

**Examining the Relationship Between Difficulties in Emotion Regulation, Stress, and Quality of Life Among Individuals with Skin Disease Symptoms**

Madeline C. Harris, Rebecca M. Tse, Taylor A. Strange, Laura J. Dixon, PhD

mcharri5@go.olemiss.edu  
rmtse@go.olemiss.edu

**INTRO**

- Skin conditions impact more than just skin. People with dermatological issues may experience higher stress and lower quality of life (Winterman et al., 2024; Edgardo et al., 2014; Zachariae et al., 2008).
- Stress can worsen skin problems and vice versa, creating a vicious cycle. Interestingly, emotion regulation skills can act as a protective factor that can improve quality of life (Panasiti et al., 2020).
- Research shows that women experience higher levels of chronic and daily stress compared to men (Grave et. al., 2021).
- Regarding emotion regulation and quality of life, research suggests that gender may influence these constructs, but findings are mixed, suggesting situational factors play a significant role (Lee et. al., 2020).

**Hypotheses:**

1. There will be significant, positive correlations between skin-related quality of life, perceived stress, and difficulties in emotion regulation.
2. Females will experience these factors differently than males.

**METHODS**

- Participants (N = 143) were recruited through Cloud Research from Amazon’s online Mechanical Turk (Mturk) and completed a series of self-report questionnaires.
- The sample identified as 65.0% women and 57.3% White, with a mean age of 32.2 (SD = 9.46).

**RESULTS**

- Bivariate correlations (see Figures 1 – 3) and independent samples t-tests were computed (see Figure 4) to test the study hypotheses.

There are no significant differences in emotion dysregulation, quality of life, and stress between men and women with skin disease symptoms.

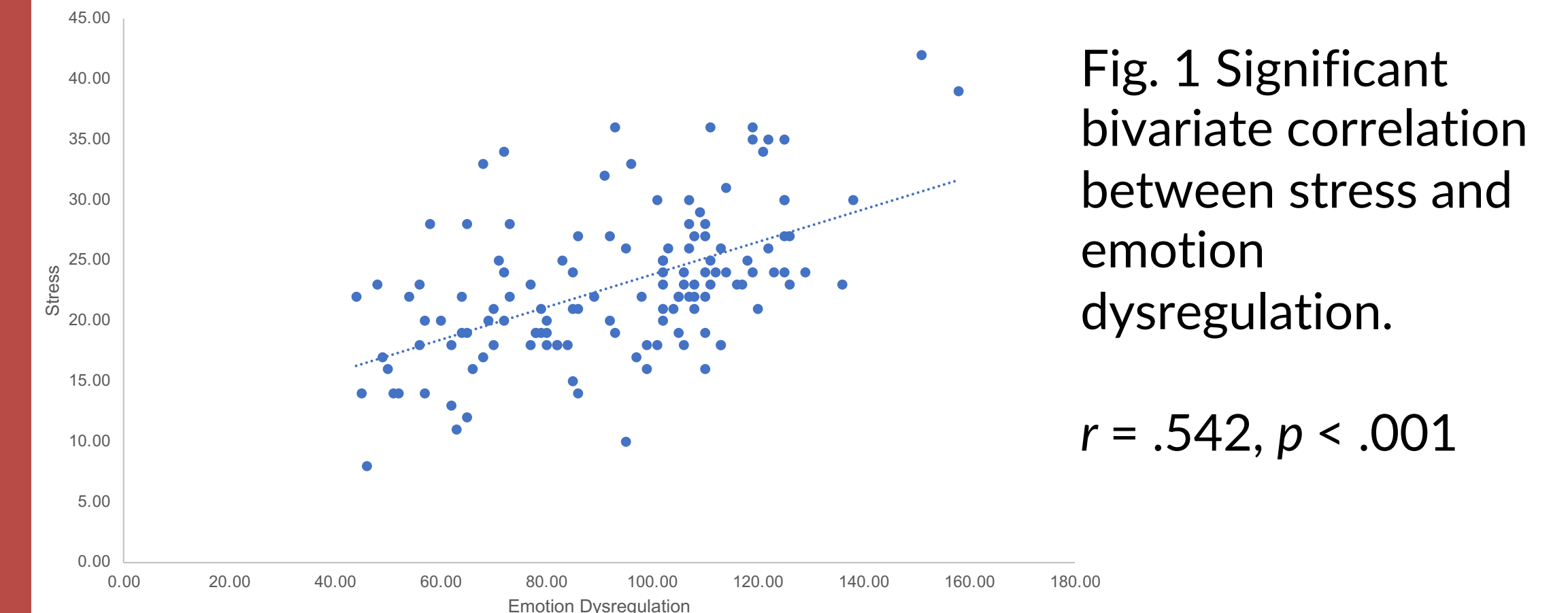
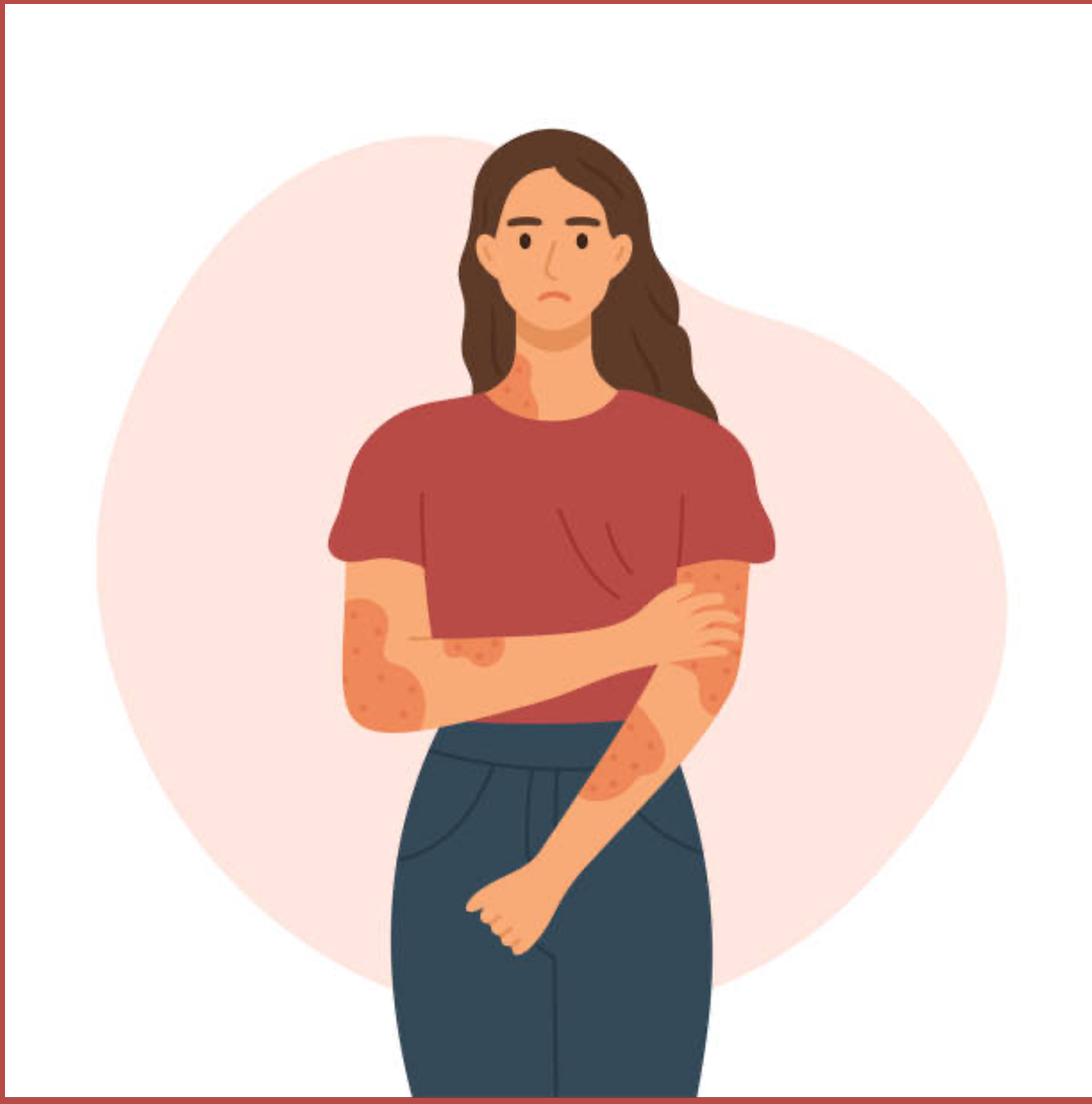


Fig. 1 Significant bivariate correlation between stress and emotion dysregulation.  
 $r = .542, p < .001$

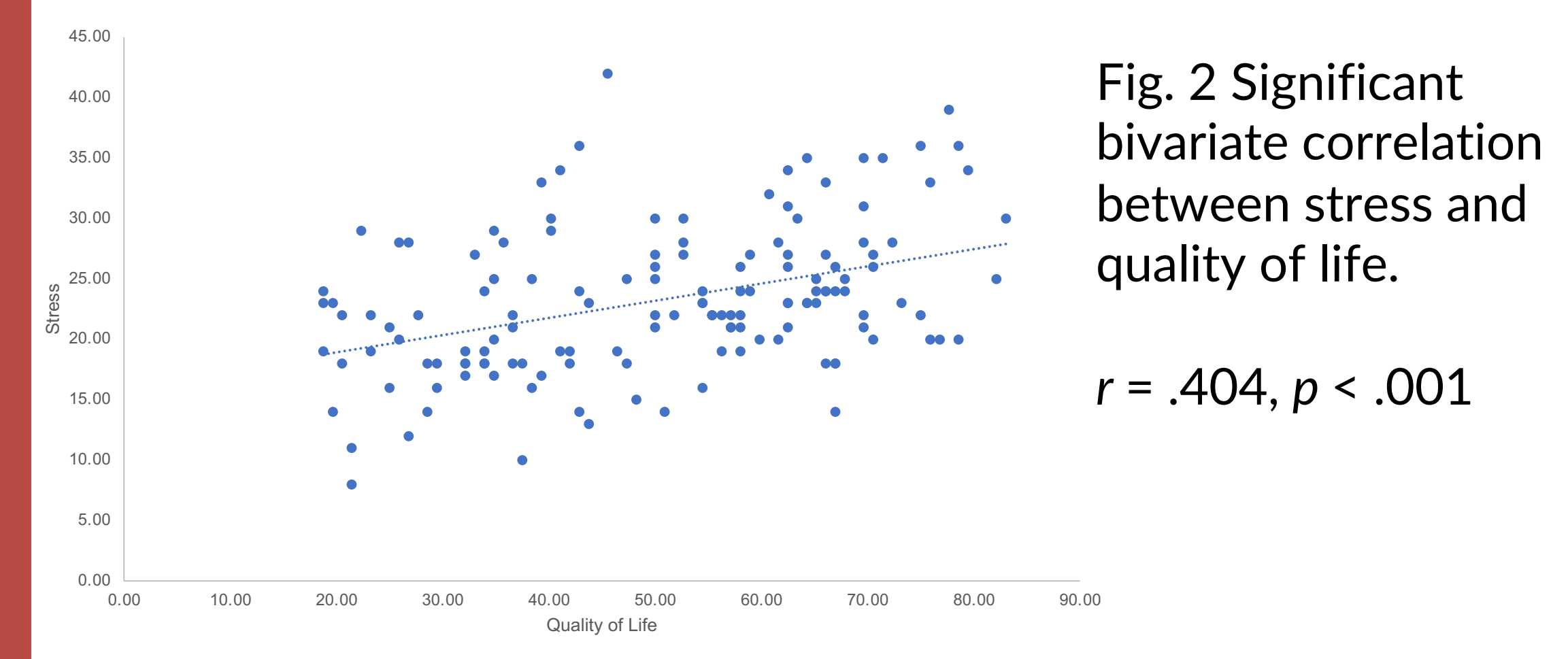


Fig. 2 Significant bivariate correlation between stress and quality of life.  
 $r = .404, p < .001$

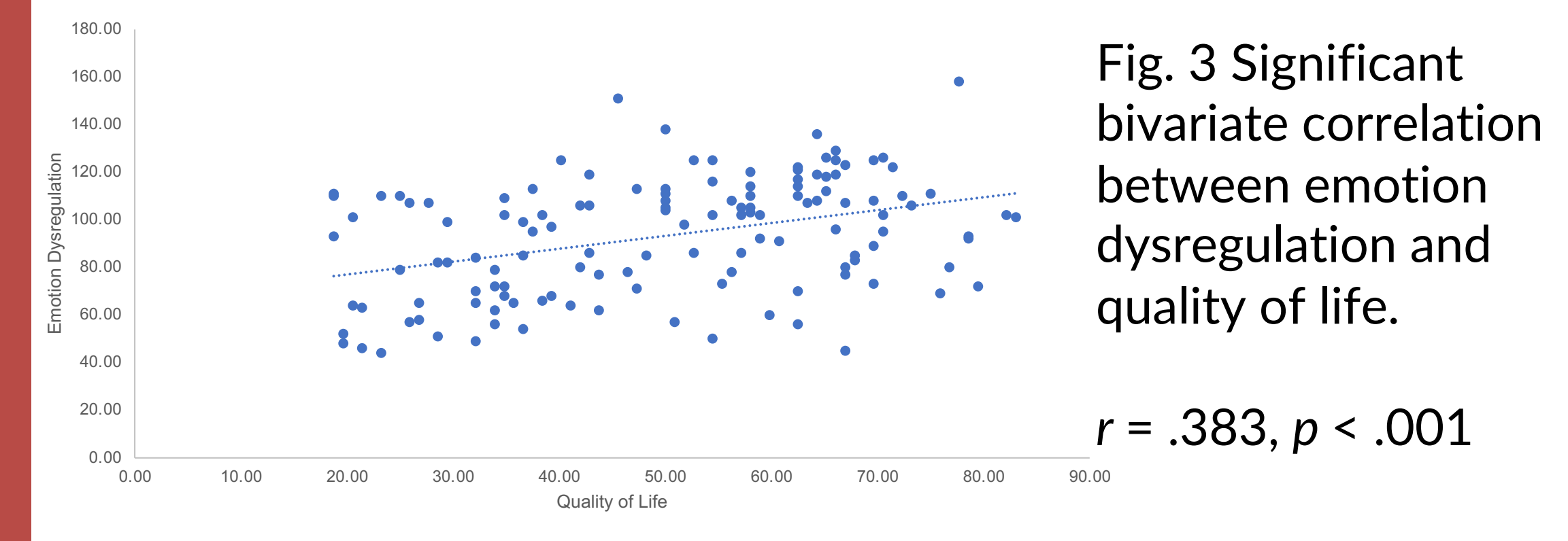


Fig. 3 Significant bivariate correlation between emotion dysregulation and quality of life.  
 $r = .383, p < .001$

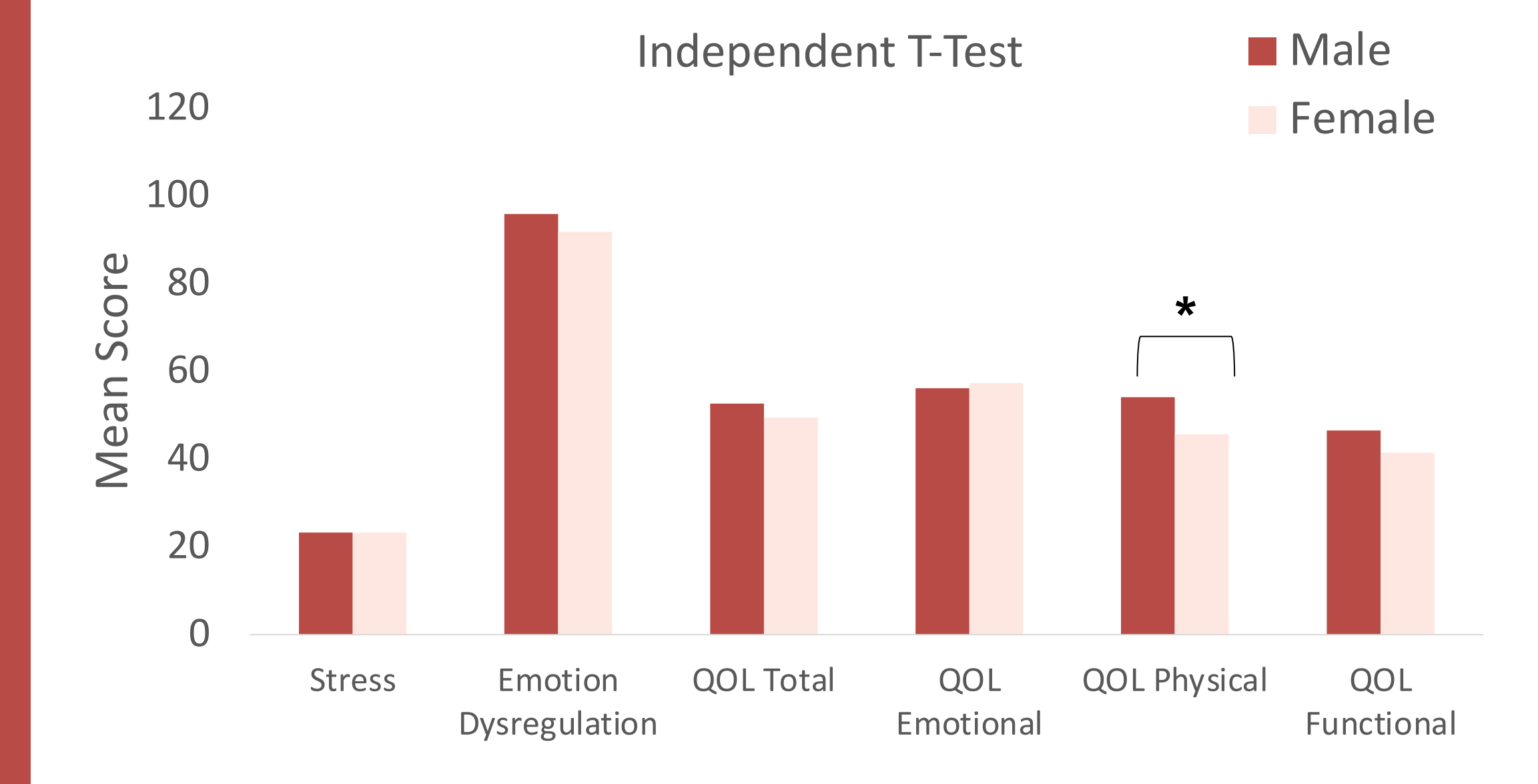
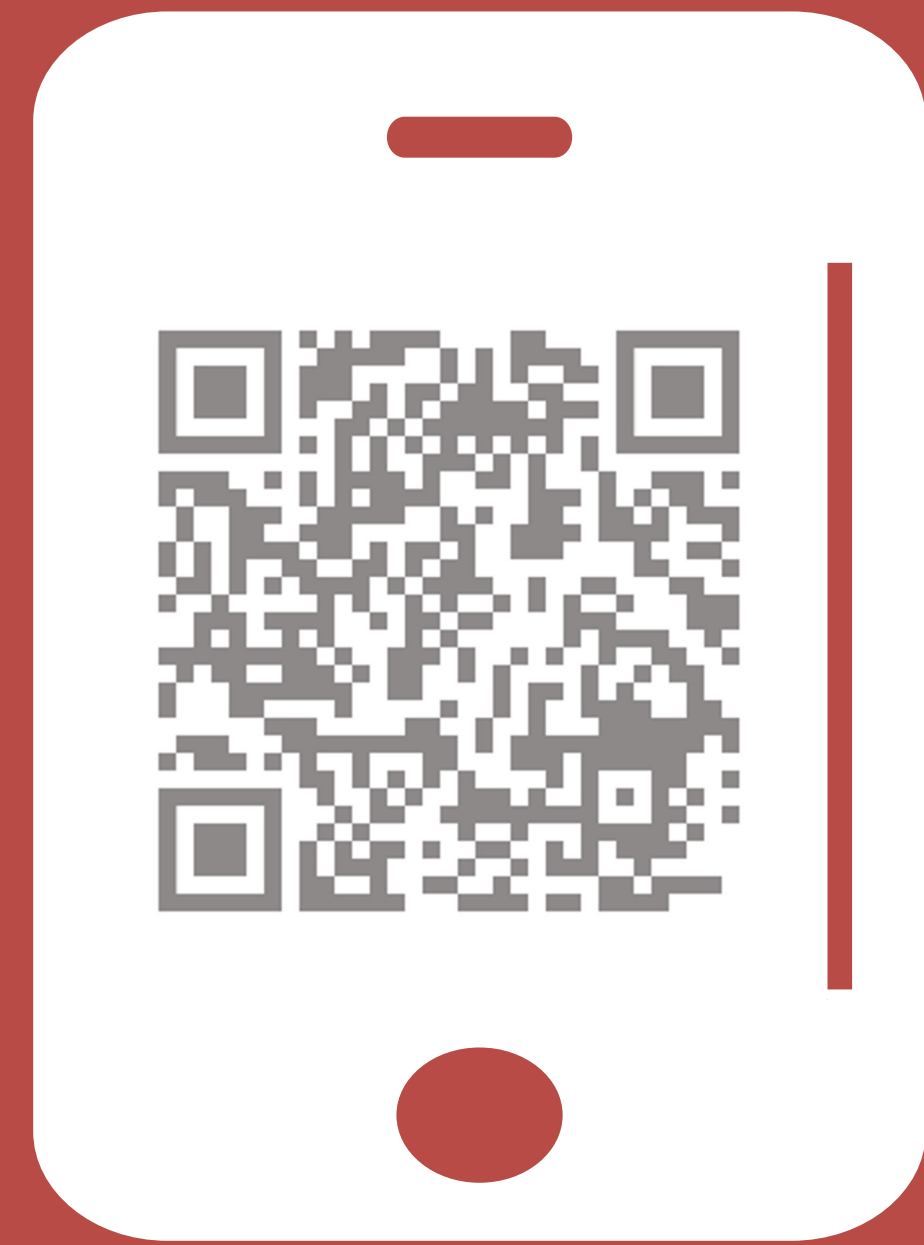


Fig. 4 Independent samples t-tests comparing psychological symptoms between men and women

**DISCUSSION**

- Consistent with prior work, our first hypothesis was supported as results indicated that there are significant, positive relationships between skin-related quality of life, perceived stress, and difficulties in emotion regulation.
- The second hypothesis was partially supported by the data, as males (vs. females) reported greater skin-related impairment due to physical symptoms.
- Results suggest that dermatology-related distress may affect men and women in a similar way, with the exception of the perceived impact of physical symptoms
- Future research should consider replicating this study in a sample of dermatology patients seeking treatment to determine the generalizability of the current findings.
- In addition, studies should consider examining differences in men and women regarding specific emotion regulation skills and abilities.



THE UNIVERSITY of MISSISSIPPI

