

The Dimensions of Meta-Mood Experience

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Introduction

- The field of perceived emotional intelligence has been receiving interest as of late. It includes cognitions and regulation processes regarding moods and emotions.
- Meta-mood refers to the reflective process in which individuals monitor, evaluate, and change their mood.
- The meta-mood experience can be measured by the Trait Meta-Mood Scale (TMMS).
- Early research extracted three factors from the TMMS that pertain to meta-mood: Attention to, Clarity of, and Repair of mood.
- In the present study, we aimed to examine the factor structure of the TMMS.

Method

- A total of 217 participants (68 male and 149 female) completed the study.
- Participants ranged in age from 18 to 49 years old ($M = 22.62$, $SD = 6.23$).
- The sample consisted primarily of undergraduate students enrolled in PSY 101 and PSY 240 at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.
- Participants' demographic information and responses to the TMMS were completed on a computer during the first of two testing sessions. The session took approximately 1.5 hours and was unsupervised.
- We considered five criteria in determining the number of factors to extract: number of factors according to theory, the Kaiser-Guttman rule, the scree plot, parallel analysis, and Velicer's minimum average partial (MAP) test. Based upon these criteria, we extracted four factors.
- Finally, we rotated our factors to aid in interpretation and to make them more meaningful. The direct oblimin rotation was selected because it came closest to the ideal of simple structure.

Results

- We extracted four factors, which we named Clarity, Attention, Repair, and Emotional Sensitivity.
- The first factor was named Clarity, because the items measured seem to be related to the ability to be clear about one's mood.
- The second factor was called Attention, because the items measured deal with monitoring and paying attention to one's mood.
- The third factor was called Repair, because the items measured all reflected a quality of changing negative moods into positive ones.
- We named the fourth factor Emotional Sensitivity, because the items measured related to valuing one's emotions and the susceptibility of those emotions to outside influence.
- Refer to Table 1

Four factors underlie the meta-mood experience: Clarity, Attention, Repair, and Emotional Sensitivity

Discussion

- The first three factors of the TMMS were consistent with previous research in regards to the meta mood experience. The fourth factor we extracted was new.
- Future researchers may wish to calculate TMMS factor scores based upon all four of these factors to provide a more detailed description of meta-mood.
- Prior research has demonstrated the ability of the TMMS factors to predict psychosocial coping and mental well-being. We hypothesize that Emotional Sensitivity will be related to worse coping.
- A major limitation of the present study is the use of a self-report measure like the TMMS in assessing the meta-mood construct.
- A second limitation that should be mentioned is the fact that our sample was not very representative.
- We believe that the novel factor Emotional Sensitivity extends the conceptualization of meta-mood and complements the other three factors that prior research has identified.

Table 1
Factor Analysis Results for Rotated Factors

Item	Factor				h ²
	1	2	3	4	
30. I almost always know exactly how I am feeling.	0.79	-0.10	0.07	0.06	0.63
6. I am rarely confused about how I feel.	0.76	-0.16	-0.04	0.05	0.51
25. I am usually very clear about my feelings.	0.76	-0.09	0.03	0.04	0.55
16. I am usually confused about how I feel.	-0.76	-0.19	0.03	0.14	0.70
28. I usually know my feelings about a matter.	0.69	0.03	0.00	0.07	0.48
11. I can never tell how I feel.	-0.63	-0.24	0.01	0.00	0.53
20. I feel at ease about my emotions.	0.62	0.02	0.10	0.12	0.45
15. I am often aware of my feelings on a matter.	0.59	0.06	0.02	0.08	0.38
5. Sometimes I can't tell what my feelings are.	-0.56	0.02	-0.10	0.20	0.41
22. I can't make sense out of my feelings.	-0.55	-0.09	-0.03	0.15	0.39
4. I don't usually care much about what I'm feeling.	-0.03	-0.73	0.05	0.09	0.53
29. It is usually a waste of time to think about your emotions.	-0.08	-0.69	-0.05	0.01	0.54
3. I don't think it's worth paying attention to your emotions or moods.	-0.06	-0.64	0.04	0.20	0.46
17. One should never be guided by emotions.	-0.03	-0.58	0.04	-0.19	0.38
27. Feelings are a weakness humans have.	0.01	-0.57	-0.11	0.18	0.39
23. I don't pay much attention to my feelings.	0.00	-0.54	-0.28	-0.08	0.48
18. I never give in to my emotions.	0.08	-0.54	0.15	-0.28	0.35
2. People would be better off if they felt less and thought more.	-0.03	-0.46	0.11	-0.04	0.20
21. I pay a lot of attention to how I feel.	0.01	0.44	0.27	0.37	0.50
24. I often think about my feelings.	-0.28	0.35	0.23	0.29	0.30
1. I try to think good thoughts no matter how badly I feel.	-0.05	-0.11	0.85	-0.04	0.65
26. No matter how badly I feel, I try to think about pleasant things.	0.07	-0.04	0.78	0.08	0.64
13. When I become upset I remind myself of all the pleasures in life.	0.06	-0.00	0.69	0.13	0.53
8. Although I am sometimes sad, I have a mostly optimistic outlook.	0.10	0.07	0.64	-0.06	0.50
19. Although I am sometimes happy, I have a mostly pessimistic outlook.	0.01	-0.25	-0.57	0.22	0.49
12. The best way for me to handle my feelings is to experience them to the fullest.	0.18	0.04	0.11	0.62	0.45
14. My beliefs and opinions always seem to change depending on how I feel.	-0.28	-0.22	-0.08	0.52	0.47
9. When I am upset I realize that the "good things in life" are illusions.	-0.20	-0.26	-0.29	0.44	0.50
10. I believe in acting from the heart.	0.17	0.41	-0.02	0.44	0.43
7. Feelings give direction to life.	0.13	0.32	0.13	0.37	0.34

Factor Intercorrelations				
	1	2	3	4
Factor 1				
Factor 2	-0.29			
Factor 3	0.37	0.29		
Factor 4	-0.07	0.05	0.03	

Note. Salient factor pattern matrix coefficients > |0.3| are in bold face. h² = communality. Items were not reverse scored prior to statistical analysis. Factor 2 was reversed scored after statistical analysis. Factor 1 = Clarity. Factor 2 = Attention. Factor 3 = Repair. Factor 4 = Emotional Sensitivity.

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