Workplace Emotional Perception: An Ability-Based Measure

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The purpose of this study is to develop a short, valid, and ability-based measure of workplace Emotional Perception (EP). By exploring its validity, this paper will seek to study the importance of Emotional Perception in such workplace outcomes as job stress and Job-Related Negative Affect. Survey data was obtained in two studies. The measure of Emotional Perception is negatively related to job stress and job-related negative emotions. It also discriminated between affective personality traits such as neuroticism and extraversion. Because of test length and lack of general access, existing ability-based emotional intelligence measures are not frequently used in workplace studies. Therefore, having a short and valid emotional perception measure will help increase its use in workplace context. Additionally, this will help managers understand the impact of emotional perception ability in such workplace outcomes as job stress and a negative job-related affect. This is the first ability-based, emotional perception measure specifically formatted for use in the workplace. It is believed that this measure could be used to select and/or assign employees based on their emotional intelligence to different jobs.

Twenty years since its proposition, Emotional Intelligence (EI) (Salovey & Mayer, 1989), or the ability to deal with emotions, and its research scenario, is either a smoldering cauldron of existential debate and controversy, or a warm crucible of constructive conversation (Becker, 2003; Landy, 2005). It is clear that measures that are theoretically aligned with the ability-based definition, and at the same time demonstrate impactful criterion validity need to be developed (Joseph & Newman, 2010; Murphy, 2006). Here, data will be presented validating a new EI-perception measure.

Emotional Intelligence: From Global Construct Definition to Specific Dimensions

In this paper, the original intelligence-based definition proposed by Mayer and Salovey (1997) and validated by others is followed (e.g., MacCann & Roberts, 2008). Emotional Intelligence (EI) is defined as a type of intelligence that helps individuals to perceive, thoughtfully use, understand, and manage emotions in themselves and others (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Each of these abilities is categorized as a hierarchical (or sequential; from basic to applied) branch of a global EI construct (sometimes also referred to as facets). Branch 1 (Emotion Perception) includes abilities that help individuals to identify or "read" emotions in themselves or in others. Branch 2 (using emotions in thoughts) includes abilities that help individuals assimilate emotions into thoughts. Branch 3 (understanding) includes abilities that help individuals to understand the finer shades of complex emotions and to accurately predict how emotions transition over time. Branch 4 (managing emotions) includes abilities that help individuals to modify emotions in social situations. Investigators have studied EI at the global construct level as well as at the branch level. Similar to the efforts of MacCann and Roberts (2008), this measure-development effort is done at the branch level. Emotion Perception ability is focused on for several reasons. First, Emotion Perception has a strong knowledge component. Previous research indicated that individuals who were trained to read other people's emotions could in fact, improve their skills (Elfenbein, 2006; Grinspan, Hemphill, & Nowicki, 2003). Though the global construct of EI is conceptualized as a stable ability, better knowledge and skill of Emotion Perception does help substantially in successfully handling social situations. Second, research has also suggested that the Emotion Perception ability is one of the most basic and clearly defined among the four components of EI (Davies, Stankov, & Roberts, 1998). Emotion Perception (or recognition) is very important to the workplace outcomes. Elfenbein and Ambady (2002) showed that people's ability to perceive others' emotions helped them perform better as leaders (Rubin, Munz, & Bommer, 2005). Research also showed that salespeople who were better at emotion recognition sold more cars and earned more pay raises (Byron, Terranova, & Nowicki Jr., 2007).

Emotional Perception: Measurement

Broadly, like EI, Emotion Perception has typically been measured using self-report measures and ability-based (problem solving) measures. Self-report measures, as shown in recent meta-analyses and reviews, have their own advantages (O'Boyle Jr. et al., 2010; Walter, Cole, & Humphrey, 2011). They provide good criterion-related validity. They are shorter, more freely available, face-valid, and convenient to use. It was decided to use the ability-based (performance) tests for two reasons (Brackett et al., 2006). First, self-report measures are more prone to being false than ability-based tests, especially in high-stakes testing conditions (Day & Carroll, 2008). Second, Mabe and West's (1982) meta-analysis showed that individuals' perceptions of their own intelligence were weakly correlated with their actual scores on ability-based intelligence tests. Therefore, the ability-based, problem solving paradigm of measuring

Emotion Perception was followed. This method and EI's measurement in general, have at least three major challenges: the "right answer" problem, test length, and the extent of domain specific information.

The "Right Answer" Problem

Measuring EI using problem solving tests presents a unique challenge — the "right answer" problem. Because it is much more difficult to find objective and correct answers to problem solving items on the EI test, researchers have used a consensus of a large number of people (e.g., >100) or a smaller number of experts (e.g., 20) to determine the correct answer (Mayer et al., 2003). These approaches assume that a consensus of a large number of individuals accurately reflects the "correct" answer from a societal perspective (for a comparison of scoring methods, please see MacCann et al., 2004).

Test Length

To reliably measure all the branches of EI, a large number of items are typically used (e.g., MSCEIT with 141 items). An exception is the Consumer Emotional Intelligence Scale (CEIS) with 18 items (Kidwell, Hardesty, & Childers, 2008). In previous studies, scientists either measured EI globally or studied individual components. In addition to allowing researchers to study individual abilities (or branches) more clearly, focusing on individual branches also helped to bring down the overall number of items. Shorter measures of EI abilities at the branch level could allow for more extensive usage of these measures in a larger number of field settings. For example, in a law enforcement setting, a detective could use Emotion Perception ability to detect facial expressions and emotion changes in a suspect in order to determine his/her future behavior or attitudes. Therefore, for selection and/or reassignment decisions in that specific context, an EI-Perception test could be more appropriate, valuable, and practical due to its short length.

Extent of Domain Specific Information

The third challenge in measuring EI-perception concerns the extent of domain-specific (e.g., management, marketing) information in which EI's abilities are used and measured. For example, a human resources manager who has to be cognizant of anxious reactions due to a newly announced downsizing at an organization would need to use quite specialized and unique ways of perceiving emotions (e.g., read responses of employees who are being laid-off) versus those in a generic situation (e.g., dealing with emotions in a family dispute). Kidwell et al. (2008) highlighted this issue when they proposed a domain-specific measure (specific to consumer decision making), that showed that the CEIS predicted marketing-related criteria better than the domain generic MSCEIT. Perception in CEIS is measured by asking consumers to rate emotions expressed in products rather than faces. Therefore, to effectively assess the specific abilities employees use to perceive emotions at work, it is preferable to use more information relevant and specific to the workplace in the measure. This, however, does not mean that domain generic measures are ineffective. In fact, most measures, except CEIS, are domain generic or mixed. Similar to the use of CEIS in the

marketing domain, the use of additional workplace-specific information in Emotion Perception's measurement is proposed. This proposition is justified by explaining the role of contextual information in situational judgment testing.

It is suggested that test takers' responses to certain situations presented on the test will be of higher quality if they have more information about domain specific behaviors – a phenomenon referred to as the "Frame of Reference effect (FOR)" (Lievens, De Corte, & Schollaert, 2008). In personality measurement, the effect of providing a better FOR has been shown to increase both criterion and face validity. In the development of CEIS, Kidwell et al. (2008) used a similar logic and showed that their test, by the use of consumption-related situational judgment items, predicted consumption criteria better than a domain generic test. Applying this to the workplace domain, most ability-based tests presented test takers with social situations with people, their behaviors, or both. They asked test takers to respond to or rate the intensity and nature of emotions derived from those situations. The most effective responses received higher scores. Using actual behaviors and thoughts which employees engaged in at work, Emotion Perception ability specifically applied to the workplace was also measured. Because this new EI-perception measure is recommended for use with working individuals, it was named the Workplace Emotional Abilities Test-Perception (WEAT-P).

EI Perception: Nomological Net and Validity Evidence

Next, the relationship between EI-perception ability and two workplace criteria will be discussed: job stress and Job-Related Negative Affect (JNA).

Job stress. Stress draws significant amounts of resources in organizations, affecting approximately 50% of people (Avey, Luthans, & Jensen, 2009; Spector, 2002). Most theories of job stress describe the relationship between job demands and the resources available to or in control of the employees (Fox, Dwyer, & Ganster, 1993). The Appraisal or Transaction (or Relational) Theory of Stress put forth by Lazarus and Folkman (1987) suggested that cognitive evaluations of environmental stimuli mediated the relationship between specific events and health outcomes. Components of a job or environment that cause physiological and psychological stressful reactions in employees are called stressors (Spector, 2002). If the environmental stimuli are considered a threat and beyond an employee's resources, he or she is likely to feel more stress. The most dominant theory in the occupational domain is the Job Demands Control Theory (Van Der Doef & Maes, 1999; Karasek, 1979), which states that when individuals feel that the job demands are large and they have less control on the dimensions of their job, they are likely to feel more stress.

Emotions are closely related to stress. Previous research showed that EI can be associated (negatively) with different forms of stress (Brackett & Salovey, 2006; MacCann & Roberts, 2008; Matthews et al., 2006). Jordan, Ashkanasy, and Hartel (2002) theorized the possible role of EI in affective reactions to job insecurity and job tension. Therefore, it is particularly interesting to study EI's role in the attenuation of job stress. Perception ability (Branch 1) could help individuals identify the reactions to a stressful event (e.g., feeling anxious before a task deadline). This could then help individuals to further deal with the emotions using other branches of EI (Schutte et al., 2007). Thus,

Hypothesis 1: The WEAT-P score will be negatively correlated with job stress.

There is a notion of "good" stress and "bad" stress named "challenge" stress and "hindrance" stress, respectively (Cavanaugh et al., 2000). Rodell and Judge (2009) recently found evidence for negative affective reactions associated with these different kinds of stresses, with hindrance stress causing more negative effects and counterproductive behaviors than challenge stress. More negative effects due to stress could facilitate the role of Emotion Perception. Because hindrance stress causes a more negative effect, it is suggested that the role of Emotion Perception would be more pronounced (in attenuating the negative reactions to stress) in hindrance stress than challenge stress (Rodell & Judge, 2009). One of the after-effects of stress (especially hindrance stress) is the elicitation of negative affect (Rodell & Judge, 2009). Therefore, it is pertinent to investigate whether EI is also attenuating the elicitation and expression of Job-Related Negative Affect (JNA).

Job-Related Negative Affect. In the past decade, there has been an increased emphasis on the study of affect (Brief & Weiss, 2002; Ashkanasy, 2003). Affective Events Theory (AET) (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) suggests that events in the workplace produce short-term affective reactions and can have long-term effects on job attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction). Each of these effects could be influenced by traits (e.g., neuroticism and extraversion) or abilities (e.g., EI). Even so, there appears to be few studies that have looked at the direct effects of Emotion Perception on affect. Most job events could lead to some amount of positive or negative affect/emotions (Basch & Fisher, 2000). There is a well-established link between negative affect and enduring job attitudes. Thoresen et al.'s (2003) meta-analytic findings suggested that negative affect led to lower job satisfaction and increased job-withdrawal behaviors.

It is proposed that Emotion Perception ability will play an important role in shielding employees from negative affect specifically produced from job events and/or stress. When such emotions are elicited, Emotion Perception ability could help individuals to identify those emotions. Because Emotion Perception provides the first basic step in the EI framework, individuals will thus be able to use their other abilities (understanding, and management) to handle those negative emotions (Joseph & Newman, 2010). Thus, EI-perception ability will be associated with significantly reduced negative affect produced from the job. Thus,

Hypothesis 2: The WEAT-P score will be negatively correlated with job-related negative effects.

Feldman (1995) proposed that affective experiences could be mapped onto a circumplex based on two dimensions: valence (hedonic tone) and activation (arousal). Following Spector's (2007) terminology, each respective category was referred to as Low Pleasurable, High Activation (LPHA) and Low Pleasurable, Low Activation (LPLA). LPHA-emotions have been particularly known to influence outcomes in organizations (Thoresen et al., 2003). It is proposed that Emotion Perception will more strongly and negatively influence job-related LPHA-emotions. Thus,

Hypothesis 3: The WEAT-P score will correlate more strongly and negatively with the LPHA score (negative, highly activated job-related emotions) than the LPLA score.

General Method

Overview

Two studies demonstrating the development and validation of a short and workplace-based emotion perception measure are presented. The ability-based framework proposed by Mayer and Salovey (1997) and the situational judgment test-framework were followed.

Study Design

A survey design was used for this study.

Participants

Study 1 consisted of working undergraduate students and Study 2 consisted of alumni from a Midwestern university.

Procedure

Study 1 was administered through a paper and pencil format, with initial validation done through an online method, and Study 2 was completely administered online.

Data Analyses

The new measure's internal structure was analyzed by Confirmatory Factor Analyses in AMOS and the nomological net information (convergent-, discriminant-, and criterion-related validities) were determined by correlational analyses.

Study 1

In Study 1, the WEAT-P was evaluated in a sample of working students (N = 228). The criterion validity was evaluated by studying the relationship between EI and job stress and EI and Job-Related Negative Affect. Such personality traits as neuroticism (propensity to be around negative affect) and extraversion (propensity to be positive and cheerful in social interactions) had previously been associated with the study of stress and negative effects. Therefore, neuroticism and extraversion were also included in this study.

Study 1 Method

Sample and Participants

330 undergraduate business students were invited to participate in this study. A total of 270 responded (response rate = 87.2%), out of which 228 (both male and female) respondents were either employed currently or were in the recent past (within 30 days). All students were rewarded with extra credit for their participation.

Procedure

The study was administered in the paper-pencil survey format. Subjects responded to questions related to demographics, EI (using the WEAT-P), personality (neuroticism and extraversion), Job-Related Negative Affect, and job stress.

Measure Development and Initial Validation

The WEAT-P was developed to measure Emotion Perception ability given the context of the workplace. In addition to the unique frame of reference, WEAT was created with usability in mind. Brevity, therefore, was an important element considered. This Emotion Perception Abilities measure was developed in three steps. Step 1 included an initial exploratory phase in which respondents were asked open-ended questions about emotional situations in the workplace. These answers were used to create 10 scenario-based items each with 11 emotions (total number of responses = 110) which were then asked in Step 2. Step 2 was a usability study. The 110 response items were sent to a sample of working students. Based on these results, the measure was shortened to 3 scenario-based items, each with 11 emotions for a total of 33 response items. In the final validation step, the measure was given to another sample of students. The measure had significant correlations with conscientiousness, agreeableness, and alexithymia (negative) as expected. The measure also showed discriminant validity when other personality variables such as neuroticism and extroversion were considered. For more detailed information see Krishnakumar and Hopkins (2013). The entire measure thus consisted of three scenarios, with 11 items each, and is presented in Appendix A.

The Emotion Perception measure developed and validated above was used in this study to further investigate the effects of EP on job stress and job negative emotions. The 33-item WEAT-P measure had $\alpha = .89$. A Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) with AMOS v. 16 software was performed (Arbuckle, 2006). In Study 1, individual items were combined to form 4 parcels (Nasser & Wisenbacker, 2003). Parcel 1, 2, & 3 had 8 items, and parcel 4 had 9 items. The CFA (measurement) model showed moderate fit ($\chi 2 = 19.83$, df = 2, p =.00; NFI = .93; RFI = .79; IFI = .94; TLI = .80; CFI = .93; RMSEA = .19) (Schumacher & Lomax, 1996).

Neuroticism and extraversion. Ten items from the International Personality Item Pool (IPIP) each measured neuroticism ($\alpha = .87$) and extraversion ($\alpha = .89$; Goldberg, 2001). Response options were 1 = "very inaccurate", to 5 = "very accurate."

Job stress. Cavanaugh et al.'s (2000) 16-item measure ($\alpha = .86$) assessed job stress. Six items ($\alpha = .85$) measured challenge stress. Five items ($\alpha = .70$) measured hindrance stress. The measure had items that asked participants to respond to statements describing components of jobs that could potentially cause stress to them (e.g., "the number of projects/assignments I have"). Response options were 1 = "produces no stress", to 7 = "produces a great deal of stress."

Job-Related Negative Affect. Spector's (2007) 15-item measure ($\alpha = .86$) assessed Job-related Negative Affect. These items were part of the Job-related Affective Well Being Scale (JAWS). Items asked respondents to indicate the amount to which their job made them feel a particular emotion (e.g., "my job made me feel angry") in the past 30 days. Response options ranged from 1 = "never", to 5 = "extremely often."

The negative affect-related items in JAWS assessed two kinds of negative affective experience: Negatively valenced or Low Pleasurable, High Arousal (LPHA items: angry, anxious, disgusted, frightened, and furious) and Low Pleasurable, Low Arousal (LPLA items: bored, depressed, discouraged, gloomy, and fatigued). Five items each measured LPHA (α = .74) and LPLA (α = .64).

Study 1 Results

Means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations between the study variables are reported in Table 1.

Table 1: *Means, Standard Deviations, and Zero-order Correlations*

		Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	Age	21.95	2.45	-										
2	Gender	.45	.50	-.13	-									
3	Neuroticism	2.13	.70	-.06	.17*	(.87)								
4	Extraversion	3.74	.74	.08	.04	-.37**	(.89)							
5	Emotion Perception[a]	.43	.10	.12	.13	-.10	.00	(.89)						
6	Challenge Stress	3.64	1.34	-.06	.01	.20**	-.03	-.05	(.85)					
7	Hindrance Stress	2.74	1.22	.133*	-.10	.14*	-.14*	-.09	.39**	(.70)				
8	Job Stress	2.80	.47	.07	-.04	.24**	-.02	-.14*	.75**	.67**	(.86)			
9	LPHA	2.06	.67	.08	-.07	.40**	-.08	-.12	.35**	.38**	.56**	(.74)		
10	LPLA	2.18	.64	.04	-.07	.45**	-.21**	-.06	.20**	.26**	.33**	.64**	(.64)	
11	JNA	2.14	.60	.09	-.09	.45**	-.14*	-.11	.36**	.39**	.57**	.92**	.82**	(.86)

a. Emotion perception is measured by WEAT-P.
* = p < .05, ** = p < .01; N = 217-228 (pair-wise deletion); LPHA = Low Pleasurable, High Activation; LPLA = Low Pleasurable, Low Activation; JNA = Job-related Negative Affect.

From Study 1, the results are as follows:

Hypothesis 1, which stated that the WEAT-P score would be negatively and significantly correlated with job stress, was supported (r = -.14; p < .05).

Hypothesis 2, which stated that the WEAT-P score would be negatively correlated with Job-related Negative Affect (JNA), was not supported (r = .11; *n.s.*).

Hypothesis 3, which stated that the WEAT-P score would correlate more strongly and negatively with LPHA-emotions (negative, highly activated job-related emotions), was also not supported (r = -.12; *n.s*).

Study 1 Discussion

In addition to showing the role of EI-perception ability in job stress, Study 1 also revealed that the 33-item WEAT-P showed good reliability and validity. This is a good contribution to EI-perception's measurement, as the measure is much shorter than most ability-based measures currently validated (except the 18-item CEIS, which is specifically used in the consumer decision making domain). This could help increase the usage of EI measures in more field studies in the workplace. The findings also

indicated that the WEAT-P demonstrated correlations with job stress, but not with Job-related Negative Affect.

As expected, WEAT-P was also not related to neuroticism and extraversion. This finding is important because many critics have suggested that affective personality traits like neuroticism and extraversion could overlap substantially with certain measures of EI (Schulte, Ree, & Carretta, 2004). The findings extended or confirmed other researchers' findings that performance or ability-based measures of EI did show good discriminant validities with potentially similar personality variables. The WEAT-P showed a significant and negative relationship with job stress. Job stress was a very important construct still being evaluated with respect to the formation of short-term affective reactions and long-term behaviors and attitudes (e.g., turnover, burnout).

However, the WEAT-P did not show a statistically significant correlation with Job-related Negative Affect. One of the reasons for the lack of correlation could be because this sample exclusively consisted of undergraduate students who were working part-time. The WEAT-P is formatted with situations and themes directed at the workplace. Therefore, although working part-time, it is possible that most participants in Study 1 may not have been exposed to the wide variety of affective situations that are presented in the WEAT-P, and hence may not have responded to the items effectively. Study 2 aims to address this limitation by studying the role of EI in job stress and Job-related Negative Affect in a more experienced working sample.

Study 2 Introduction

This study further examines the criterion validity by studying the effect of EI on job stress and JNA in an older field sample with more work experience (N = 151). The implications of the findings, limitations of the study, and potential for future research are discussed.

Study 2 Method

Sample and Participants

A group of 3,090 alumni and trustees of a Midwestern university were invited through e-mail to participate in an online study. One hundred and fifty one responses were received (response rate = 4.88%; 39.6% female). Participants substantially varied in age and were older on average when compared to the Study 1 sample (22-71 years, mean = 36.9 years, s.d. = 10.53). Participants held a variety of job positions/titles (e.g., Vice President, researcher, consultant, driver). Participants were not rewarded for responding to the survey.

Procedure

An internet link was provided at the end of the study invitation. Participants clicked this link which took them to a website on which the Institutional Review Board cover page was displayed. Then they completed items from the WEAT-P, some information about their jobs (e.g., job type, job title), the job stress measure, and items from the Job-related Affective Well Being Scale (JAWS).

Measures

Measures used in Study 2 were 33 items from the WEAT-P (α = .88), 16 items from the job stress measure (α = .82), and 15 items (measuring negative affect) from the JAWS (α = .92; α_{LPHA} =.67; α_{LPLA} = .64). The content of the measures were similar to the content of the same measures used in Study 1. The job stress measure was slightly modified and asked respondents about the components of their jobs (e.g., the amount of travel required) that caused stress to them. The respondents held a wide variety of job titles and were recruited from a variety of occupations. Some respondents in Study 1 noted that some of the items on the job stress measure did not apply to their job. Because Study 2 recruited people from an even wider variety of occupations, the response options were modified so that they ranged from 1 = "produces no stress", to 5 = "produces a great deal of stress". A "not applicable" option was also added to the response options. This ideally would accurately assess job stress, taking into account the variety of occupations of the respondents. Six items (α = .84) measured challenge stress and five items (α = .61) measured hindrance stress based on previous research (Cavanaugh et al., 2000).

Similar to Study 1, a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) with AMOS v. 16 software was performed (Arbuckle, 2006). Again, individual items were combined to form 4 parcels (Nasser & Wisenbacker, 2003). Parcel 1, 2, & 3 had 8 items, and parcel 4 had 9 items. The CFA (measurement) model showed an excellent fit (χ^2 = .99, df = 2, p =.61; NFI = .99; RFI = .97; IFI = 1; TLI = 1; CFI = 1; RMSEA = .00) (Schumacher & Lomax, 1996).

Study 2 Results

Means, standard deviations and zero-order correlations between the study variables are reported in Table 2.

Table 2: *Means, Standard Deviations, and Zero-order Correlations*

		Means	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Age	36.86	10.54	-								
2	Gender	.43	.53	-.19*	-							
3	Emotion Perception[a]	.46	.09	.17*	-.05	(.88)						
4	Challenge Stress	3.27	.87	.14	-.02	-.01	(.84)					
5	Hindrance Stress	2.56	.80	.05	.04	-.28**	.15	(.61)				
6	Job Stress	2.73	.31	.06	-.04	-.22*	.60**	.52**	(.82)			
7	LPHA	2.22	.71	-.01	-.14	-.27**	.28**	.40**	.59**	(.67)		
8	LPLA	2.25	.70	-.09	-.14	-.22*	.22*	.36**	.47**	.77**	(.64)	
9	JNA	2.30	.68	-.04	-.12	-.27**	.30**	.41**	.59**	.94**	.90**	(.92)

a. Emotion perception is measured by WEAT-P.
* = p < .05, ** = p < .01; N = 120-136; LPHA = Low Pleasurable, High Activation; LPLA = Low Pleasurable, Low Activation; JNA = Job-related Negative Affect.

The results of Study 2 are as follows:

Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 were again tested in this sample. Hypothesis 1, which stated that the WEAT-P score would be significantly and negatively correlated with job stress, was supported (r = -.22; p < .05).

Hypothesis 2, which stated that the WEAT-P score would be negatively correlated with Job-Related Negative Affect (JNA), was supported (r = -.27; p < .01).

Hypothesis 3, which stated that the WEAT-P score would correlate more strongly and negatively with LPHA-emotions (negative, highly activated job-related emotions), was not supported r = -.27, n.s.). Note here that the reliabilities for LPHA and LPLA were .67 and .64 respectively. However, their correlations with Emotion Perception were significant (LPHA, r = -.27, p < .01; LPLA, r = -.22, p < .05). Because their reliabilities were low, the results are only suggestive and not conclusive. Further studies would be needed.

Study 2 Discussion

The findings in Study 2 demonstrated criterion validity evidence for the WEAT-P. While Study 1 showed that the WEAT-P was significantly and negatively related to job stress, Study 2, with a working sample, showed that the WEAT-P was much more strongly related to job stress, particularly hindrance stress. This was in line with the theory behind challenge and hindrance stressors. Challenge stressors are components of the workplace that encourage and challenge employees to work harder. It could be portrayed as the "good" stress, that many times is needed for organizations to motivate employees (Cavanaugh et al., 2000). The WEAT-P did not affect challenge stress, which suggests that EI could ultimately help organizations through its effects on positive outcomes. Hindrance stressors have been shown to negatively affect organizational outcomes. The WEAT-P showed a negative correlation with hindrance stressors, with the caveat that the hindrance stress measure showed poor reliability (.61). More studies will be needed to see if this result can be replicated. This suggests that the WEAT-P could be useful in predicting workplace stress that is related to hindrances. Hindrance stressors are job components that are beyond employees' control.

Study 2 had some limitations. Like Study 1, Study 2 was also cross-sectional. Job stress occurs over a period of time. Reactions to it also occur over a period of time. Therefore, to understand the finer details of how each stressor leads to stress and how each stressor leads to certain kinds of emotions, a longitudinal and/or sampling design (e.g., Rodell & Judge, 2009) would be even more informative.

General Discussion

Theoretical Implications

WEAT-P is the only measure of Emotion Perception specifically designed for the workplace. The WEAT-P, with 3 item packets and 33 items, is also one of the shortest measures of individual dimensions of EI. Observing the results of the three studies, the WEAT-P showed good reliability and discriminant validity. Overall, the WEAT-P did not correlate substantially with neuroticism and extraversion. The WEAT-P was also useful in predicting job stress and JNA. As far as is known, this is the first study that has examined the role of EI-perception ability and these constructs. In addition to showing the predictive and incremental validity of the new measure, the paper also demonstrated the role of EI-perception in outcomes that could potentially emerge from job stress and/or negative job effects.

Managerial Implications

The relationship between EI and job stress and EI and active JNA are also particularly interesting. Scientists and practitioners often write about the "calming" role of EI in stressful situations at work (Jordan et al., 2002). Thus, the WEAT-P could be potentially useful in selecting and assigning individuals in the kinds of jobs that would typically encounter highly affective and/or stressful situations (e.g., attending to a seriously injured patient at an emergency room). Because of the short length of the scale, it is also believed that researchers and practitioners will be able to practically assess EI-perception in active working situations.

Limitations and Direction for Future Research

This study had several limitations. First, in Study 1, the measure indicated fit indices that were lower than the cut-offs recommended by Schumacher and Lomax (1996). However, in Study 2, the measure showed excellent fit. Study 2 had the most experienced sample compared to Study 1. This could have influenced the fit. Second, reliabilities of some of the measures (e.g., LPLA in Study 1; LPHA and LPLA in Study 2) had reliabilities lower than 0.7. Those results should only be taken as suggestive and not conclusive — more studies will be needed to further confirm the differential role of EI-perception in these outcomes. Third, the study overall seemed to explain a lower amount of variance than most studies. However, looking at the literature, this seems to be fairly typical of EI-perception (e.g., r = .17 with leadership behavior, Rubin et al., 2005; meta-analytic r = .18 with performance in highly affective jobs) (Joseph & Newman, 2010). This level of prediction will hopefully be crucial to organizations.

While this study demonstrated some effects of EI, it also revealed other interesting areas of future research. Further research could examine this effect in more detail. For example, would EI affect anger, anxiety, and sadness differently? Similarly, would EI have different effects on different kinds of stress? More studies could also investigate whether EI moderates the relationship between job stress and JNA.

Conclusion

To conclude, the two studies presented in this paper underlined the role of EI-perception in such relevant criteria as motivation to lead, job stress, and Job-related Negative Affect in the workplace.

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Appendix A: *Workplace Emotional Abilities Test-Perception (WEAT-P)*

1. Your coworker was unfairly punished by your immediate supervisor. Please rate how strongly you would feel the following emotions. 1=do not feel at all & 7=feel very strongly

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Interest							
Joy							
Sadness							
Anger							
Disgust							
Fear							
Frustration							
Pride							
Guilt							
Shame							
Embarrassment							

2. Your coworker has recently experienced a life changing personal problem. That is now carrying over to their work. Please rate how strongly you would feel the following emotions. 1=do not feel at all & 7=feel very strongly

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Interest							
Joy							
Sadness							
Anger							
Disgust							
Fear							
Frustration							
Pride							
Guilt							
Shame							
Embarrassment							

3. John is a sales engineer at a musical instrument retailer. One day, a customer praised his extra effort and warm customer service. Please rate how strongly John is likely to feel the following emotions. 1=do not feel at all & 7=feel very strongly

Each of the three vignettes was followed by the following list of emotions and ratings scales.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Interest							
Joy							
Sadness							
Anger							
Disgust							
Fear							
Frustration							
Pride							
Guilt							
Shame							
Embarrassment							