

Multidimensional Jealousy Scale (MJS): a contribution to validation in an Italian sample

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Background: Pfeiffer & Wong (1989) aimed to identify and empirically measure the founding aspects of romantic jealousy. According to the authors, it is a complex multidimensional construct based on three dimensions: cognitive, emotional, and behavioral. The first dimension is based on the frequency of paranoid thoughts regarding the partner's enactment of real or hypothetical infidelity; the second dimension represents the degree of emotional distress and irritation that the individual experiences in specific situations; the final dimension is based on the frequency of investigative/protective behaviors the individual has towards his/her partner. This model is the base for a self-report instrument used to measure these components: the Multidimensional Jealousy Scale (MJS; Pfeiffer & Wong, 1989). The present research aims to validate this scale in Italian.

Research Questions: verify the goodness of the 3 factor model by means of a Confirmatory Factorial Analysis (CFA); verify the instrument reliability; verify its convergent and divergent validity. Women should obtain higher scores in emotional and behavioral factors; individuals with high levels of anxious attachment should score higher in all factors.

Methods: MJS was translated into Italian through the back-translation method. 1093 participants (345 male, 748 female) aged 18 to 45 years ($M=24,91$; $SD=5,60$) in a stable couple relationship for at least 6 months ($M=49,50$; $SD=6,20$). Participants completed: Multidimensional Jealousy Scale (MJS; Pfeiffer & Wong, 1989); Experiences in Close Relationship-Revised (ECR-R; Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000; Calvo, 2008); Chronic Jealousy Scale (CJS; White, 1981b); Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS; Spanier, 1976; Gentili, Contreras, Cassaniti, D'Arista, 2002); Relationship Jealousy Scale (RJS; White, 1981c). A CFA was used to test the instrument's multidimensionality and confirm the goodness of the 3 factor model. Reliability for each factor was calculated with the index of internal consistency (α ; Cronbach, 1951); Reliability was evaluated with the test-retest method (t-test). Convergent and divergent validity were evaluated by means of Pearson's correlations between jealousy factors and factors from other instruments. Gender- and age-related differences were investigated with a Multivariate analysis of variance (MANCOVA).

Results: CFA confirmed the goodness of the 3 factor model, confirming the multidimensional nature of jealousy. Internal consistency indexes were good for all three factors: from .80 to .84 in the total sample; from .81 to .82 in the male sample; from .79 to .85 in the female sample. T-test results showed that there are no statistically significant differences between averages, and a good stability for all factors was found after one month. Convergent and divergent validity were supported by the great correlations between the MJS's three factors with other instruments' factors. Gender- and age-related differences were found.

Conclusions: The MJS is a reliable instrument, and it can be used to measure romantic jealousy in an Italian sample.

Key words: Romantic jealousy, Cognitive jealousy, Emotional jealousy, Behavioral jealousy, MJS.

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