Gratitude as a Moderator for the Relation Between Relationship Quality and Social-Emotional Competence in Opportunity Youth

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Previous research has investigated the positive outcomes associated with having strong relationships and the additional benefits of experiencing gratitude, but little research has been conducted on whether they relate to social-emotional competence. Opportunity youth, youth aged 15-26 at-risk or experiencing homelessness and accessing services, may benefit from higher levels of social-emotional competence to bolster their ability to communicate with others and access resources, but they tend to experience a lack of support. The current study examines the relationship between relationship quality and social-emotional competence as well as this relation with the addition of gratitude as a moderator with a sample of opportunity youth (n = 35). Data was collected from a self-report survey and linear regressions were conducted with the responses. Results indicated (1) a significant relation between relationship quality and social-emotional competence, (2) but gratitude did not moderate this relation. These results have important implications for developing helpful programming for vulnerable youth as well as future directions of research.