attachment have evidenced difficulties with awareness, identification, and description of their emotions (Mallinckrodt, King, & Coble, 1998; Mallinckrodt & Wei, 2005; Mikulincer & Orbach, 1995). Overall, it is clear that when emotional connections are disrupted as they are with an insecure attachment style, emotional intelligence capabilities are disturbed (Aldea, & Rice, 2006; Lapsley, Rice, & Fitzgerald, 1990).

### Attachment and Coping

Insecure attachment style has been associated with problem-focused coping (Fuendeling, 1998; Lopez, Mauricio, Gormley, Sinko, & Berger, 2001; Lopez, Mitchell, & Gormley, 2002). Individuals with anxious attachment styles appear to cope with stressful events by increasing their perception of these events as harmful and threatening and reacting impulsively, thus depleting their abilities to utilize coping mechanisms that address the stressor in a constructive manner. Furthermore, individuals evidencing avoidant attachment style cope with stressors by decreasing and suppressing any cues that could indicate distress. Therefore, these individuals do not utilize coping mechanisms to address the stressor since efforts have been made to inhibit its importance. Although this may appear adaptive since it appears that negative affect in response to a stressor is absent, accompanying reports of decreased well-being still reflect maladjustment to the stressor (Lopez & Brennan, 2000; Mallinckrodt, 2001).

### Emotional Intelligence and Coping

Many theorists and researchers assert that cognitive, behavioral, and emotional processes are all crucial in daily functioning and tend to have an interactive effect on one another (Aldea & Rice, 2006; Heppner, Cook, Wright, & Johnson, 1995). Emotional information can assist individuals in understanding their reactions to different stressors,

which can then adaptively guide them in the coping process (Alumran & Punamäki, 2008; Baker & Berenbaum, 2007; Greenberg, 2002). Specifically, affective material may serve as important cues for individuals to note that a problem exists, and can provide information in regards to progress towards the problem-solving goal (Heppner & Krauskopf, 1987). Individuals' ability to effectively confront and cope with a problem depends upon their ability to regulate their emotions (Aldea & Rice, 2006). Greater emotional intelligence is associated with higher levels of effective problem-solving, such as allowing individuals to create a multitude of problem-solving perspectives (Salovey, Bedell, Detweiler, & Mayer, 2000). In addition, individuals who demonstrate high EI also seem to be more adept at stress management, decision-making and faster mood recovery after disturbing and stressful experiences (Bar-On, 2001; Bar-On & Parker, 2000; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000).

Interestingly, individuals who are unclear about their emotions who also participate in high levels of problem-focused coping have been found to experience negative distress outcomes (Baker & Berenbaum, 2007). Engaging too quickly in a particular problem-focused coping strategy because one has not utilized information from their emotional cues and reactions can have detrimental effects. In other words, having increased emotional intelligence affords individuals more resources in allowing them to utilize the most adaptive problem-solving coping strategy for that particular situation (Bar-On, 1997; Saklofske, Austin, Galloway, & Davidson, 2007; Salovey, Stroud, Woolery, & Epel, 2002).

Although there has been research that considered mediators of emotional content in relation to attachment and distress (Mallinckrodt & Wei, 2005; Wei, Vogel, Ku, &

Zakalik, 2005) as well as EI's relationship with certain coping indices (Salovey et al., 2002), EI and problem-focused styles of coping have yet to be examined together. It is crucial to have a more in-depth understanding of the specific role of problem-focused coping and emotional intelligence in the developmental progression of emerging young adults. This is important since insecure attachment is associated with ineffective emotional and coping processes and practices, which then trigger and/or furthermore worsen psychological and interpersonal distress levels (Wei et al., 2005).

### Emotional Intelligence and Distress

Emotional intelligence has been found to be related to psychological and interpersonal distress levels. Theorists argue a clear EI-distress link since individuals high in EI attend to, understand, and manage emotions in such a skillful manner that they serve as adaptive mechanisms that benefit themselves and with those whom they interact (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2008). Specifically, high emotional intelligence has been associated with higher levels of psychological and interpersonal functioning (Salovey, Stroud, Woolery, & Epel, 2002; Salovey, et al., 1995). Emotional intelligence has been correlated with psychological symptoms such as lower levels of anxiety (Fernandez-Berrocal, Alcaide, Extremera, & Pizarro, 2006; Jacobs, Snow, Geraci, Vythilingam, Blair, Harney, Pine & Blair, 2008; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000; Salovey, Stroud, Woolery, & Epel, 2002; Salovey et al., 1995) and depression (Fernandez-Berrocal, Salovey, Vera, Extremera, & Ramos, 2005; Rude & McCarthy, 2003; Salovey, Mayer, Goldman, Turvey, & Palfai, 1995; Williams, Fernandez-Berrocal, Extremera, Ramos, & Joiner, 2004). Specifically, depression has been associated with low emotion regulation and low clarity, whereas the relation of depression and attention to emotion appears more

elusive (Rude & McCarthy, 2003; Salovey et al., 1995). Furthermore, individuals high in emotional repair appear to also report lower anxiety symptoms (Salovey et al., 2002). General distress levels have also been found to relate to EI. For example, attention to emotion has been associated with increasing distress levels, whereas clarity of emotions has been associated with decreased distress levels (Salovey et al., 1995; Goldman, Kraemer, & Salovey, 1996). Although attention to one's emotions can in certain situations be a useful cue, it appears that excessive attention to emotions becomes problematic. Specifically, attending to one's emotions too much has been associated with an increase in ruminative thought as well as anxiety and depression (Salovey, Stroud, Woolery, & Epel, 2002). Also, individuals high in clarity and repair are shown to have lower vulnerability thresholds to distress reactions (Salovey, Mayer, Goldman, Turvey, & Palfai, 1995). Furthermore, a study on college adjustment found that students who appeared "emotionally confused," overwhelmed, and felt uncertain about their emotions appeared the most maladjusted (Kerr, Johnson, Gans, & Krumrine, 2004). Emotion also appears to play a role in interpersonal functioning and problems. High EI appears to predict more favorable social outcomes while low EI is empirically related to interpersonal conflict and maladjustment (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000). For example, Birditt & Fingerman (2003) found that distress decreased in relationships that were deemed "emotionally" close. People evidencing high EI appear to be more socially competent, to participate in higher quality relationships, and appear to evidence unique interpersonal sensitivities that are not present in people with low EI (Brackett, Rivers, Shiffman, Lerner, & Salovey, 2006; Brackett, Warner, & Bosco, 2005). Also, individuals evidencing high scores in clarity and repair dimensions report higher satisfaction with

interpersonal relationships (Salovey et al., 2002). Furthermore, interpersonal distrust has been shown to relate to one's difficulty in describing feelings, and impulse regulation has been associated with difficulty identifying and describing feelings (Quinton & Wagner, 2005). Teenagers who evidenced lower EI scores were rated as more aggressive and engaging in more conflictual behavior as compared to their higher EI counterparts (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2008). Interestingly, difficulties relating to individual emotional intelligence abilities (i.e. emotional awareness) have also been found to mediate the relationship between attachment and distress (Mallinckrodt & Wei, 2005; Wei, Vogel, Ku, & Zakalik, 2005 ). However, no study has considered emotional intelligence as a multidimensional construct with multiple variables and analyzed its relationship with attachment and distress.

#### Coping and Distress

Problem-focused coping styles have also been found to be correlated with higher levels of psychological distress such as depression, anxiety, a higher reporting of personal problems, and decreased reports of overall adjustment (Heppner, Cook, Wright, & Johnson, 1995; Heppner & Lee, 2002; Wei, Heppner, & Mallinckrodt, 2003; Wei, Heppner, Russell, & Young, 2006). In addition, individuals who perceive that they are not adept at problem-solving or do not possess the necessary skills to become efficient problem-solvers appear to suffer other deleterious relational outcomes. For example, individuals with perceived ineffective problem-solving skills have difficulty with interpersonal relationships. This is evidenced by difficulties in trusting others, exhibiting oversensitivity in interpersonal interactions, and displaying less assertive behavior during interactions (Heppner & Lee, 2002).

Specifically, reactive and suppressive coping have been found to be related to attachment and its relationship to distress currently experienced in college student populations (Lopez, Mauricio, Gormley, Sinko, & Berger, 2001; Wei, Heppner, & Mallinckrodt, 2003). Wei et al. (2003) successfully demonstrated that the relationship between attachment anxiety and distress was fully mediated by perceived problem-focused coping and attachment avoidance was partially mediated by perceived problem-focused coping.

### Current Study

The current study was intended to test a model in which both emotional intelligence and coping styles mediate the relationship between adult attachment and psychological and interpersonal distress. Upon examining the literature, it can be hypothesized that a clear link between attachment style, emotional intelligence, coping styles, and distress exists in this specific direction. Insecure attachment affects the manner in which we cope with stressors (Lopez, Mauricio, Gormley, Sinko, & Berger, 2001; Lopez, Mitchell, & Gormley, 2002) and also affects our perception and management of emotional material (Kafetsios, 2004; Kim, 2005). Our emotional abilities are then able to assist us with effective problem-solving (Heppner & Krauskopf, 1987; Salovey, Bedell, Detweiler, & Mayer, 2000). Both emotional and problem-solving abilities allow the utilization of tools to enrich interpersonal relationships as well as tools to decrease psychological distress levels (Wei, Heppner, & Mallinckrodt, 2003; Wei, Heppner, Russell, & Young, 2006). Despite the clear links amongst these constructs, a model that incorporates all of these variables in the stated direction has yet to be tested. This study seeks to address that gap in the literature. Thus, the overall hypothesis of the

current study is that those who are highly anxious and avoidant in their attachment will report reduced emotional intelligence and problem solving and capacities. Individuals evidencing low emotional intelligence capabilities and problem-solving coping will also be more likely to report greater psychological and interpersonal distress.

In addition, previous literature has found some relative inconsistencies in terms of how each of the attachment styles may relate to aspects of EI and coping. For example, Mallinckrodt and Wei (2005) found that both anxious and avoidant attachment had similar relationships with EI variables such as emotional awareness, while Kafetsios (2004) found that anxious and avoidant uniquely related to EI indices. Similarly, some studies point to attachment styles relating uniquely to various coping efforts. In particular, specific aspects of coping have been found to be more related to anxious attachment than avoidant attachment (Lopez, Mitchell, & Gormley, 2002; Lopez, Mauricio, Gormley, Simko, & Berger, 2001; Wei, Heppner, & Mallinckrodt, 2003). For these reasons, it will be important to investigate the inconsistencies in the literature by looking at various competing models that can target how the two attachment styles may relate uniquely to components of emotional intelligence and coping efforts.

An additional alternative model that will be assessed in the current study is one that specifies emotional intelligence being linked to attachment, while at the same time being a necessary precursor to coping, which in turn leads to distress. This alternative model follows from the hypothesis posited by some researchers that emotional intelligence is critical for the activation and utilization of successful coping strategies (Downey, Johnston, Hansen, Birney & Stough, 2010; MacCann, Fogarty, Zeidner, & Roberts, 2011). In addition, the literature highlights that insecure attachment style affects

our perception and management of emotional material (Kafetsios, 2004; Kim, 2005), while these same emotional abilities assist us in effective problem-solving (Heppner & Krauskopf, 1987; Salovey, Bedell, Detweiler, & Mayer, 2000). Effective problem-solving then allows the utilization of tools to enrich interpersonal relationships as well as tools to decrease psychological distress levels (Wei, Heppner, & Mallinckrodt, 2003; Wei, Heppner, Russell, & Young, 2006). Since no researcher has examined both EI and coping in relation to attachment-distress, the current study will fill this gap in the literature by examining one possible model and two alternative models of how these constructs relate to one another.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was chosen as the method to test the fit of the overall model to the data, as well as to compare the viability of alternative models. This statistical approach is required for this kind of research study due to its flexibility in allowing all variables to be tested in one inclusive latent variable model, in addition to exploring the significance of the observed indicators. In addition, SEM allows the comparison of alternative comprehensive models which can lead to optimal fit of the data. Considering competing models is an important aspect of psychological research and an added strength of utilizing SEM. Comparing various models in addition to the one that was initially hypothesized is needed in order to gain confidence in the final model one will accept (Keith, 2005; Loehlin, 2004). Assessing for this kind of comprehensive model can be a useful tool for researchers trying to empirically identify the emotional intelligence skills and the coping strategies that individuals with insecure attachment

utilize. In addition, this comprehensive model can be useful in counseling settings in order to help clients with insecure attachment styles target typical skills and strategies that are utilized in the face of distress.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODS

#### Participants and Procedure

Participants in this study were 233 undergraduate students who were enrolled at a medium sized southeastern university. The undergraduate students were enrolled in a variety of education courses. The sample comprised 139 women (59.7%) and 94 men (40.3%). The average age of participants was 20.66 years ( $SD = 1.92$ , range = 17-35 yrs.). In terms of their self-reported demographics, 142 were Caucasian/European American ( $n = 142$ , 60.9%), 43 were Latino/Hispanic ( $n = 34$ , 14.6%), 20 were African-American/Black ( $n = 20$ , 8.6%), 14 were Asian/Asian American/ Pacific Islander ( $n = 14$ , 6.0%), 14 were Biracial/Multiracial ( $n = 14$ , 6.0%), and 9 were “Other” (3.9%). With respect to their socioeconomic status, 29 students reported belonging to the upper class ( $n = 29$ , 12.4%), 102 were upper-middle class ( $n = 102$ , 43.8%), 78 were middle class ( $n = 78$ , 33.5%), 15 were lower-middle class ( $n = 15$ , 6.4%), and 5 were lower class ( $n = 5$ , 2.1%).

The current study was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) before data collection ensued. Volunteers who participated in this study were given a detailed informed consent document that described the current research, the minimal risks involved, and contact information for the principal investigator. Participants were instructed that taking part in the study was voluntary and their right to withdraw from the study at any time was clearly communicated. Furthermore, the participants were told that their surveys were anonymous. Students were eligible to receive extra credit in their particular education course for participating in the study; however, this information was

kept separate from their surveys to maintain anonymity. The actual amount of credit varied depending on the instructor and the course. In order to reduce the potential for coercion, students were given other options that were similar in caliber to the current study so that they could still receive extra credit.

### Measures

*Experiences in Close Relationship Scale - Short Form.* The Experiences in Close Relationship Scale (ECR-Short Form; Wei, Russell, Mallinckrodt, & Vogel, 2007) is a 12-item self-report measure of adult attachment which contains two distinct subscales designed to capture anxious and avoidant attachment subtypes (see Appendix A). The original ECRS was comprised of 36-items which attempted to capture the two domains of attachment, Anxiety and Avoidance, and was developed from all current attachment measures (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998). A 7-point Likert scale that ranges from *disagree strongly (1)* to *agree strongly (7)*, is used for each item in the measure. Participants rate how accurate each statement is in describing typical feelings they experience while in close romantic relationships. Higher scores on these subscales indicate higher levels of anxious and avoidant attachment, respectively. Low scores on both the Anxiety and the Avoidance subscales evidence secure adult attachment in that individual.

The Anxiety subscale measures an individual's fear of rejection and concurrent preoccupation with abandonment. The Avoidance subscale measures an individual's fear of intimacy and their discomfort with getting close to other people (Brennan, et al., 1998; Wei, et al. 2007). Sample items are "My desire to be very close sometimes scares people away" (anxiety) and "I am nervous when partners get too close to me" (avoidance). Each

subscale that comprises the ECR-Short Form contains six items which were established via exploratory factor analysis. Coefficient alphas for the current study were .62 for the Anxiety subscale and .56 for the Avoidance subscale. Wei et al. (2007) reported coefficient alphas that ranged from .77 to .86 for the Anxiety subscale and .77 to .88 for the Avoidance subscale across a multitude of studies. Test-retest reliabilities over a one month period were  $r = .80$  for the Anxiety Subscale and  $r = .83$  for the Avoidance Subscale, indicating that these subscales evidenced relative stability over time. Wei et al. (2007) also found support for appropriate construct validity with positive correlations between attachment anxiety and reassurance seeking and additional positive correlations between attachment avoidance and emotional cutoff.

*Inventory of Interpersonal Problems.* The Inventory of Interpersonal Problems (IIP-C; Alden, Wiggins, & Pincus, 1990) is a 64-item self-report measure that reflects a wide range of interpersonal difficulties. The IIP-C is a shortened and abbreviated version of the original 127-item IIP (Horowitz, Rosenberg, Baer, Ureno & Villasenor, 1988). The IIP was created based on actual presenting problems and interpersonal difficulties of clients seeking psychotherapy. The IIP-C was created based on the theoretical foundation of the interpersonal circumplex, which views individuals on a continuum with some mixture of two major dimensions; dominance and nurturance. Items were extracted from the 127-item IIP and used to for the IIP-C based on the strength of their relationship to these two main dimensions. Each item is rated on a 5-point Likert scale that ranges from *not at all (0)* to *extremely (4)*. A participant's subscale score can be defined as the mean of all of the ratings of items in that particular subscale with higher means corresponding to more distress within that specific scale. The considerable correlations found among the

subscales have been attributed to a general complaint factor, an individual's general tendency to report distress. In addition to a total IIP-C score that reflects general interpersonal distress, the IIP-C is further broken down into eight subscales: domineering, vindictive, cold, socially avoidant, nonassertive, exploitable, overly nurturant, and intrusive. Two different types of items are included in these scales; interpersonal behaviors that a person might have difficulty doing and interpersonal behaviors that one often does. Coefficient alphas across the subscales that comprise the IIP-C range from .72-.85. While the coefficient alpha for the IIP-C total was not reported, previous versions of the IIP have demonstrated an internal consistency of .93 (Horowitz et al., 1988). The IIP-C total and subscale scores were reported to have good test-retest reliability over a 10-week period (Alden et al., 1990). In the current study, only the total IIP-C score is used as a general indicator of interpersonal distress. The coefficient alpha for the current study was .97. Horowitz et al., (1988) reported sufficient evidence of construct validity by appropriate correlations with traits reflected in The UCLA Loneliness Scale, the Rathus Assertiveness Schedule, and the Interpersonal Dependency Inventory.

*The Outcome Questionnaire-45.2.* The Outcome Questionnaire-45.2 (OQ-45.2; Lambert, Burlingame, Umphress, Hansen, Vermeersch, Clouse, et al., 1996) is a self-report measure that consists of 45 items that are designed to assess overall psychological functioning. Each item is rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *not at all (0)* to *extremely (4)*. Higher scores on each scale indicate greater psychological symptoms for that particular facet of functioning, or greater overall psychological distress. This instrument is administered repeatedly over several therapy sessions for the purpose of tracking progress made during the psychotherapy process (Lambert et al., 2006). A total

overall psychological functioning score is calculated, as well as three additional subscales that provide information about functioning in specific areas: Symptom Distress, Interpersonal Relations, and Social Role Performance. In addition to using this measure for psychotherapy purposes, the OQ-45.2 has also been used to capture overall psychological distress in a variety of studies (Umphress, Lambert, Smart, Barlow & Clouse, 1997). The coefficient alpha for the overall psychological distress score was found to be .93, with a test-retest reliability alpha of .84 (Lambert et al., 1996). In the current study, only the overall psychological distress score is used as an indicator of symptom distress. The coefficient alpha for the current study is also .93. Positive correlations were found with measures that assess similar theoretical constructs, such as the Symptom Checklist 90 Revised (SCL-90-R), which lends support to the overall construct validity of the current instrument (Umphress et al., 1997).

*Trait Meta-Mood Scale.* The Trait Meta-Mood Scale (TMMS) is a 48-item self-report measure that was originally drawn from a larger item set constructed by Mayer, Marnberg and Volanth (1988) that broke down into five specific domains: emotional perception clarity, strategies of emotional regulation, integration of feelings, attention to emotions, and attitudes about emotion (see Appendix B). Salovey, Mayer, Goldman, Turvey and Palfai (1995) used an exploratory factor analysis to map these items in a three factor solution that reflect three primary domains of reflective mood experience that Mayer and Gaschke (1988) had described: attention to emotion, clarity of emotion and mood repair. Participants are asked to rate how much they agree with each item on a 5-point Likert scale that ranges from *strongly disagree (1)* to *strongly agree (5)*. Higher scores on each subscale indicate a higher level of functioning within that particular scale.

Salovey et al. (1995) reported the coefficient alpha for Attention was .86, Clarity .87, and Mood Repair .82. For the current study, the coefficient alpha for Attention was .82, Clarity .70, and Mood Repair .60. The Attention to emotions subscale is indicative of how aware one is about how they feel overall. A sample item is “I pay a lot of attention to how I feel.” The Clarity of emotions subscale is designed to tap how accurately one can identify and discern their various feelings and emotions. A sample item is “I am usually very clear about my feelings.” The Mood repair subscale is designed to measure one’s attempts at repairing unpleasant moods or maintaining pleasant ones. A sample item is “Although I am sometimes sad, I have a mostly optimistic outlook.” The TMMS has been found to have a positive correlation with similar theoretical constructs tapped in the Ambivalence Over Emotional Expressiveness scale (AEQ), the Self-Consciousness Scale (SCS) and the Expectancies for Negative Mood Regulation scale (NMR) (Salovey et al., 1995).

*Problem-Focused Style of Coping.* The problem-focused style of coping scale (PF-SOC; Heppner, Cook, Wright, & Johnson, 1995) comprises 18 items which captures how well people believe they are coping with a problem and working towards the resolution of that problem (see Appendix C). In particular, these items not only reflect actual coping activities, but also the consequences those activities might have that may be harmful or helpful to the person (Heppner et al., 1995). Each item is rated on a 5-point Likert scale that ranges from *almost never (1)* to *almost all of the time (5)*. The PF-SOC is broken down into three separate subscales which reflect a Reflective Style, a Reactive Style, and a Suppressive Style. In the present study, only the Reactive and Suppressive subscales were used because they are viewed as maladaptive strategies which are more

strongly associated with increased levels of distress. The Reactive subscale can be understood as a person's tendency to engage in responses to the stressor that then negatively affects the person's efforts to resolve their problem. A sample item is "I get preoccupied thinking about my problems and overemphasize some parts of them." The Suppressive subscale reflects the tendency towards denying one's problems and altogether giving up on making efforts that would bring one closer to solving the difficulty. A sample item is "I avoid even thinking about my problems."

Higher scores on either the Reactive or Suppressive subscales indicate higher levels of utilization of those specific problem-focused coping styles. In the current study, the coefficient alpha for the Reactive subscale was .68 while the Suppressive subscale was found to be .77. Heppner et al. (1995) reported that the coefficient alpha for the Reactive subscale was .73 while the Suppressive subscale was found to be .76. Test-retest correlations also appeared to range from .65-.71 over a 3 week period. The PF-SOC evidences solid construct validity and was found to be associated with scales that reflect more personal problems, depression, anxiety, and overall maladjustment (Heppner et al., 1995).

## Analysis

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was utilized in order to test the overall fit of the proposed model. Latent variable SEM was utilized in order to test the overall hypothesis, which was a model in which attachment relates to both EI and coping which then relates to both psychological and interpersonal distress (See Figure 1.1). Attachment Anxiety and Attachment Avoidance were analyzed as observed variables. Previous statistical approaches often break these two constructs up separately due to the fact that they are often orthogonal in nature (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998). Estimates in the current study reflect their low correlational relationship ( $r = .22$ ), which provides further evidence that these constructs would best be represented as two separate observed variables. Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) two-step approach for latent variable SEM was performed in order to analyze the proposed models. First, the measurement model was tested in order to see how well it fit the data (see Figure 1.2). Subsequently, the structural model was tested (Figure 1.1) and paths were re-specified as necessary based upon the results of my model. Alternative models were then tested in order to ascertain a model that best represents the data as well as to assess the various theoretical underpinnings of the related constructs. More specifically, one alternative hypothesis that was tested was whether a model (Model B, See Figure 4.2) specifying EI as a predecessor to coping in the link between attachment and distress is better supported. Another alternative model (Model C, See Figure 4.3) that was tested was whether or not anxious and avoidant attachment styles relate uniquely to the different aspects of EI and coping. Model fit indices will be used in order to compare models and determine optimal data fit. Specifically, model comparisons will be analyzed by noting the change in chi-square

( $\Delta\chi^2$ ) statistical information. The statistical significance of the standardized coefficients will also provide information on how the variables relate to one another. Relationships amongst variables that do not display statistical significance will be removed from the model.

AMOS (Version 17.0) was used to test the overall model in order to assess optimal model fit of the data (Arbuckle, 2008). Amos software utilizes a maximum likelihood method which calculates estimates of the parameters. Generally, the overall fit of an SEM is initially determined by the chi-square statistic ( $\chi^2$ ), which is the most common fit index. However, this statistic can be influenced by the sample size of a particular study. Especially with smaller samples, even misspecified models can produce appropriate chi-square values, leading to acceptance of poor models. Thus, a number of other fit indices are commonly used to provide additional information on the adequacy of fit for proposed models. Fit indices that have been demonstrated to be good indicators of fit are the Comparative fit index (CFI), The Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), the Root-Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), and the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC), all of which were reported for the current study. Specifically, smaller chi-square values assert better fit, and values approaching 1.00 suggest a better fit for CFI, GFI, and TLI. RMSEAS below .05 are preferred, SRMR values below .08, and lower AIC levels, all of which suggest better model fit. In addition to using model fit indices to analyze and compare models, the standardized coefficient values will also provide information on which paths should be

kept in order to best represent the relationships of the variables. Therefore, all of the models in the current study will be guided by a combination of both theoretical and empirical information.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

#### Structural Equation Modeling

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was utilized in order to test the overall hypothesis using *AMOS* (Version 17.0) statistical software (Arbuckle, 2008). In addition, multivariate normality was tested in order to estimate the appropriate skew and kurtosis values. Kline (2005) advises the use of the absolute values of the standardized index values for skew and kurtosis. A skew index with an absolute value greater than 3.0 and a kurtosis index with an absolute value greater than 10.0 will also reflect problems with multivariate normality. In the present study, all of the variables appeared to satisfy the requirements for multivariate normality.

The sample ( $N = 233$ ) contained missing data and in an effort to acquire meaningful and interpretable results, methods to address the missing data were utilized. Researchers and statisticians urge against using imputation of the mean (Arminger, Clogg, & Sobel, 1995; Rubins & Little, 1987). Imputing the means can substantially decrease the variance since the same value is being replaced for every single case that is missing for that variable. This may also result in biased estimates and correlations based on the faulty notion that participants and values that are missing will be similar to participants and values that are valid (Arminger, Clogg, & Sobel, 1995). Listwise and pairwise deletion of cases has also been cited as a poor practice of dealing with missing values (Little & Rubin, 1987). Deleting cases may result in a loss of power. In addition, deletion of cases can result in systematic errors and biased estimates, especially if the deleted cases are not missing randomly (Little & Rubins, 1987). In addition, although

single imputation methods appear to be more useful than deletion of cases and mean imputation, they appear to not take into account the relationship of the values of the different correlates. In addition, they also seem to underestimate the degree of variability in the values among subjects (Steyerberg, 2008).

Multiple imputation methods have been cited as often more accurate and useful (Arminger, Clogg, & Sobel, 1995; Little & Rubins, 1987; Steyerberg, 2008). Multiple imputation actually replaces the missing values with  $m > 1$  simulated datasets, where  $m$  is often fairly small and can be dependent on the percentage of missing data (Steyerberg, 2008). Analysis combines the results of the multiple, simulated datasets in order to provide a final analysis with missing values imputed. This method is advanced in that it is able to capture the “natural variability” that is present in the missing data values. This is done by the creation of values that have their basis in variables that have correlations with the actual missing values. This method also controls for “uncertainty” that results when one attempts to estimate missing data values since different versions of the missing values are created and overall analysis occurs on the relationship of these different dataset versions. Therefore, due to the overwhelming majority of statisticians that point out the benefits and superiority of multiple imputation, multiple stochastic regression imputation (Little & Rubin, 2002) was utilized in order to address the missing values in the current dataset. Multiple stochastic regression imputation is unique in that it randomly draws from the conditional distribution of the values that are missing. Parameters that are unknown are set equal to their maximum-likelihood estimates.

When utilizing multiple stochastic regression imputation methods, it is important to consider the number of imputations to perform. According to Arminger, Clogg, &

Sobel (1995) only a small number of imputations are needed. Rubins (1987) points out that gains which result from using multiple imputations appear to decrease as one increases the actual number of imputations. According to Steyerberg (2008) and Rubin and Little (1987) there is a relationship between the percent of data missing for a variable and how many imputations one might request. Steyerberg (2008) concluded from examining studies using multiple imputations that "the number of imputations can be as low as 3 for data with 20% missingness" (p. 126). Consequently, a missing values analysis was run on all of the variables. The missing values analysis revealed a range of missing data from 1.3%-17.6%. It is likely that the variable with 17.6% missingness was due to this measure being the longest measure in the packet that was given. Given the percent missingness, multiple stochastic regression imputation was utilized and a total of the 3 imputations were computed given the percentage of missing data for each variable. In addition, means, standard deviations and zero-order correlations were analyzed and can be found in Tables 4.1 and 4.2.

#### Measurement Model

As advised by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), a two-step approach was taken in order to test the fit of the proposed model in the current study. The first model tested was the a priori measurement model (See Figure 1.2). It is only when the measurement model exemplifies an adequate fit that one can proceed to test and analyze the structural model. Utilizing the maximum likelihood method, AMOS provided multiple indices to test the baseline measurement model. AIC levels were reported for models that were not nested. Models with lower AIC values represent better fitting models.

Fit indices for the hypothesized baseline measurement model indicated reasonable to marginal fit,  $\chi^2(19, N = 233) = 128.064, p = .000$ ; TLI = .939; CFI = .938; RMSEA = .091 (.076, .106); SRMR = .047. The Chi square and RMSEA indices indicate marginal fit, while the TLI, CFI, and SRMR indicate reasonable/adequate fit. In addition, each of the observed variables loaded significantly on their corresponding latent variable (See Table 4.3). These significant loadings signal that the latent variables were measured correctly by their observed variables. In addition, all of the latent variables (in addition to the observed variables for anxious and avoidant attachment) in the model were significantly correlated with each other (See Table 4.4). With adequate fit, the measurement model was able to then be used in order to test the subsequent structural model.

#### Structural Model

The fit for the proposed structural model (Model A) reflected adequate to reasonable model fit (See Figure 1.1),  $\chi^2(21, N = 233) = 144.909, p = .000$ ; TLI = .879; CFI = .929; RMSEA = .092 (.078, .106); SRMR = .049. Post-hoc specifications were also performed and modification indices as well as the standardized residual covariance matrix were examined. Upon further analysis of the data, the error terms for attention to emotion and reactive coping and attention to emotion and suppressive coping appeared to share unique covariances. In addition, there is evidence in the literature that the relationship between attention to emotion and coping may also be somewhat unclear. In some cases attention to emotion can lead individuals to feel as though they have even more threats they will need to cope with, yet in other circumstances attention to emotions has been found to help individuals to feel as though their stressors are actually less

threatening and coping efforts may not be activated at the same level (Goldman, Kraemer, & Salovey, 1996; Salovey, Stroud, & Woolery, 2002). The inconsistency between the above constructs may be related to coping and attention to emotion in fact being related to an additional construct that is not in the current study. Due to the literature in regards to attention to emotion and coping as well as the lack of literature in specific relation to reactive and suppressive coping and attention to emotion (this appears to be the first study to examine these constructs together), data and theory support the covariance of these unique error variances terms (See Figure 4.1). Hence, the covariation of attention to emotion and reactive and suppressive coping resulted in a better fitting structural model  $\chi^2(19, N = 233) = 99.316, p = .000; TLI = .913; CFI = .954; RMSEA = .078 (.063, .093); SRMR = .045$ .

Alternative models were tested in order to systematically uncover a structural model that appropriately represented the accurate relationships amongst the variables. Prior research has not considered how both emotional intelligence and coping style might affect the attachment-distress link when together in the same model. Although the current study has attempted to undertake this task, it is useful to also test for the most parsimonious model. Given the literature suggesting that EI may be a necessary predecessor to coping styles, alternative Model B was proposed (See Figure 4.2). Both paths from insecure attachment to coping styles were set to equal zero as was the path from EI to distress. The structural model was then run again and model fit was assessed. The comparison of Model A and Model B revealed that Model B fit significantly worse than Model A,  $\Delta\chi^2(3, N = 233) = 106.46, p < .01$ . Model A was thus retained.

Upon further analysis of Model A, the paths from anxious attachment to EI and avoidant attachment to coping were not statistically significant. As previously stated, certain regulation strategies may be more important for individuals with attachment anxiety whereas other strategies might capture an avoidantly attached individual (Lopez, Mauricio, Gormley, Simko, & Berger, 2001; Lopez, Mitchell, & Gormley, 2002; Wei, Vogel, Ku, & Zakalik, 2005). Therefore, based on these theoretical and empirical findings, Model C (See Figure 4.3) posited anxious attachment with a direct path to coping style and avoidant attachment with a direct path to emotional intelligence. The paths from anxiety to emotional intelligence and from avoidance to coping were constrained to zero and Models A and C were compared,  $\Delta \chi^2(2, N = 233) = 1.02, p = .501$ . Since the  $\Delta \chi^2$  was not statistically significant, this means that the less complex model (Model C) fit about the same as the more complex model. Simpler models are preferred when they fit about the same as the more complex models, hence Model C was retained. Model B and Model C were also compared. Model B and Model C are not nested models, therefore their AIC values were compared. Model B fit significantly worse than Model C according to the AIC model fit indices and Model C was the retained structural model for the current study (See Table 4.5). All of the paths in Model C reached statistical significance and estimates for the retained structural model can be found in Table 4.6.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION

#### Synopsis of Findings

The current study investigated the unique relationships of emotional intelligence and coping styles in relation to a well-established attachment-distress link. Although previous research has investigated various emotion and coping variables in relation to attachment and distress, no study has considered a comprehensive model of emotional intelligence in combination with coping styles. In terms of the overall results, the findings of the current study provide evidence for my initial hypothesis. The presence of an insecure attachment style leads to lower levels of emotional intelligence and higher levels of maladaptive coping efforts which further heightens distress levels. These findings are consistent with previous research that has found an effect of insecure attachment on coping (Fuendeling, 1998; Lopez, Mauricio, Gormley, Simko, & Berger, 2001; Lopez, Mitchell, & Gormley, 2002) and emotional intelligence (Kafetsios, 2004; Kim, 2005; McCarthy, Moller, & Fouladi, 2001), an effect of emotional intelligence on coping style (Downey, Johnston, Hansen, Birney & Stough, 2010; MacCann, Fogarty, Zeidner, & Roberts, 2011) and an effect of emotional intelligence and coping style on distress (Heppner, Cook, Wright, & Johnson, 1995; Heppner & Lee, 2002; Salovey, Stroud, Woolery, & Epel, 2002; Wei, Heppner, & Mallinckrodt, 2003; Wei, Heppner, Russell, & Young, 2006). These findings also support previous research that asserted the importance of coping style in the attachment-distress link (Lopez & Brennan, 2000; Lopez, Mauricio, Gormley, Simko, & Berger; Wei, Heppner, & Mallinckrodt, 2003). However, the purpose

of this study was to develop a comprehensive attachment-distress model, including emotional intelligence and coping. This model adds to the literature particularly by evidencing that both emotional intelligence and coping styles were important in understanding the link between attachment style and distress.

Although the overall hypothesis was supported, the ways in which insecure attachment style related to EI and coping appeared to depart from the initial hypothesis. As hypothesized, the findings of this study assert that insecure attachment has direct effects on both emotional intelligence and coping. However, of particular importance appears to be that a specific type of insecure attachment style may predispose an individual to struggle more so with either emotional intelligence abilities or with their coping style. Specifically, attachment anxiety related to coping style and avoidant attachment related to emotional intelligence. This finding has also been supported by previous research (Lopez, Mitchell, & Gormley, 2002; Lopez, Mauricio, Gormley, Simko, & Berger, 2001; Wei, Heppner, and Mallinckrodt, 2003). For an anxious individual, their predisposition towards rumination affects their tendency to cope with their difficulty by utilizing maladaptive strategies such as reactive and suppressive styles instead of active problem-solving approaches. Specifically, the current study found that individuals with anxious attachment tend to misread other people, display impulsiveness, and avoid thinking about their problems. These kinds of approaches represent passive coping strategies that do not bring the individual any closer to resolving their difficulty. In order to fully understand the experience of an individual with an anxious attachment style, it will be important to continue to pay attention to the way in which they cope with

day-to-day problems and the coping strategies (or lack thereof) that they typically engage in.

Furthermore, current findings in regard to avoidant attachment are also supported by previous research. Exhibiting an avoidant attachment style which utilizes tactics such as denial and suppression, has a strong negative impact on one's ability to appropriately attend, be clear, and manage one's emotions (Mallinckrodt, King, & Coble, 1998; Mallinckrodt & Wei, 2005; Mikulincer & Orbach, 1995). For an avoidant individual, their experience of discomfort with dependence and intimacy directly affects whether they will possess and utilize emotional intelligence abilities. Specifically, the current study found that individuals with avoidant attachment are less likely to repair their emotional experiences and less likely to be aware of and able to distinguish which emotion is being felt. In order to more fully understand the experience of an individual with an avoidant attachment style, it will be important to continue to note their levels of emotional awareness, their abilities to understand which emotion they are currently feeling, and their abilities to repair their moods.

The notion that insecure attachment styles have unique relationships with both emotional intelligence and coping has been a recent debate in the attachment-distress literature. Previous research has cited the need for further investigation of unique, specific attachment styles utilizing distinct regulatory functions in order to manage stressors (Wei, Vogel, Ku, & Zakalik, 2005). There has been mixed support of this notion, however. In certain studies an anticipated distinct link between insecure attachment styles and awareness of one's emotions did not seem to hold true (Mallinckrodt & Wei, 2005), whereas the opposite was found for a different set of

emotional tendencies (Wei, Vogel, Ku, & Zakalik, 2005). Similar Kafetsios' (2004) findings, it will be important to continue to elucidate under which circumstances the kind of insecure attachment style might matter in terms of one's tendency to utilize regulatory functions to cope with overwhelming demands. This has important counseling implications because if one can identify distinct sets of regulatory deficits for each unique attachment style, therapists and psychologists can begin to target their therapy goals and their treatment plans most effectively. For example, upon identification that an individual operates from an avoidant attachment style, psychologists may want to specifically assess EI abilities. Results from this assessment can be used to implement strategies and tools in which to enhance those emotional intelligence indices that are low. Individuals with avoidant attachment might benefit most from becoming more familiar with the function of their emotions, as well as obtaining skills in familiarizing themselves with their own emotional systems. Furthermore, instead of focusing on an anxious individuals' emotional intelligence abilities, it may be more useful to spend the time focusing on their tendencies to cope in reactive or suppressive ways and assisting them in developing additional problem-solving alternatives.

Further fueling the debate, previous research and theory has conceptualized emotional intelligence correlates and coping activities underneath an overarching affect regulation umbrella (Fuendeling, 1998). In other words, emotional intelligence variables and coping variables are both viewed as managing one's attempt to reach a more enjoyable state of mind. One major reason for this lies in the current findings as well as previous research supporting that emotional intelligence and various coping styles are inextricably linked (Matthews and Zeidner, 2000). For example, similar to problem-

focused coping, one's likelihood to utilize emotion-focused coping has been found to depend on one's emotional intelligence abilities (Austin, Saklofske and Mastoras, 2010; Mikolajczak et al., 2008). Emotion focused coping (i.e. venting feelings, positive thinking) has been described as various strategies that one employs in order to decrease any negative feelings one may experience when attempting to cope with a problem or threat (Carver, 1994). Specifically, the more emotional intelligence abilities one has, the less likely they were to utilize emotion-focused coping and the more likely they are to utilize problem-focused coping. Therefore, it is clear that emotional intelligence abilities play a crucial role in a variety of coping activities. Given these clear associations, future research that wishes to capture a comprehensive understanding of the attachment-distress relationship will want to include both EI and coping in their conceptualization.

The current study contributes a model that highlights that attention to emotion shares a unique relationship with both reactive and suppressive styles of coping. While previous research has not investigated perceived emotional intelligence in relationship to reactive and suppressive coping style, findings in relation to EI and coping may provide clues to the relatedness amongst these variables that was evident in the structural model. The current study found that the more one attended to their emotions, the less likely they were to utilize maladaptive problem-focused coping styles. This finding sheds light on previous research which has found mixed results with attention to emotion and one's coping abilities. Attention to emotions appears to serve as a conduit for perceiving events as even more threatening (Salovey, Stroud, Woolery, & Epel, 2002) yet in other instances, attention to emotion has had a habituation effect, where stressors appear to become less threatening (Matthews, Zeidner, & Roberts, 2002). If a person appears to be

hyperaware of their emotions, this may impede one's abilities to effectively cope with the problem at hand. In addition, an individual who does not attend very much to their emotions may lack the clues that a problem is present, and the activation of coping strategies may not ensue. These processes are important to continue to understand because gauging a person's ability to attend to their emotions may help them to understand why and how their coping efforts prove ineffective. Helping a person to become familiar with where their problem-solving goes awry is the first step to helping them build new skills and capabilities that assist them in improving problem-solving abilities.

One of the strengths of the current study reflects the way each construct was captured. It was important to capture one's own perceptions of their attachment styles, emotional abilities, coping styles, and distress levels. The reason their perception was so important is because one's view of their current circumstances and capabilities carries with it important implications for their relationships with self, others, and their ability to function in various environments and conditions (Cherniss, 2000). For example, a person's belief that they are adept at ascertaining what they are feeling in certain instances increases their self-efficacy in relation to their emotional experiences and increases accuracy in the future. Furthermore, subjective tests that measure one's perceptions of their abilities have been shown to translate into behavioral indices that reflect accuracy of one's perceptions. For example, people who reported devoting greater attention to their emotions appeared to pay more attention to the emotion words in a Stroop task (Coffey, Berenbaum, & Kerns, 2003). This finding supports the notion that self-report questionnaires that ask participants to report their perceived emotional

capabilities can accurately reflect reality. Therefore, while there are many reputable ways to measure emotional intelligence, there is strong evidence that prediction and explanation of emotion-laden constructs is uniquely understood through a person's perception of their own internal experiences (Wester, Vogel, Pressly, & Heesacker, 2002).

### Limitations

In the current study, the model trimming approach was taken. This can be viewed as a limitation due to the fact that models were tested in addition to the one that was initially hypothesized. However, substantive theory informed all of the models that were generated, and therefore there was firm theoretical and empirical support for the models investigated. In addition, method variance has the potential to be seen as a possible problem due to the fact that all of the measures given were self-report in nature. However, the current study was focusing on a person's perceived abilities and tendencies. In this way, self-report data is crucial in uncovering the links amongst these constructs. Additionally, a large portion of the sample consisted of White, undergraduate, college students. It is important not to generalize the current findings to other populations such as various racial/ethnic groups and older adults. Lastly, coefficient alpha levels for the two insecure attachments constructs were low, as were the alpha levels for two of the EI subscales (Clarity and Repair). Reasons for this may lie in the fact that the sample consisted of emerging adults. The emerging adult demographic is often struggling with developmental issues that involve intimacy, identity, and emotional development (Berger, 2007). Therefore, it is possible that there could be a greater range in responses as these young adults are focusing on these topics

currently. Alternatively, it is possible that the lower than expected reliability is a result of the use of the shortened version of the ECR-S, which has been associated with lower reliability coefficients than the full version (Wei, Russell, Mallinckrodt, & Vogel, 2007). Future studies analyzing these relationships may wish to include the original version of the ECR-S. Low reliability of a measure has the potential to impact the estimates of that measure with other variables. This process may result in the underestimation of relationships amongst study variables (Schmitt, 1996). However, the current study resulted in a number of well-fitting models. This is important to note because the findings of the study resulted in significant relationships despite some of the measures displaying less than preferred reliability estimates. Thus it is quite possible that the relations among these constructs are even stronger than our current findings.

#### Implications for Future Research

Similar to Kafetsios (2004), future research may wish to investigate the current model utilizing the attachment styles set forth by Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) which specifies additional insecure attachment types (i.e. dismissing-avoidants, fearful avoidants, etc). Given the findings of this study which point to insecure attachment styles uniquely relating to both EI and coping, it is of interest to investigate how additional insecure styles relate to the combined effect of EI and coping on distress levels. In addition, future research may wish to incorporate more objective measurements of emotional intelligence abilities when investigating attachment and distress (Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, & Sitarenios, 2003). While self-report EI reflects one's perception of their emotional intelligence abilities, objective forms of EI can reflect one's actual emotional intelligence potential. It may be of interest to determine if the perception

of someone's EI significantly contributes to how attachment style affects distress levels or if one's actual EI potential has more of an effect on the attachment-distress relationship. Furthermore, given EI's association with emotion-focused coping, future researchers may want to hypothesize the combined effect of EI and emotion-focused coping on attachment-distress models.

Having a more thorough understanding of the relationship among EI and problem-focused coping will be important. Specifically, investigation is needed to further assess the relationship that was found between attention to emotion and its relationship to maladaptive coping efforts. It is possible that the mental health status of an individual may shed some light on the relationships that were found amongst these constructs. For example, an individual who is depressed may not be in the habit of attending to their emotions, and this may affect the possibility that coping strategies might not be activated. On the other hand, an individual who suffers from anxiety may be particularly attentive to their emotional cues to the point that they are not able to engage in useful coping practices. It will be useful for future research to continue to investigate trait-like dispositions in which attention to emotion might lend itself toward a more maladaptive and passive coping strategy.

Future research may also want to examine the current model with more of a well-being approach. Previous research has evidenced important links amongst attachment and its effects on adaptive coping and well-being (Landen and Wang, 2010; Zhang and Labouvie-Vief, 2004). Psychologists' primary efforts have often been targeted on alleviating deficits and distress of individuals. However, focusing on positive approaches such as assisting individuals in building up their strengths is a more recent approach that

some assert will help alleviate the very distress we are attempting to elucidate (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). For example, instead of focusing on insecure attachment one might want to focus on secure attachment, adaptive coping styles instead of maladaptive ones, and perhaps a well-being outcome instead of a distress one.

Lastly, similar to Heppner (2008) and Park, Heppner, and Lee's (2010) viewpoint, future research may want to consider how individuals manage and cope with distress in different ways while taking racial, cultural and gender differences into account. Previous research has found that low EI moreso predicted maladjustment in females over males (Bindu and Thomas, 2006). Women have also been found to possess higher EI when compared to their male counterparts (Van Rooy, Dilchert, Vlswesvaran, & Ones, 2006). Gender also appeared to be linked to various EI and coping efforts found in Bahraini adolescents (Alumran and Punamaki, 2008). Research on adolescents from China and Korea explored how parenting practices rooted in East Asian culture may affect emotional intelligence abilities. The results point out a significant association between cultural parenting practices (i.e. familial hierarchy, "saving face," etc.) and the EI of those adolescents exposed to the parenting practices (Sung, 2010). In addition, the actual construct of EI looked different for individuals from Germany and India as evidenced by different factor structures for the construct depending on the cultural background of the participants (Sharma, Deller, Biswal, & Mandal, 2009). Racial/ethnic differences in EI have also been cited in Mexicans, African Americans, Latino Americans, and Whites (Joseph and Newman, 2010; Martines, Fernandez-Berrocal, & Extremera, 2006). Therefore, one's emotional intelligence and coping styles may affect the attachment-distress relationship differently for various gender and ethnic/racial groups in addition to

individuals possessing intersecting identities. Since one's perception partly depends on the cultural and societal context in which one was raised, the current model may look differently for various ethnic and gender groups.

The results of the current study have important implications for the field of psychology. Given the observed importance of EI and coping, continuous development and participation in EI and coping training programs will be useful for individuals experiencing distress. Slaski and Cartwright (2003) recruited individuals to participate in an emotional intelligence training program which exposed them to emotional intelligence skills and allowed them to practice these skills in order to ensure learning occurred. Results of the training indicated not only increased EI scores but increased well-being. Along the same vein, making an effort to train counselors, supervisors, and educators in EI and coping skills appears a worthy endeavor. In fact, requiring the addition of an EI and coping style training in counseling graduate programs might be particularly useful.

In conclusion, the current study evidences that insecure attachment leads to lower levels of emotional intelligence and higher levels of maladaptive coping which leads to higher distress levels. The results further highlight the importance and relevance of considering both emotional intelligence and coping styles in the investigation of the attachment-distress relationship. The current study also suggests that emotional intelligence and coping uniquely relate to various forms of insecure attachment. Coping style becomes more important for anxiously attached individuals while emotional intelligence is significant for individuals with avoidant attachment. The results support previous calls for research that focuses on the unique needs of individuals who evidence different forms of attachment styles (Wei, Vogel, Ku, & Zakalik, 2005). These results

also suggest explicit interventions for counseling populations who evidence either an anxious or an avoidant attachment style. It is hoped that the current findings can assist psychologists who are performing brief therapy to target their treatment goals in a quick and effective manner. By identifying skills and strategies that insecurely attached individuals typically utilize, psychologists can identify strengths and areas for improvement in an effort to decrease the distress experienced by clients.

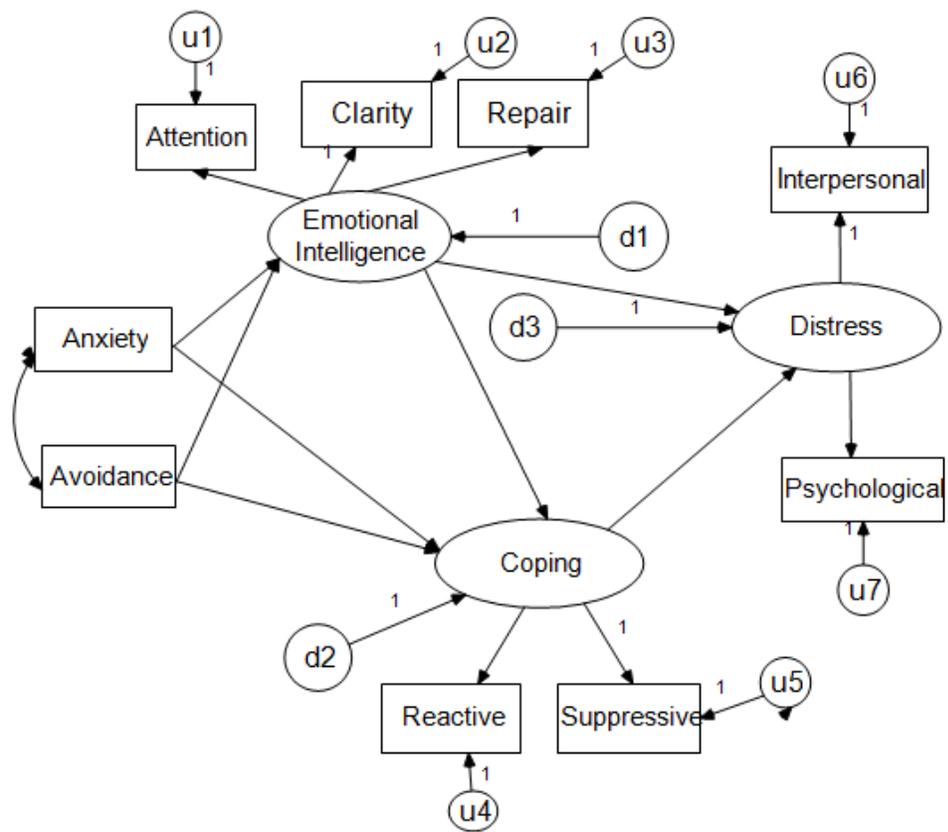


Figure 1.1. The hypothesized structural model

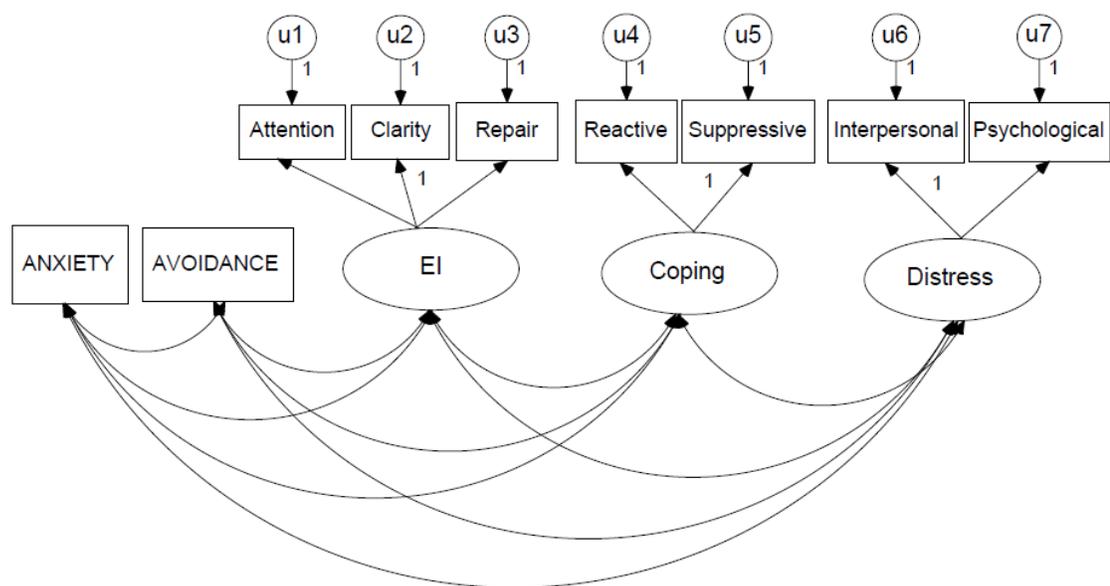


Figure 1.2. The hypothesized measurement model.

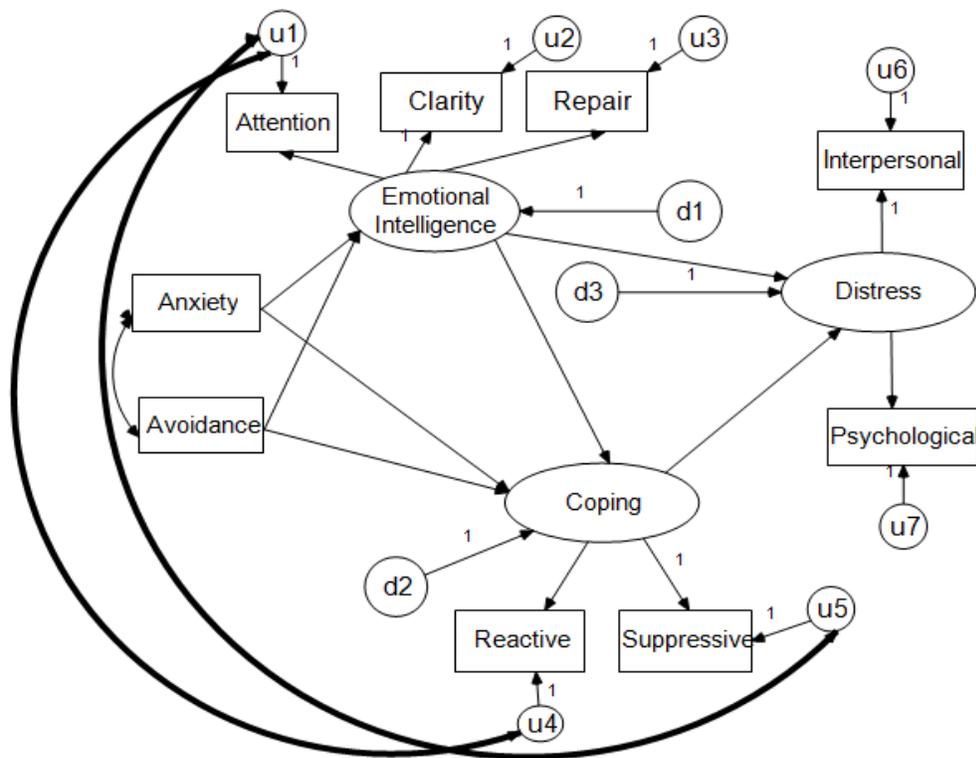


Figure 4.1. The respecified structural model (Model A).

Bold paths represent covariation among attention to emotion and coping styles.

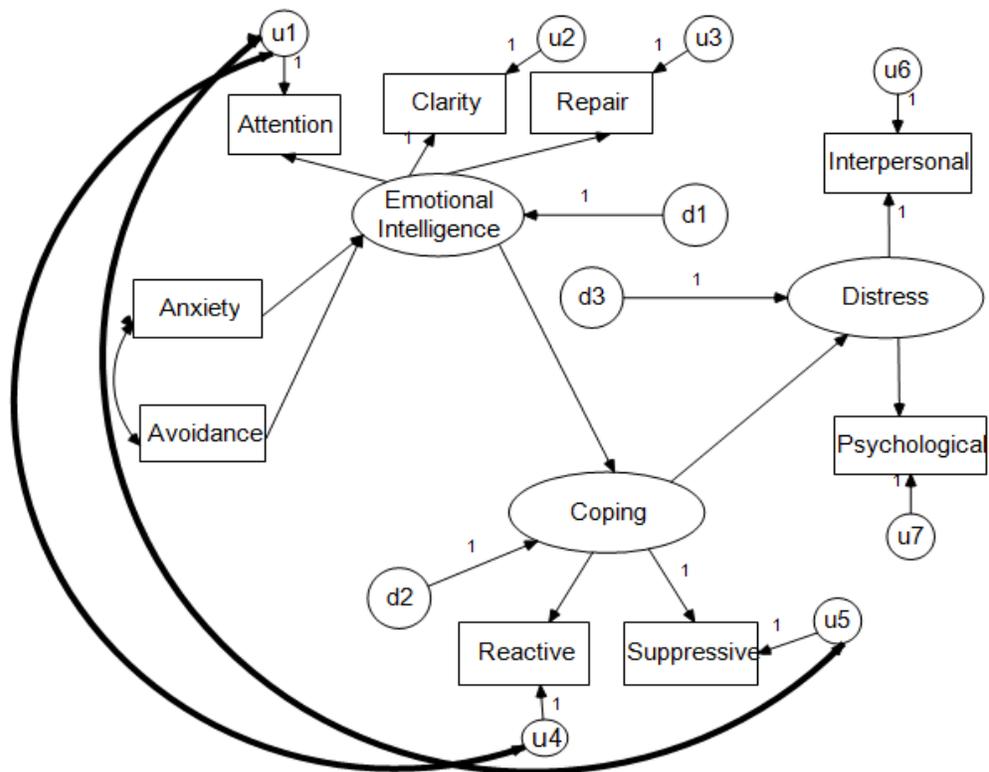


Figure 4.2. The alternative structural model (Model B).

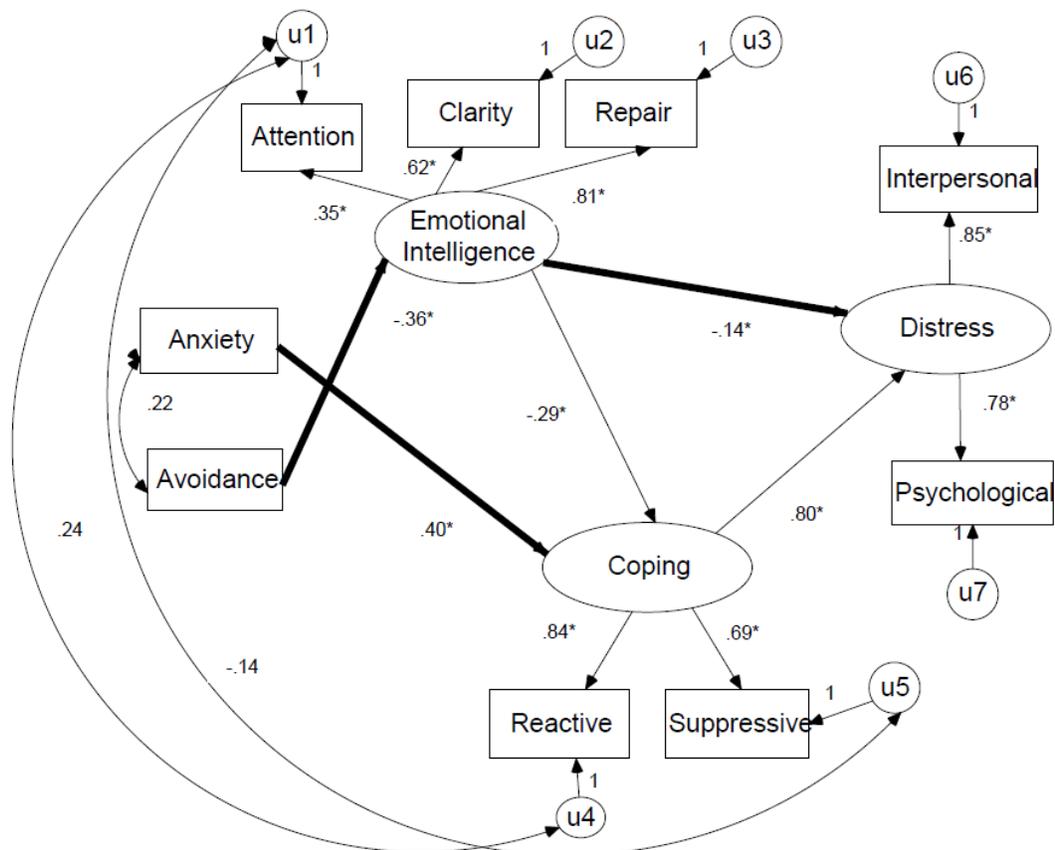


Figure 4.3. The retained structural model (Model C).

\* $p < .001$

Table 4.1.  
*Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables*

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>Anxiety</b>	22.93	6.44
<b>Avoidance</b>	23.95	7.70
<b>Attention</b>	48.54	8.06
<b>Clarity</b>	34.61	6.04
<b>Repair</b>	19.3	4.21
<b>Reactive</b>	13.19	3.64
<b>Suppressive</b>	13.2	4.30
<b>Psychological Distress</b>	53.49	33.83
<b>Interpersonal Distress</b>	133.00	25.81

Table 4.2.  
*Correlations Between Variables*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Anxiety	—								
2. Avoidance	.225**	—							
3. Attention	.086	-.064	—						
4. Clarity	-.098	-.266	.241**	—					
5. Repair	-.085	-.284	.262**	.518**	—				
6. Reactive	.404**	.203**	-.023	-.134*	-.212**	—			
7. Suppressive	.238**	.185**	-.261**	-.191**	-.160*	.573**	—		
8. Psychological Distress	.334**	.159*	-.195**	-.152*	-.299**	.543**	.425**	—	
9. Interpersonal Distress	.221**	.148*	-.280**	-.112	-.193**	.570**	.551**	.612**	---

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

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

Table 4.3.  
*Factor Loading for the Measurement Model*

Indicators and Latent Variables	Unstandardized Factor Loading	Standard Error	Critical Ratio	<i>p</i>	Standardized Factor Loading
Attention ← Emotional Intelligence	.762	.100	7.613	***	.358
Clarity ← Emotional intelligence	1.000				.625
Repair ← Emotional Intelligence	.885	.086	10.312	***	.799
Reactive ← Coping	1.016	.059	17.334	***	.827
Suppressive ← Coping	1.000				.694
Psychological ← Distress	.708	.035	20.068	***	.782
Interpersonal ← Distress	1.000				.847

*Note.* \*\*\*0.001 significance level (two-tailed).

Table 4.4.  
*Latent and Observed Variable Correlations for the Measurement Model*

Variable Name	Unstandardized Factor Loading	Standard Error	Critical Ratio	<i>p</i>	Standardized Factor Loading
Anxiety ↔ Distress	61.742	8.392	7.358	***	.327
Anxiety ↔ Coping	8.664	.958	9.041	***	.455
Anxiety ↔ Emotional Intelligence	-2.321	1.099	-2.111	0.035	-.096
Anxiety ↔ Avoidance	10.871	1.913	5.684	***	.220
Avoidance ↔ Distress	33.691	9.599	3.510	***	.150
Avoidance ↔ Coping	5.989	1.042	5.747	***	.264
Avoidance ↔ Emotional Intelligence	-10.470	1.536	-6.817	***	-.362
Emotional Intelligence ↔ Coping	-3.472	.652	-5.328	***	-.311
Emotional Intelligence ↔ Distress	-45.151	6.632	-6.808	***	-.408
Coping ↔ Distress	74.384	6.059	12.276	***	.856

*Note.* \*\*\*0.001 significance level (two-tailed).

Table 4.5  
*Summary of Model Fit Indices*

Model	$\chi^2$	<i>df</i>	CFI/TLI	RMSE A	CI for RMSEA	SRMR	AIC	Models compared	$\Delta\chi^2$
A	99.316	19	.954/.913	.078	.063-.093				
B	205.778	22	.895/.829	.109	.096-.123	.092		B vs. A	106.46*
C	100.337	21	.955/.923	.074	.059-.088	.045		C vs. A	1.02
C	100.337	21	.955/.923	.074	.059-.088	.045	166.337/269.778	C vs. B	

*Note.* \* $p < .01$

Table 4.6.  
*Factor Loading for the Retained Structural Model*

Indicators and Latent Variables	Unstandardized Factor Loading	Standard Error	Critical Ratio	<i>p</i>	Standardized Factor Loading
Emotional Intelligence					
←Avoidance	-.174	.024	-7.279	***	-.357
Coping ← Anxiety	.183	.019	9.751	***	.404
Coping ← Emotional Intelligence	-.220	.039	-5.641	***	-.284
Distress ← Emotional Intelligence	-1.102	.324	-3.397	***	-.141
Distress ← Coping	8.077	.542	14.906	***	.803
Attention ← Emotional Intelligence	.741	.098	7.561	***	.347
Clarity ← Emotional intelligence	1.000				.621
Repair ← Emotional Intelligence	.900	.088	10.217	***	.807
Reactive ← Coping	1.062	.061	17.317	***	.843
Suppressive ← Coping	1.000				.687
Psychological ← Distress	.708	.035	19.999	***	.782
Interpersonal ← Distress	1.000				.846

*Note.* \*\*\*0.001 significance level (two-tailed).

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