

If you can regulate sadness, you can probably regulate shame: Associations between trait emotional intelligence, emotion regulation and coping efficiency across discrete emotions

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Abstract

The construct of trait emotional intelligence [trait EI] encompasses individual dispositions related to the perception, processing, regulation, and utilization of emotional information. These emotion-related dispositions are located at the lower levels of personality hierarchies. Prior studies found that trait EI promoted the utilization of adaptive coping strategies to regulate stress. The present study examined (1) whether this effect would extend to other emotions and (2) whether the coping styles used to regulate a given emotion would mediate the effect of trait EI on the propensity to experience that particular emotion. Analyses revealed that trait EI promoted the choice of adaptive strategies not only in the case of stress, but also anger, sadness, fear, jealousy, and shame. Trait EI also promoted the use of adaptive strategies to maintain joy. We also found that high trait EI individuals' choice of adaptive strategies to down-regulate various negative emotions and maintain positive ones explained their decreased propensity to experience these negative emotions and their increased propensity to experience positive ones.

Keywords: Trait emotional intelligence; Emotion regulation; Coping; Discrete emotions; Mediation; Trait affectivity

1. Introduction

Modern theories emphasize the functional nature of emotions (Damasio, 1994). Yet, emotions are not always helpful. As pointed out by Gross and Thompson (2007), emotions become dysfunctional when they are of the wrong type, when they come at the wrong time, or when they occur at the wrong intensity level. In these cases, emotions typically need to be regulated. Emotional regulation refers to the processes through which individuals influence which emotions they have, when they have them, and how they experience or express these emotions (Gross, 1998). Although people typically try to decrease the subjective and/or expressive aspects of negative emotions (Gross, Richards, & John, 2006), positive emotions are also regulated. They can be down-regulated (e.g., when we try to decrease feelings of attraction for a colleague who is married), maintained (e.g., when we engage in social sharing in order to prolong the effects of a positive event), and even up-regulated (such as when we try to increase our amusement at a colleague's supposedly funny joke).

In addition to being a universal and recurring psychological process, emotion regulation is a crucial one. Impaired emotional regulation can lead to critical consequences for social relationships as well as for mental and physical health (for a review, see Bruchon-Schweitzer, 2002). As a matter of fact, over half of the non-substance related axis I disorders and all of axis II DSM disorders involve some form of emotion dysregulation (Gross & Levenson, 1997).

Despite the importance of emotion regulation for adaptation, individuals greatly vary in their ability and propensity to implement regulatory processes (Gross & John, 2003). Whereas some individuals appear perfectly able to control their irritation when dealing with a stubborn administrator, others lose their temper, thereby only worsening their situation. Emotional intelligence (EI) is part of the various concepts that have been proposed to account for this variability. EI aims to provide a scientific framework for the idea that individuals differ in the extent to which they attend to, process, and utilize affect-laden information of an *intrapersonal* (e.g., regulating one's own emotions) or *interpersonal* (e.g., regulating others' emotions) nature (Petrides & Furnham, 2003). Two complementary conceptions of emotional intelligence currently co-exist: ability EI and trait EI. Ability models (e.g., Mayer & Salovey, 1997) conceive EI as a form of intelligence best assessed via intelligence-like (i.e., performance) tests. In contrast, trait models (e.g., Petrides & Furnham, 2003) view EI as emotion-related dispositions and aim at organizing in a single framework the key affect-related aspects of personality (Petrides,

Pérez-González, & Furnham, 2007). The trait perspective focuses on typical performance and assesses EI via personality-like tests (i.e., self-reports). Although often presented as competitors, we think of these perspectives as being complementary: the former captures what the individual is capable of doing, whereas the latter aims to capture how much of this knowledge/competence translates into practice (Petrides & Furnham, 2000). The present paper focuses on the trait EI perspective.

Several studies have suggested that trait EI is a particularly useful construct to capture individual differences in emotion regulation. For instance, Mikolajczak and colleagues have repeatedly found that high EI people display less of an increase in distress than their low EI peers in response to various adverse events or conditions. In applied settings, students with higher trait EI scores displayed a smaller increase in psychological symptoms and somatic complaints during exams than their lower trait EI counterparts (Mikolajczak, Luminet, & Menil, 2006). In the same vein, nurses with higher trait EI scores reported lower levels of burnout and somatic complaints than nurses with lower scores (Mikolajczak, Menil, & Luminet, 2007). These findings were replicated in laboratory settings, in which trait EI was found to moderate both the subjective [mood deterioration, emotional intensity, action tendencies and bodily sensations] and endocrine response to acute stressors (for subjective components, see Mikolajczak, Luminet, Leroy, & Roy, 2007 and Mikolajczak, Petrides, Luminet, & Coumans, 2007; for neuroendocrine component, see Mikolajczak, Roy, Luminet, Fillée, & de Timary, 2007).

While the processes underlying such adaptive effects have long been largely overlooked, studies have recently begun to address this gap. The question is not trivial, indeed, as many processes can potentially account for this effect (e.g., appraisals, automatic processing of emotional information, coping strategies). There is preliminary evidence that trait EI influences the appraisal of both the situation and one's resources to face it (Mikolajczak & Luminet, in press), and that these appraisals mediate the effect of trait EI on the emotional response to the situation (Mikolajczak et al., 2006). There is also evidence that trait EI might influence the choice of coping strategies, namely the specific behavioural and psychological strategies that people implement in order to deal with negative events. Petrides, Pérez-González, et al. (2007) and Petrides, Pérez-González, et al. (2007) as well as Saklofske, Austin, Galloway, and Davidson (2007) have shown that trait EI is positively associated with the use of adaptive coping strategies (e.g., problem-focused coping) and negatively associated with the use of maladaptive coping strategies (e.g., avoidance). While these studies enhance our understanding of the processes through which people deal with the emotions elicited by negative situations, they also raise two new research questions. Firstly, do coping strategies *mediate* the relationship between trait EI and adaptive outcomes? It is indeed not sufficient to show that EI influences coping strategies, it must still be demonstrated that these coping strategies actually mediate the link between EI and relevant outcomes. Secondly, is trait EI associated with adaptive coping strategies regardless of the emotion considered? As pointed out by LeDoux (1998), "*the various classes of emotions are mediated by separated neural systems that have evolved for different reasons (ex. fear and sexual pleasure) [...] We should not mix findings about different emotions all together independent of the emotions that they are findings about*". Thus, it is not obvious that some people are able to regulate *all kinds of emotions* better than their peers. The hypothesis that EI facilitates the regulation of all emotions must therefore be tested.

The present study represents a preliminary investigation into these issues. Firstly, we sought to replicate Saklofske et al. (2007) and Petrides, Pérez-González, et al., 2007 and Petrides, Petrides, Pita, and Kokkinaki (2007) findings that trait EI is generally associated with adaptive rather than maladaptive coping style. Secondly, we examined whether this effect was replicable across different categories of emotions. Finally, we tested whether the coping styles adopted to deal with a particular emotion mediated the influence of EI on the propensity to experience that particular emotion.

2. Method

2.1. Participants and procedure

Two hundred and three students (166 woman and 37 men) completed the questionnaires during a Psychology class. Participation was not compulsory and questionnaires were thus completed on a voluntary basis. The mean age for the sample was 22.16 years (SD = 8.69 years).

2.2. Measures

Trait emotional intelligence was measured through the French version of the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue; Petrides & Furnham, 2003; for the psychometric properties of the French adaptation used in this study, see Mikolajczak, Luminet, et al., 2007). The TEIQue consists of 153 items responded to on a

7-point scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree; see Appendix for sample items). It provides scores for 15 subscales, four factors (*well-being*, $\alpha = \textit{self-control}$, *emotionality*, and *sociability*) and global trait EI. A description of the factors and subscales is provided in Appendix A. The internal consistency of the global score was .88 in the present study.

The general emotion regulation style was assessed through the Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (CERQ; Garnefski, Kraaij, & Spinhoven, 2002; French validation by Jermann, Van der Linden, d'Acremont, & Zermatten, 2006). The CERQ comprises 36 items based on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = almost never to 5 = almost always), measuring nine coping strategies (4 items per subscale). Five of these strategies are usually thought as adaptive in that they have been associated with good indicators of adaptation: acceptance (accepting what happened as a part of life; $\alpha = .68$), refocus on planning (i.e., \approx problem-focused coping: thinking about what steps to take and how to handle the negative event; $\alpha = .83$), positive refocus (i.e., mental distraction: invoking pleasant thoughts or memories in order to distract oneself from the event; $\alpha = .88$); positive reappraisal (i.e., looking for the silver lining; $\alpha = .83$); putting the problem into perspective (i.e., mentally decreasing the seriousness of the event by comparing it to more serious events; $\alpha = .80$). The last four strategies are usually viewed as maladaptive because they have been associated with poor indicators of adaptation: Self-blame (i.e., cognitions consisting of blaming oneself for the occurrence of the problem and/or for one's incapacity to solve it; $\alpha = .81$), others-blame (i.e., cognitions consisting of blaming others for the occurrence of the problem and/or their incapacity to solve it; $\alpha = .74$), rumination (i.e., persevering focus on thoughts and feelings associated with an emotion-eliciting event; $\alpha = .72$), catastrophisation (i.e., mental focus on the negative consequences of the event; $\alpha = .64$).

The discrete emotion regulation style was assessed through the Emotion Regulation Profile Questionnaire (ERP-Q; Nelis, Quoidbach, & Mikolajczak, 2007; $\alpha = .77$). The ERP-Q is a vignette-based measure that has been recently developed in order to compensate for the lack of instruments measuring coping styles associated with specific emotions. The ERP-Q comprises 12 scenarios targeting 6 emotion categories: anger/irritation, sadness/nostalgia, fear/anxiety, jealousy/envy, shame/guilt and joy/plenitude. Each scenario is associated with six possible reactions: three considered as adaptive in the literature (e.g., positive reappraisal, social support seeking, acceptance) and three viewed as maladaptive (avoidance, substance abuse, rumination).

Respondents are required to circle, for each scenario, the two strategies s/he would most likely use and the two strategies s/he would most likely not use. Respondents are credited 1 point if they select a functional strategy or reject a dysfunctional strategy and -1 point if they select a dysfunctional strategy or reject a functional strategy. Psychometrical properties of the ERP-Q appear to be promising in that it correlates in meaningful and significant ways with neuroticism (-.56), adaptive coping (.41), maladaptive coping (-.36), anxiety (-.36), severe depression (-.40), social dysfunction (-.19) and somatic symptoms (-.22). As can be seen in Table 2, it also predicts the extent to which the individual experiences various related discrete emotions: the highest the ability to regulate a specific emotion (as measured by the ERP-Q), the lowest the propensity to experience that specific emotion (as measured by the QuEST) (see Table 2, bold correlations).

The propensity to experience various discrete emotions was assessed via the Quoidbach's Emotional Style Test (QuEST; Quoidbach, Mikolajczak, Nelis, & Hansenne, 2007). The QuEST comprises 47 items responded to on a 5-point scale (1: absolutely false to 5: absolutely true) which measure the propensity to experience seven discrete emotions: joy (e.g., "My friends perceive me as someone cheerful"; $\alpha = .75$), anger (e.g., "I easily loose my temper"; $\alpha = .84$), sadness (e.g., "When I feel down, it never lasts long"; $\alpha = .83$), fear (e.g., "It is hard to scare me"; $\alpha = .67$), envy (e.g., "I feel sometimes resentful about the success of my relatives"; $\alpha = .76$), shame (e.g., "I am seldom embarrassed in public"; $\alpha = .76$) and disgust (e.g., "I would be shocked to hear that one of my friend changes underwear only once a week"; $\alpha = .65$). The psychometric properties of the QuEST appear to be promising. The factorial structure of the questionnaire is good (principal components analysis identified seven factors with eigenvalues greater than those extracted by the parallel analysis, the pattern matrix looks as expected, and the mean correlation between theoretically-derived and empirically-derived factors is .92, SD = 0.04). The convergent and predictive validity seem to be promising as well, as indicated by the following examples. The "joy" dimension of QuEST correlates positively with the "positive emotions" facet of the NEO-PI-R (.78); the shame dimension relates negatively to the "assertiveness" facet of the NEO-PI-R (-.58); the anger dimension relates negatively to agreeableness (-.49). Finally, the sadness dimension of QuEST predicts the level of depression and somatic complaints over and above the five dimension of the NEO-PI-R (the increment of variance explained is 6% and 2%, respectively, $p < 0.001$ and $p < 0.05$).

2.3. Statistical procedures

The relationships between trait EI, general emotion regulation style, discrete emotion regulation style, and the propensity to experience various discrete emotions were first analysed through Pearson correlations. Mediation analyses (see Baron & Kenny, 1986) were then carried out to statistically determine whether the effect of trait EI on the propensity to experience various discrete emotions was explained by the coping strategies used to regulate these specific emotions. According to Baron and Kenny (1986), mediation is said to occur when (1) the independent variable (IV) significantly influences the mediator, (2) the IV significantly influences the dependent variable (DV) in the absence of the mediator, (3) the mediator has a unique effect on the DV and (4) the effect of the IV on the DV shrinks upon the addition of the mediator to the model. Full mediation is said to occur when this latter effect drops to zero, partial mediation is said to occur when this effect diminishes but remains significant. In case of partial mediation, a Sobel test (1982) has to be performed to ensure that the indirect effect of the IV on the DV via the mediator is significantly different from zero. Mediation coefficients (unstandardized) and Sobel test statistics were obtained using the SPSS macros and procedures developed by Preacher and Hayes (2004).

3. Results

3.1. Trait emotional intelligence and general emotion regulation style

As shown in Table 1, trait EI is positively related to the use of positive reappraisal, positive refocus, refocus of planning, and putting in perspective. Although their weight in the global score may vary, all trait EI factors contribute to these effects (see Table 1 for a detailed breakdown of the factors). In addition to promoting the choice of positive strategies ($r = .44, p < .001$), trait EI seems to also prevent the choice of maladaptive strategies ($r = -.28, p < .001$). That is, trait EI is negatively related to self-blame and catastrophisation (only the factors *well-being* and *self-control* explain the latter effect). By contrast, trait EI was found to be unrelated to blaming others and rumination (*well-being*, *self-control* and *sociability* decrease the propensity to ruminate, but *emotional sensitivity* seems to increase it).

3.2. Trait emotional intelligence and discrete emotion regulation style

As shown in Table 2, Trait EI is positively associated with the global ERP-Q score ($r = .52, p < .001$), thereby replicating the foregoing findings according to which trait EI promotes the use of more adaptive regulation strategies. Most important, however, this effect held true for all sub-dimensions of the ERP-Q. That is, trait EI promotes more adaptive coping strategies both to maintain joy and to down-regulate fear, anger, sadness, envy and shame (see Table 2).

Table 1: Pearson correlations between trait emotional intelligence and the use of coping strategies in general

	TEIQue-global	Well-being	Self-control	Emotional sensitivity	Sociability
Total adaptive coping	.44***	.51***	.42***	.24***	.40***
Acceptance	-.06	.01	.23***	-.10	-.03
Positive refocus	.41***	.46***	.22**	.28***	.30***
Refocus of planning	.40***	.40***	.44***	.24***	.28***
Positive reappraisal	.46***	.50***	.38***	.28***	.47***
Putting in perspective	.33***	.43***	.29***	.12 [†]	.38***
Total maladaptive coping	-.28***	-.45***	-.30***	-.02	-.21**
Self-blame	-.37***	-.50***	-.30***	-.14 [†]	-.30***
Rumination	-.10	-.28***	-.19**	.15*	-.14*
Catastrophisation	-.23***	-.33***	-.28***	-.06	-.07
Blaming others	-.07	-.11	-.04	-.03	-.03

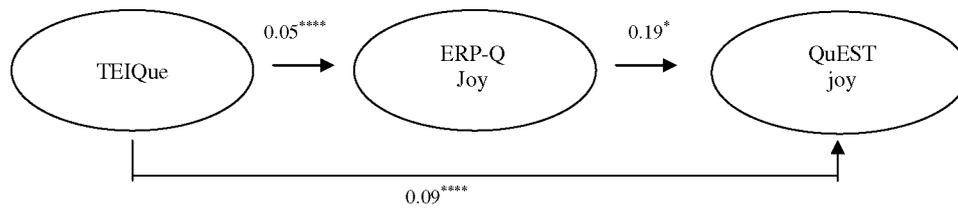
Note. * $p \leq .05$. ** $p \leq .01$. *** $p \leq .001$. [†] $p < .10$.

Table 2: Pearson correlations between trait emotional intelligence (TEIQue), the efficiency to regulate various emotions (ERP-Q) and the propensity to experience these emotions (QuEST)

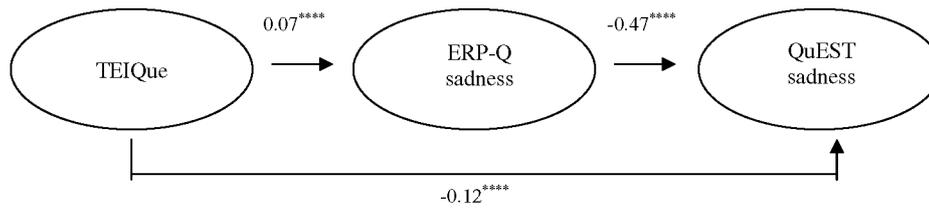
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1. TEIQue	1														
2. ERP _joy	.35***	1													
3. ERP _fear	.35***	.31***	1												
4. ERP _anger	.36***	.35***	.36***	1											
5. ERP _sadness	.39***	.27***	.43***	.36***	1										
6. ERP _envy	.24***	.22**	.32***	.39***	.49***	1									
7. ERP _shame	.40***	.21***	.25***	.33***	.44***	.36***	1								
8. ERP -Q global	.52***	.58***	.64***	.68***	.76***	.72***	.64***	1							
9. QuEST _joy	.52***	.30***	.24***	.23***	.25***	.22**	.18**	.35***	1						
10. QuEST _fear	-.25***	-.19**	.02	-.11	-.17*	-.19**	-.06	-.19**	-.22***	1					
11. QuEST _anger	-.14 [†]	-.12 [†]	-.19**	-.38***	-.34***	-.43***	-.26***	-.44***	-.07	.09	1				
12. QuEST _sadness	-.60***	-.27***	-.34***	-.33***	-.50***	-.35***	-.38***	-.54***	-.45***	.37***	.36***	1			
13. QuEST _envy	-.42***	-.15*	-.28***	-.27***	-.46***	-.49***	-.27***	-.49***	-.22**	.17*	.39***	.51***	1		
14. QuEST _shame	-.60***	-.23***	-.26***	-.29***	-.29***	-.22***	-.20**	-.37***	-.29***	.35***	.07	.39***	.45***	1	
15. QuEST _disgust	-.15*	-.14***	-.08	-.13 [†]	-.11	-.18*	-.13 [†]	-.20**	-.02	.48***	.25***	.23***	.14 [†]	.36***	1

Note. * $p \leq .05$. ** $p \leq .01$. *** $p \leq .001$. [†] $p < .10$.

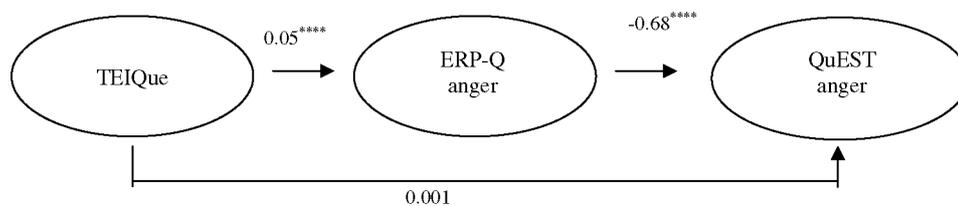
Fig. 1: Mediating role of the efficiency to regulate a discrete emotion on the propensity to experience that same emotion.



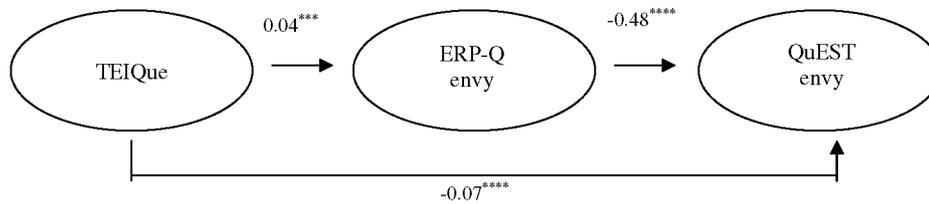
(a) Mediating role of the efficiency to maintain joy in the propensity to experience joy.



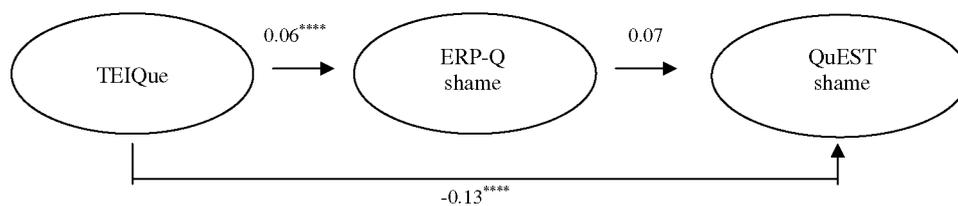
(b) Mediating role of the efficiency to down-regulate sadness in the propensity to experience sadness.



(c) Mediating role of the efficiency to down-regulate anger in the propensity to experience anger.



(d) Mediating role of the efficiency to down-regulate envy in the propensity to experience envy.



(e) Mediating role of the efficiency to down-regulate shame in the propensity to experience shame. Note. Coefficients are unstandardized coefficients. Sobel's statistics for figures 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d and 1e are $z = 1.99$ ($p \leq .05$), $z = -4.02$ ($p \leq .0001$), $z = -3.866$ ($p \leq .0001$), $z = -3.106$ ($p \leq .0001$), and $z = 0.72$ ($p = ns$), respectively, **** $p \leq .0001$; *** $p \leq .001$; ** $p \leq .01$; * $p \leq .05$.

3.3. Trait emotional intelligence and the propensity to experience various emotions

As expected, trait EI was found to be associated with an increased propensity to experience joy and a decreased propensity to experience fear, anger, sadness, envy, shame and disgust (see Table 2).

3.4. Emotion regulation style as a mediator between trait EI and the propensity to experience discrete emotions

Since the above mentioned analyses revealed a significant association between trait EI and both the style used to regulate a particular emotion and the propensity to experience this particular emotion, it was important to test whether the strategies used to regulate specific emotions mediated the relationship between trait EI and the propensity to experience these emotions. Such a mediation was likely, given that correlations between the ERP-Q facets and the QuEST facets suggest that the way one regulates a given emotion directly affects the propensity to experience that particular emotion (see bold correlations in Table 2). Note that meditation could not be tested for the emotion of "fear" because the correlation between the fear dimensions of the ERP-Q and the QuEST was statistically null.

Mediation coefficients (unstandardized) are reported in Fig. 1a-e. The significance of the indirect effects are indicated in the notes. In summary, Sobel tests indicated that the efficiency to regulate joy, sadness, anger and envy mediated the link between trait EI and the propensity to experience joy, sadness, anger and envy. The mediation was total in the case of anger and partial for the other emotions. It is noteworthy that the efficiency to regulate shame did not mediate the relationship between trait EI and the propensity to experience shame.

4. Discussion

The present study first replicates Saklofske et al. (2007) and Petrides and colleagues (2007) findings that trait EI is associated with adaptive rather than maladaptive coping styles. When confronted with a negative situation, high trait EI individuals seem particularly inclined to look for the silver lining, invoke pleasant thoughts or memories in order to counter their current emotional state, think about what steps to take in order to handle the problem, and put it into perspective. In contrast, they seem less likely to catastrophize or to blame themselves for the occurrence of the problem and/or for their incapacity to solve it.

Our study also extends previous findings in three ways. Firstly, we found that trait EI does not only promote the choice of adaptive strategies in the case of stress, but also in the case of anger, sadness, fear, jealousy, and shame. This study is the first one to investigate whether the ability to regulate one type of emotion extends to other types of emotions. In addition to promoting the use of adaptive strategies to down-regulate negative emotions, trait EI seems also to promote the use of adaptive strategies to maintain positive emotional states such as joy and plenitude.

Secondly, our findings suggest that high EI individuals' superior capacity to *choose* adaptive coping strategies to down-regulate negative emotions and maintain positive ones is accompanied by a superior capacity to *implement* them. We indeed found that trait EI was associated with a lower propensity to experience negative emotions and higher propensity to experience positive emotions. The latter finding is particularly important because it suggests that high EI individuals are not less emotional in general. That is, high levels of EI are not underlain by lower emotional intensity but by a much more fine-tuned emotion regulation.

Thirdly, mediation analyses revealed that the efficiency of the strategies used to regulate a given emotion partially explains the propensity to experience that particular emotion. Namely, high trait EI individuals' choice of adaptive strategies to down-regulate various negative emotions and maintain positive ones explains their decreased propensity to experience these negative emotions and their increased propensity to experience positive ones.

The increased efficiency to regulate various emotions may account for the relationship between emotional intelligence and long-term indicators of adaptation. Firstly, it may explain why high trait EI individuals are less prone to mental disorders (Petrides, Pérez-González, et al., 2007; see Schutte, Malouff, Thorsteinsson, Bhullar, & Rooke, 2007 for a meta-analysis). Clinical features such as anxiety, depression and other mood disorders have indeed been construed as maladaptive attempts to regulate unwanted emotions (Campbell-Sills & Barlow, 2007, p. 543). Secondly, it may also explain the positive relationship repeatedly found between trait EI and the quality and quantity of social support (e.g., Austin, Saklofske, & Egan, 2005; Mikolajczak, Luminet, et al., 2007). Several studies have indeed shown that the efficient regulation of emotions was essential to ensure high-quality social relationships (e.g., Keltner & Kring, 1998; Lopes, Salovey, Côté, & Beers, 2005).

Although informative, this study suffers from several limitations. First, most of the participants were young females, which raises direct concerns about the generalizability of the results to other populations. Second, results are based on self-report measures. However, as suggested by an anonymous reviewer, whilst being a self-

reported measure, the ERP-Q is a vignette-based instrument. This allows one to rule out the interpretation according to which the results would be attributable to common methods variance. Third, our design cannot establish a causal relationship because the analysis of the mediating process was based on cross-sectional measures. As pointed out by our anonymous reviewer, it seems reasonable that trait EI and emotional regulation strategies may precede the tendency to experience particular emotions, however, the cross-sectional nature of this study does not allow one to infer conclusive data on this issue. As suggested by Ciarrochi, Chan, and Caputi (2000), more or less happiness also influences the ability to perceive and manage one's emotions.

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Appendix: Theoretical factor structure of the TEIQue (replicated on our sample)

	High scorers perceive themselves as	Sample items
...		
Well-being		
Self-esteem	...successful and self-confident	I am not able to do things as well as most people
Trait happiness	...cheerful and satisfied with their lives	I generally do not find life enjoyable
Trait optimism	...confident and likely to "look on the bright side" of life	I tend to see the glass as half-empty rather than half-full (<i>R</i>)
Self-control		
Emotion regulation	...capable of controlling their emotions	I am usually able to calm down quickly after I have got mad at someone
Stress management	...capable of withstanding pressure and regulating stress	Others tell me that I get stressed very easily (<i>R</i>)
Impulsiveness (low)	...reflective and less likely to give in to their urges	I tend to rush into things without much planning (<i>R</i>)
Emotionality		
Emotion perception (self and others)	...clear about their own and other people's feelings	I often find it difficult to recognise what emotion I am feeling (<i>R</i>)
Emotion expression	...capable of communicating their feelings to others	Others tell me that I rarely speak about how I feel (<i>R</i>)
Relationship skills	...capable of having fulfilling personal relationships	Those close to me often complain that I do not treat them right (<i>R</i>)
Empathy	...capable of taking someone else's perspective	I often find it difficult to see things from another person's viewpoint (<i>R</i>)
Sociability		
Social awareness	...accomplished networkers with excellent social skills	I am generally good at social chitchat
Emotion management (others)	...capable of influencing other people's feelings	I am usually able to influence the way people feel
Assertiveness	...forthright, frank, and willing to stand up for their rights	I am a follower, not a leader (<i>R</i>)
Adaptability^a	...flexible and willing to adapt to new conditions	I do not mind frequently changing my daily routine
Self-motivation^a	...driven and unlikely to give up in the face of adversity	Generally, I need a lot of incentives in order to do my best (<i>R</i>)

^a These subscales contribute directly to the global trait EI score.