INTERPERSONAL REACTIVITY INDEX (IRI)

Reference:


Description of Measure:

Defines empathy as the “reactions of one individual to the observed experiences of another (Davis, 1983).”

28-items answered on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “Does not describe me well” to “Describes me very well”. The measure has 4 subscales, each made up of 7 different items. These subscales are (taken directly from Davis, 1983):

- **Perspective Taking** – the tendency to spontaneously adopt the psychological point of view of others
- **Fantasy** – taps respondents' tendencies to transpose themselves imaginatively into the feelings and actions of fictitious characters in books, movies, and plays
- **Empathic Concern** – assesses "other-oriented" feelings of sympathy and concern for unfortunate others
- **Personal Distress** – measures "self-oriented" feelings of personal anxiety and unease in tense interpersonal settings

Abstracts of Selected Related Articles:


The past decade has seen growing movement toward a view of empathy as a multidimensional construct. The Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI; Davis, 1980), which taps four separate aspects of empathy, is described, and its relationships with measures of social functioning, self-esteem, emotionality, and sensitivity to others is assessed. As expected, each of the four subscales displays a distinctive and predictable pattern of relationships with these measures, as well as with previous unidimensional empathy measures. These findings, coupled with the theoretically important relationships existing among the four subscales themselves, provide considerable evidence for a multidimensional approach to empathy in general and for the use of the IRI in particular.


The hierarchical factor structure of the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) (Davis, 1980) inventory was investigated with the Schmid-Leiman orthogonalization procedure (Schmid & Leiman, 1957). The sample consisted of 409 college students. The analysis found that the IRI could be factored into four first-order factors,
corresponding to the four scales of the IRI, and two second-order orthogonal factors, a general empathy factor and an emotional control factor.

**Scale (taken from mailer.fsu.edu/~cfigley/Tests/IRI.RTF):**

**INTERPERSONAL REACTIVITY INDEX**

The following statements inquire about your thoughts and feelings in a variety of situations. For each item, indicate how well it describes you by choosing the appropriate letter on the scale at the top of the page: A, B, C, D, or E. When you have decided on your answer, fill in the letter next to the item number. READ EACH ITEM CAREFULLY BEFORE RESPONDING. Answer as honestly as you can. Thank you.

**ANSWER SCALE:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DOES NOT</td>
<td>DESCRIBE ME</td>
<td>ME WELL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I daydream and fantasize, with some regularity, about things that might happen to me. (FS)</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me. (EC)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>I sometimes find it difficult to see things from the &quot;other guy's&quot; point of view. (PT) (-)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Sometimes I don't feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems. (EC) (-)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>I really get involved with the feelings of the characters in a novel. (FS)</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>In emergency situations, I feel apprehensive and ill-at-ease. (PD)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>I am usually objective when I watch a movie or play, and I don't often get completely caught up in it. (FS) (-)</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision. (PT)</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective towards them. (EC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I sometimes feel helpless when I am in the middle of a very emotional situation. (PD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective. (PT)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
12. Becoming extremely involved in a good book or movie is somewhat rare for me. (FS) (-)

13. When I see someone get hurt, I tend to remain calm. (PD) (-)

14. Other people's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal. (EC) (-)

15. If I'm sure I'm right about something, I don't waste much time listening to other people's arguments. (PT) (-)

16. After seeing a play or movie, I have felt as though I were one of the characters. (FS)

17. Being in a tense emotional situation scares me. (PD)

18. When I see someone being treated unfairly, I sometimes don't feel very much pity for them. (EC) (-)

19. I am usually pretty effective in dealing with emergencies. (PD) (-)

20. I am often quite touched by things that I see happen. (EC)

21. I believe that there are two sides to every question and try to look at them both. (PT)

22. I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person. (EC)

23. When I watch a good movie, I can very easily put myself in the place of a leading character. (FS)

24. I tend to lose control during emergencies. (PD)

25. When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his shoes" for a while. (PT)

26. When I am reading an interesting story or novel, I imagine how I would feel if the events in the story were happening to me. (FS)

27. When I see someone who badly needs help in an emergency, I go to pieces. (PD)

28. Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place. (PT)
NOTE: (-) denotes item to be scored in reverse fashion
    PT = perspective-taking scale
    FS = fantasy scale
    EC = empathic concern scale
    PD = personal distress scale

    A = 0
    B = 1
    C = 2
    D = 3
    E = 4

Except for reversed-scored items, which are scored:

    A = 4
    B = 3
    C = 2
    D = 1
    E = 0
HOGAN EMPATHY SCALE (HES)

Reference:

Description of Measure:

Defines empathy as “the intellectual or imaginative apprehension of another’s condition or state of mind (Hogan, 1969).”

64-item scale composed of 31 items selected from the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI; Hathaway & McKinley, 1943), 25 items selected from the California Psychological Inventory (CPI; Gough, 1964) and 8 items created by Hogan and colleagues.

Abstracts of Selected Related Articles:


This article reviews measures of empathy with a focus on the two most recent and widely used measures, the Hogan Empathy Scale and the Questionnaire Measure of Emotional Empathy (QMEE). The development and validity of each scale is discussed as well as the scales’ relation to measures of personality and moral conduct and character. Although both the Hogan Empathy Scale and QMME have adequate validity, they seem to measure different aspects of empathy.


This paper reviewed several studies that (a) supported the idea that empathy is an important aspect of interpersonal behavior and moral conduct and (b) provided further evidence for the validity of an empathy scale. In addition, Minres factor analyses were performed to determine the underlying structure of the empathy scale and its relationship to the California Psychological Inventory (CPI) from which it can be scored. The items on the scale were sorted into three factors: tolerant, even-tempered disposition; ascendant, sociable interpersonal style; and humanistic sociopolitical attitudes. With regard to the CPI, the scale was most closely related to the factor labeled interpersonal adequacy. Characteristics of empathic persons and uses of the empathy scale in future research were discussed.

Factor analysis of Hogan's Empathy Scale, scored in Likert format, yielded four factors: Social Self-Confidence, Even Temperedness, Sensitivity, and Nonconformity. Correlations with 16 different personality measures and a set of 12 adjective rating scales confirmed the factors' unique psychological meanings. Empathy subscales, created from items loading primarily on one factor, accounted for roughly equal amounts of variance in Hogan's original Q-set empathy criterion, although the Sensitivity and Nonconformity factors appeared to be slightly more important. Implications discussed include ways to improve the scoring of the Empathy Scale for future research and several broader measurement issues: the costs and benefits of using sophisticated statistics, the importance of manifest item content, and the importance of scale homogeneity.

**Scale:**

**A. Items in the CPI:**
4(T), 8(T), 25 (F), 67(F), 79(F), 81(F), 84(T), 86(T), 97-(T), 98(F), 100(T), 127(T), 186(F), 191(T), 194(F), 198(T), 239(T), 247(F), 255(F), 271(F), 275(T), 287(T), 359(T), 361(F), 363(F), 364(F), 403(T), 421(F), 442(F), 463(F).

**B. Items in the MMPI:**
15(F), 26(F), 57(T), 73(F), 78(T), 79(F), 100(T), 129(F), 170(F), 204(T), 231(T), 244(F), 248(T), 254(T), 327(F), 336(F), 355(T), 372(T), 399(T), 404(F), 407(T), 410(T), 417(F), 463(F), 478(F).

**C. Additional 8 Items:**
- As a rule I have little difficulty in "putting myself into other people's shoes." (T)
- I have seen some things so sad that I almost felt like crying. (T)
- Disobedience to the government is never justified. (F)
- It is the duty of a citizen to support his country, right or wrong. (F)
- I am usually rather short-tempered with people who come around and bother me with foolish questions. (F)
- I have a pretty clear idea of what I would try to impart to my students if I were a teacher. (T)
- I enjoy the company of strong-willed people. (T)
- I frequently undertake more than I can accomplish. (T)
QUESTIONNAIRE MEASURE OF EMOTIONAL EMPATHY (QMEE)

Reference:

Description of Measure:
Defines empathy as “a vicarious emotional response to the perceived emotional experiences of others (Mehrabian & Epstein, 1972).”

33-items that measure affective role-taking empathy. Items are completed using a 4-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Abstracts of Selected Related Articles:

This article reviews measures of empathy with a focus on the two most recent and widely used measures, the Hogan Empathy Scale and the Questionnaire Measure of Emotional Empathy (QMEE). The development and validity of each scale is discussed as well as the scales' relation to measures of personality and moral conduct and character. Although both the Hogan Empathy Scale and QMME have adequate validity, they seem to measure different aspects of empathy.


Uncertainty reduction theory argues that certain trait variables influence the process of information gathering. This article examines the validity of scales designed to tap three such trait variables. First-order and second-order confirmatory factor analyses were conducted to assess the psychometric adequacy of the Emotional Empathy Scale, the Self-Consciousness Scales, and the Self-Monitoring Scale. The Emotional Empathy Scale was shown to be construct invalid in that it was multidimensional at both the first- and second-order factor levels. The subscales may be useful, but the composite score is meaningless. The data also showed that the two Self-Consciousness Scales could be reduced to a single second-order factor. This raises some questions about how the scales should be treated, but does not pose any problems for interpreting earlier research. Finally, the Self-Monitoring Scale yielded four primary factors and two second-order factors.

Contact Dr. Mehrabian directly for permission to use items.