



Development and preliminary validation of a scale to assess managing the emotions of others

Elizabeth J. Austin*, Michael M. O'Donnell

University of Edinburgh, Psychology, 7 George Square, Edinburgh EH8 9JZ, UK

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 21 March 2013

Received in revised form 25 June 2013

Accepted 2 July 2013

Available online 26 July 2013

Keywords:

Emotional intelligence

Emotions

Scale development

ABSTRACT

A new scale, the managing the emotions of others scale (MEOS), was developed. Items were derived from real-life examples provided by an initial group of participants. The resulting scale was completed by 695 participants in a web survey. The factor structure of the scale was examined and a confirmatory factor analysis was also performed on a second sample ($N = 276$). Six factors were obtained: mood enhancing (Enhance), mood worsening (Worsen), concealing emotions from others (Conceal), use of inauthentic displays (Inauthentic), poor emotional skills (Poor skills), and use of diversion to enhance another's mood (Divert). Correlations of the factor scores with short measures of the Big Five, the Dark Triad and trait emotional intelligence were examined. Enhance and Divert were strongly correlated with Agreeableness, whilst Worsen and Inauthentic were strongly correlated with all of the Dark Triad. These associations are interpretable in terms of the affiliative nature of Agreeableness and the interpersonally manipulative nature of the Dark Triad. The MEOS factors provide coverage of the different ways (prosocial and non-prosocial) in which people manage the emotions of others.

© 2013 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Managing the emotions of others is viewed as a core component of emotional intelligence (EI). For example, the TEIQue trait EI measure (Petrides, Pita, & Kokkinaki, 2007) includes an Emotion Management subscale containing items relating to managing emotions in others. Within EI theory the discussion of managing others' emotions has mainly focussed on its positive aspect, for example calming the other person when an argument occurs. However, it is also possible to deploy emotion management to manipulate others for self-serving purposes, for example to cause another person to behave in a way the instigator wants, or to induce negative feelings in someone they dislike. This non-prosocial aspect of managing the emotions of others forms part of the negative aspect or 'dark side' of EI (Austin, Farrelly, Black, & Moore, 2007; Kilduff, Chiaburu, & Menges, 2010; Petrides, Vernon, Schermer, & Veselka, 2011; Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2009). The manipulation of the emotions of others was examined by Austin et al. (2007), who developed an emotional manipulation scale (EMS). This had a three-factor structure (emotional manipulation, concealing feelings and poor social skills); the emotional manipulation factor was found to be positively correlated with Machiavellianism.

Further studies have reported positive correlations of emotional manipulation with psychopathy and self-monitoring (Grieve, 2011; Grieve & Mahar, 2010).

Managing the emotions of others also falls within the domain of emotion regulation (ER); whilst EI and ER have a clear theoretical overlap, they represent distinct research areas. Within the theoretical perspective of ER it is acknowledged that it "can be used to make things either better or worse depending on the context" (Gross & Thompson, 2007, p9); a position which, in relation to regulating the emotions of others, encompasses both improving and worsening another's mood, and prosocial and non-prosocial motives. ER scales assessing regulating the emotions of others however generally focus on mood improvement; an exception is the nine-item extrinsic subscale of the EROS (Niven, Totterdell, Stride, & Holman, 2011) which assesses both mood-improving and mood worsening.

1.2. Overview of studies and data analyses

The objective of the present series of studies was to create and undertake a preliminary validation of a broad measure of managing the emotions of others (managing the emotions of others scale – MEOS) which would encompass both mood-improving and mood-worsening and also the prosocial and non-prosocial aspects of managing others' emotions. The items for the earlier EMS were generated by discussion groups comprising Psychology undergraduates (Austin et al., 2007), which may have led to a loss of

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +44 131 651 1305.

E-mail address: Elizabeth.Austin@ed.ac.uk (E.J. Austin).

information about approaches to managing the emotions of others which this group might make less use of. For the present study a broader sample of participants was involved in the item generation process, and the focus was on capturing the salient aspects of real-world behaviour. In Study 1, an initial item pool was generated using participants' free-response descriptions of real-life situations in which one person managed (or attempted to manage) the emotions of another. Study 2 involved a large-scale data collection using an initial set of candidate MEOS items. Because the project aim was to discover the underlying dimensions of managing the emotions of others rather than to validate a pre-existing theory, an exploratory factor analysis of the data was performed. Examination of the results allowed some items to be eliminated and further data (Study 3) allowed a confirmatory factor analysis to be performed. Preliminary validation information for the scale was obtained via the inclusion of measures of personality and EI in Study 2. Recruitment for all studies was via the web, with the study links being widely disseminated. Although the majority of respondents were nonetheless students, the samples also contained older adults and individuals who reported their occupational status as working, retired or not currently working. This group comprised 32%, 27%, 25% of the sample for Studies 1, 2, 3 respectively.

2. Study 1

2.1. Participants

The study was completed by 206 participants (52 male, 153 female, one undisclosed). The mean age of the sample was 25.8 years, standard deviation 11.8 years.

2.2. Materials

The survey used in this study invited participants to provide their own description of situations involving a person trying to change another's "mood or emotional state". The three items requested descriptions of situations where: (1) the respondent had tried to change the mood/emotional state of another person, (2) they had been the target of a mood/emotional state change attempt, (3) they had witnessed such an attempt in an interaction between others. These three roles (actor, target, witness) were specified in order to encourage participants to generate a wide range of examples, including behaviours of people differing in age, sex etc. from themselves. The target and witness roles were also included to facilitate the reporting of socially undesirable behaviours, which would be likely to be under-represented in first-person reports.

2.3. Procedure

The link to the survey was submitted to research participation websites, and also publicised on the departmental website.

2.4. Results

After exclusion of unclear and irrelevant responses, the core features of each scenario were extracted and converted into one or more self-report items. The candidate items were generated independently by the two authors and the results were then compared, discussed, and reduced to an agreed set of unique items. A similar procedure was used to produce a description of the distinct domains into which the various items fell, and to then reduce the items to a manageable number by selecting those which appeared to best represent each, resulting in the retention of 65 items. The domain descriptors were as far as possible selected to be

fine-grained, for example 'divert someone who is unhappy using humour', 'negative use of emotional displays', so it was expected that the items would cluster into a smaller number of factors than the number of domains (33) which were identified at this stage, e.g. domains relating to different ways (humour, diversion, etc.) of trying to improve another's negative mood would be expected to cluster. The selected items were augmented with the 18 high-loading items from the three factors of the Austin et al. (2007) EMS. There were similar numbers of items which could be classified as prosocial/non-prosocial (37/34) in this initial pool, with the remainder falling into other categories such as concealing feelings.¹

2.5. Discussion

The above approach generated items based on a wide range of real-life occurrences of attempts to manage the emotions of others. The scale derived from these was examined in a second study.

3. Study 2

3.1. Participants

There were 695 participants (157 male, 538 female). The mean age of the sample was 24.3 years, standard deviation 9.2 years.

3.2. Materials

In addition to the candidate MEOS items, the following measures were included:

3.2.1. Personality

The Mini-IPIP (Donnellan, Oswald, Baird, & Lucas, 2006) was used to measure personality. This 20-item scale provides measures of the Big Five personality dimensions of Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness.

3.2.2. Dark Triad

The Dirty Dozen scale (Jonason & Webster, 2010) was used; in this scale Machiavellianism, psychopathy and narcissism are measured by three four-item subscales.

3.2.3. EI

The short (30-item) TEIQue (TEIQue-SF; Petrides & Furnham, 2006) was used as a measure of global trait EI.

3.3. Procedure

The web survey was publicised as in Study 1. The first block of survey questions encountered by each respondent contained the candidate MEOS items; the remaining scales were then presented in a randomised order. This allowed any order effects amongst the other scales to be averaged whilst maximising the sample size for the new scale.

3.4. Results

An exploratory factor analysis of the candidate MEOS items was performed. The KMO statistic was .92. Both the scree plot and parallel analysis indicated the extraction of seven factors. On examination of these, (using oblique rotation, as some correlations between factors were expected), the last factor could not be inter-

¹ A full list of the domains and the items assigned to each is available from the corresponding author.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/10440413>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/10440413>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)