

5-3-2014

Expressive Writing as a Manipulation to Reduce Test Anxiety

Chelsea Kiehl

Valparaiso University, chelsea.kiehl@valpo.edu

Brittney Groulx

Valparaiso University

Torrie Decker

Valparaiso University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.valpo.edu/cus>

Recommended Citation

Kiehl, Chelsea; Groulx, Brittney; and Decker, Torrie, "Expressive Writing as a Manipulation to Reduce Test Anxiety" (2014).
Symposium on Undergraduate Research and Creative Expression (SOURCE). 336.
<https://scholar.valpo.edu/cus/336>

This Poster Presentation is brought to you for free and open access by the Office of Sponsored and Undergraduate Research at ValpoScholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in Symposium on Undergraduate Research and Creative Expression (SOURCE) by an authorized administrator of ValpoScholar. For more information, please contact a ValpoScholar staff member at scholar@valpo.edu.

Expressive Writing as a Manipulation to Reduce Test Anxiety

Chelsea Kiehl, Brittney Groulx, Torrie Decker

Departmental Affiliation: Psychology
College of Arts and Sciences

Students of all ages struggle with test anxiety. Not only does this anxiety affect the mental well-being of a student but it can also impair test performance. Previous research has found that expressive writing about the feelings a student may have before an exam can significantly reduce test anxiety. Prior experiments were carried out in a laboratory setting and without serious consequences for participants. These conditions do not clarify whether the results found could be helpful for a typical university exam. The goal of this study is to determine whether this manipulation can help students at Valparaiso University. Before exam day, chemistry students were asked to fill out questionnaires about their anxiety. On the day of the exam, students were randomly assigned to either write expressively about their feelings regarding the exam or write factually about the previous day's events for ten minutes. After the writing manipulation, all students took the chemistry exam. We predict that test scores will be higher for students in the expressive writing group than students in the control group. Furthermore, we predict that the manipulation will be more effective for students who experience higher test anxiety than for students who experience lower anxiety.

Information about the Authors:

Chelsea Kiehl is a junior psychology pre-med major with minors in biology and chemistry as well as a Christ College student. She is a member of Psi Chi, Psychology Honor Society, and Alpha Epsilon Delta, Pre-Medical Arts Honor Society. Chelsea plans to attend medical school for pediatric and adolescent psychiatry. Brittney Groulx is a sophomore exercise science major with minors in human biology and psychology. She is a member of the bowling team. Brittney is planning on attending graduate school for occupational therapy specializing in pediatrics and adolescents. Torrie Decker is a senior psychology major with minors in physical education and coaching. She is a previous honors undergraduate student at Robert Morris University in Chicago with an associates' degree in fitness and health. Torrie plans on attending graduate school for sports psychiatry. This project is part of a research mentor class being held in the Psychology Department this spring.

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Jennifer Winquist

Student Contact: chelsea.kiehl@valpo.edu