Psychometric Properties and a Preliminary Validation Study of the Italian Brief Version of the Communication Styles Inventory (CSI-B/I)

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People will typically develop a communication style that tends to be coherent with their own fundamental personality traits. The current debate on communication style acknowledges the construct of adaptive behavior as an appropriate area where to include both the strictly personal aspects and social learning and cultural assimilation, which translate into communicative style as a specific form of adaptation integrating the behavioral and personality perspectives. Due to the lack of instruments in the Italian psychometric scenario to assess communication styles, the present study included the translation and validation of the Italian short version of the Communication Styles Inventory (CSI-B/I). Methods. The CSI-B/I was administered to a sample of 1,044 participants, while the concurrent validity was tested through a second administration to 518 participants along with the MPP (Multidimensional Personality Profile). Results. Confirmatory factor analysis bore out a three-factor solution (including 18 items) with good indices of adaptation to data, e.g., $\chi^2/df = 1.251$, RMSEA = 0.027, RMSEA 90% CI = 0.008–0.040, GFI = 0.958, AGFI = 0.937, CFI = 0.983 and NFI = 0.922. The CSI-B/I allows to measure three main dimensions of the communication style: impression manipulativeness; emotionality; expressiveness. Internal consistency reliability and significant correlations with the MPP supported the concurrent validity of the tool. Conclusion. By virtue of its good psychometric properties, CSI-B/I represents an important addition to the assessment in multiple contexts: companies, institutions, staff selection, individual and group profile analysis, coaching, psychotherapy, counseling, career guidance.

Keywords: communication styles, confirmatory analysis, impression manipulativeness, emotionality, expressiveness

INTRODUCTION

In the field of communication studies the problem with identifying interactive communication styles has been dealt with on the one hand as an identification of a stable and recurring model of communication practices and on the other hand as an interpretation of the specific influence of individual personality characteristics on the verbal and non-verbal manifestations of people.
Currently, the two approaches seem to be usefully converging toward an integrated solution of these two perspectives (Bakker-Pieper and De Vries, 2013; De Vries et al., 2013).

In defining communication style, researchers have for the most part used a description and a classification of the relational messages that individuals share in an interaction. Initially, Norton (1978, 1983) defined communication style as a relatively stable model of verbal and non-verbal interaction, associated to specific expectations of the role of the person. Besides identifying nine different styles of communication, he also added another construct referred to as communicator image, which measures the individual's rating of how he/she perceives his/her own efficacy in communication. Various researchers have subsequently criticized the low level of internal reliability of Norton's scale (Rubin and Martin, 1994; Horvath, 1998).

Hansford and Hattie (1987) while proceeding on the basis of Norton's work, have instead conducted a factorial structure analysis and identified five dimensions of communicative style (dominant, expressive, relaxed, animated, attentive) and they have isolated two second-order factors on the scale: animated-dominant and supportive-attentive.

Other researchers from an organizational ambit (Bolton and Bolton, 1984) have, however, developed a more social model of communication styles, based on two fundamental dimensions of social behavior: assertion and reactivity. The first aspect measures how much dominance and self-confidence is manifested by the person during communication; the second expresses the person's skills in conveying emotional reactions through communication. Bolton & Bolton also added another social dimension for versatility, that is, the individual's capability of changing his/her style whenever he/she realizes that the situation is putting him/her under pressure. Recent contributions enhance the appropriateness of the communicative style for the achievement of the organizational goals (Crews et al., 2019; Yang et al., 2020).

Other studies on communication styles have considered the effect of the cultural component. Consequently, a distinction has been made between modes of communication that are little influenced by the cultural context of belonging and modes of communication that are strongly influenced and dependent on the cultural context of reference. In the first case individuals tend to send explicit and direct messages, while in the second case the messages are indirect and contextualized and always need to be adequately interpreted in order to avoid misunderstanding (Croucher et al., 2012).

Kapoor et al. (2003) in their research have shown that the first style of communication is typical of individualistic cultures, while the second is more frequently found in cultures similar to the collective model. The research of Gudykunst et al. (1996) was also oriented toward the cultural-comparative ambit and produced the Scale of Communication Styles (CSS) made up of eight main dimensions (ambiguous and indirect communication, interpersonal sensitivity, positive perception of silence – more frequent in cultures that are highly dependent on their context; inference of significance, use of emotion, dramatization, authenticity, precision – mainly associated with individualistic cultures). Successively, Leung and Bond (2001) in their analyses, extracted three second-order factors from these eight dimensions: verbal involvement, attention toward others, management of emotions and silence.

The recent contribution of Reinout De Vries et al. (2009) stands out among these studies on communication styles. He used a lexical type approach to describe the communicative behavior. First he looked for the underlying factors in an ample group of adjectives and verbs belonging to the communicative sphere. From this he extrapolated seven factors: precision, reflexion, expression, support, emotionality, kindness, threatening.

The development of the work of De Vries and his collaborators resulted in the construction of the Communication Styles Inventory (CSI), which presently constitutes, together with the Scale of Communication Styles (CSS) by Gudykunst, one of the few instruments available for the general measurement of communication styles adopted by an individual. However, in the literature we can find various instruments for the measurement of communication styles for specific ambits such as schools (Harkin et al., 1999), medical communication (Ong et al., 1995), leadership (Bechler and Johnson, 1995), and marketing (Dion and Notarantonio, 1992).

Beatty et al. (1998) is notable for having investigated the relationship between communicative behavior and personality traits. In this sense the communication style is considered to be the disposition of the person toward a certain kind of communication. Strictly speaking, communication styles are not personality traits but they emerge under the influence of these traits and the environment. Behavioral dispositions tend to generate stable relationships between the situations and the reactions of a person (Asendorpf, 2004).

According to Schulz von Thun (2003) these styles constitute a specific mode of contact, communication and management of relationships with other people. They are associated with need “flows,” states of mind and intentions that manifest their force through words and non-verbal signals. The various styles do not exclude each other but rather they come together in the person in a specific combination which as a whole expresses the individual's preferred model of contact. The five-factor model of personality is currently a reference point for identifying the fundamental tendencies specific to each person, stable over time and mostly hereditary: neuroticism, extroversion, openness to experience, friendliness and conscientiousness (McCrae et al., 2000).

Taking this model into consideration in order to apply it to a communication theory means interpreting the communication style of an individual as a form of specific adaptation, relatively stable, of his/her behavioral models under the influence of his/her personality. This means that a person will develop a communication style that tends to be coherent with his/her fundamental personality traits. For example, a person with a prominent friendly trait will prefer to express himself in a kind and polite way rather than use aggressive expressions.

Cole and McCroskey (2000) examined the relationships between two personality models and the communication styles:

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1Dominant, Dramatic, Contentious, Animated, Impression-leaving, Relaxed, Attentive, Open, Friendly.
communication styles through studies in which he tested the parallel form reliability of the instrument with the measurements of the variables (De Vries et al., 2013). His analyses showed strong and medium level associations with the communication styles, thus further validating the integration between the perspectives of traits and communication styles.

The Communication Styles Inventory consists of 96 items which refer to the communicative behavior of the person. The items are equally divided among six scales (16 items per scale): Expressivity, Precision, Verbal Aggressiveness, Critical Spirit, Emotionality, Impression Manipulation. Each scale is composed of four sub-scales, each including four items. All the items must receive a reply on the Likert scale with an interval of five points (from 1 = complete disagreement to 5 = total agreement). The Cronbach reliability of the scale oscillates from 0.82 to 0.88 in the study where a non-student sample was used; from 0.83 to 0.87 with a sample composed of students (De Vries et al., 2013).

Considering the fact that the Italian context does not yet have a homologous instrument for measuring communication styles, we have seen fit to develop and present in this paper a preliminary validation study for an Italian version of the Communication Styles Inventory (CSI-B).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Linguistic Procedures

The translation of the CSI followed forward and backward translations of the original scale, following the EORTC translation guidelines (Dewolf et al., 2009). Two Italian translators independently completed the forward translation and negotiated any differences in the two versions. The reconciled Italian version was then given to two English translators, who independently back-translated the measure. Any discrepancies were discussed and resolved, and modifications were made in the CSI to take into account any rewording to improve the conceptual relevance and comprehension of the items. Finally, a small focus group of five university students was convened, the resulting Italian CSI was administered and, based on the discussion of each item, final and minor modifications were made.

Participants and Administration Procedure

For the purposes of CFA analysis to test the psychometric adequacy of a short form of the original De Vries instrument, the scale was administered to a sample of 1,230 participants (447 males and 783 females with an average age of 31.42 and SD = 10.67. The concurrent validity was tested through a second sample of participants consisting of 518 individuals (228 males and 290 females) with an average age of 26.40 and SD = 9.50. All of them accepted voluntarily to participate in the study after being informed of its objectives and they all supplied an adequate compilation of the instrument. They were also informed of the anonymity of the test and the fact that it was designed for research purposes only. The protocol was approved by Institutional Review Board of the University of Cassino and Southern Lazio. The recruitment phase was carried out between the months of November 2019 and January 2020.
### TABLE 1 | Averages and standard deviations differentiated by gender.

| Item  | Sample Mean | Sample SD | Males Mean | Males SD | Females Mean | Females SD | t-test |
|-------|-------------|-----------|------------|----------|--------------|------------|--------|
| Item 1 | 3.29        | 0.94      | 3.28       | 0.84     | 3.29         | 0.98       | −0.10  |
| Item 2 | 3.79        | 0.70      | 3.82       | 0.70     | 3.78         | 0.69       | 0.51   |
| Item 3 | 3.24        | 1.13      | 3.11       | 1.14     | 3.31         | 1.12       | −1.59  |
| Item 4 | 3.16        | 1.08      | 3.13       | 1.12     | 3.18         | 1.06       | −0.382 |
| Item 5 | 3.05        | 1.11      | 2.70       | 0.91     | 3.23         | 1.16       | −4.66*** |
| Item 6 | 2.09        | 1.01      | 2.03       | 1.04     | 2.11         | 1.00       | −0.70  |
| Item 7 | 3.48        | 0.88      | 3.58       | 0.87     | 3.43         | 0.89       | 1.50   |
| Item 8 | 3.73        | 0.96      | 3.89       | 0.85     | 3.64         | 1.00       | 2.42*  |
| Item 9 | 3.06        | 0.94      | 2.92       | 0.91     | 3.14         | 0.94       | −2.12* |
| Item 10| 2.59        | 0.98      | 2.53       | 1.02     | 2.61         | 0.96       | −0.73  |
| Item 11| 3.20        | 1.07      | 3.15       | 1.06     | 3.22         | 1.08       | −0.57  |
| Item 12| 2.45        | 1.13      | 2.55       | 1.12     | 2.40         | 1.14       | 1.18   |
| Item 13| 2.92        | 1.02      | 3.12       | 1.01     | 2.81         | 1.02       | 2.67** |
| Item 14| 2.88        | 0.86      | 2.98       | 0.91     | 2.83         | 0.82       | 1.60   |
| Item 15| 4.17        | 0.88      | 4.12       | 0.93     | 4.20         | 0.86       | −0.81  |
| Item 16| 3.82        | 0.79      | 3.80       | 0.76     | 3.83         | 0.81       | −0.37  |
| Item 17| 3.31        | 1.10      | 3.17       | 1.11     | 3.39         | 1.09       | −1.77  |
| Item 18| 2.92        | 1.05      | 3.02       | 0.96     | 2.87         | 1.10       | 1.21   |
| Item 19| 2.26        | 0.89      | 2.31       | 0.90     | 2.24         | 0.89       | 0.70   |
| Item 20| 3.49        | 0.85      | 3.48       | 0.84     | 3.50         | 0.85       | 0.30   |
| Item 21| 4.13        | 0.77      | 4.01       | 0.80     | 4.20         | 0.74       | −2.20* |
| Item 22| 3.33        | 0.89      | 3.46       | 0.80     | 3.26         | 0.93       | 2.00*  |
| Item 23| 3.16        | 1.01      | 2.94       | 1.06     | 3.27         | 0.96       | −2.93** |
| Item 24| 2.59        | 1.00      | 2.71       | 0.96     | 2.53         | 1.02       | 1.61   |
| Item 25| 3.13        | 1.11      | 3.03       | 1.04     | 3.18         | 1.14       | −1.17  |
| Item 26| 2.78        | 1.01      | 2.75       | 1.06     | 2.77         | 0.98       | −0.19  |
| Item 27| 3.25        | 1.11      | 3.43       | 1.05     | 3.16         | 1.13       | −2.22* |
| Item 28| 3.01        | 0.87      | 3.02       | 0.91     | 3.00         | 0.85       | 0.17   |
| Item 29| 3.32        | 0.96      | 2.98       | 0.94     | 3.50         | 0.93       | −4.95*** |
| Item 30| 2.22        | 0.99      | 2.18       | 0.93     | 2.24         | 1.03       | −0.52  |
| Item 31| 2.82        | 0.81      | 2.77       | 0.77     | 2.85         | 0.83       | −0.87  |
| Item 32| 3.61        | 0.90      | 3.68       | 0.84     | 3.57         | 0.93       | 1.07   |
| Item 33| 2.96        | 1.05      | 3.09       | 0.98     | 2.89         | 1.06       | 1.67   |
| Item 34| 3.52        | 0.94      | 3.55       | 0.92     | 3.50         | 0.95       | 0.47   |
| Item 35| 3.17        | 1.02      | 3.02       | 1.00     | 3.25         | 1.02       | −2.04* |
| Item 36| 2.67        | 1.14      | 3.07       | 1.12     | 2.46         | 1.10       | 4.90*** |
| Item 37| 2.17        | 0.80      | 2.14       | 0.86     | 2.18         | 0.77       | −0.42  |
| Item 38| 2.88        | 0.96      | 2.88       | 0.98     | 2.89         | 0.95       | −1.00  |
| Item 39| 2.41        | 1.09      | 2.75       | 1.14     | 2.23         | 1.03       | 4.30*** |
| Item 40| 3.36        | 1.02      | 3.53       | 1.00     | 3.27         | 1.03       | 2.32*  |
| Item 41| 2.94        | 0.98      | 2.69       | 1.02     | 3.07         | 0.93       | −3.43** |
| Item 42| 2.41        | 0.96      | 2.39       | 0.94     | 2.43         | 0.97       | −0.31  |
| Item 43| 3.30        | 0.87      | 3.35       | 0.78     | 3.28         | 0.91       | 0.75   |
| Item 44| 3.39        | 0.85      | 3.41       | 0.92     | 3.39         | 0.81       | 0.23   |
| Item 45| 4.09        | 0.72      | 4.03       | 0.68     | 4.13         | 0.75       | −1.30  |
| Item 46| 2.68        | 1.02      | 2.79       | 0.95     | 2.62         | 1.04       | 1.51   |
| Item 47| 3.13        | 1.12      | 3.31       | 1.12     | 3.03         | 1.11       | 2.21** |
| Item 48| 2.90        | 0.98      | 2.97       | 1.06     | 2.86         | 0.93       | 0.97   |

(Continued)
**Measures**

*Communication Styles Inventory (CSI)* (De Vries et al., 2013) 96 items articulated in six scales (16 items per scale): *Expressivity, Precision, Verbal Aggressiveness, Critical Spirit, Emotionality, Impression Manipulation*. Each scale was composed of four sub-scales, each including four items. Likert scale with an interval of five points (from 1 = complete disagreement to 5 = total agreement).

*Multidimensional Personality Profile (MPP)* (Caprara et al., 2006): the test was developed from the two dominant models in the psychology of personality: the social-cognitive theory and the theory of traits. The test measures five fundamental areas of personality: Agentivity, Social-Emotional Intelligence, Self-regulation, Ability to Cope (with critical situations), Innovation. To these is added the evaluation of further personal skills and characteristics, such as Self-esteem, Social Desirability, Cynicism, Impression Management. Each of these areas is divided into sub-dimensions that analyze its content by anchoring it directly to behaviors, subjective states and significant external criteria. The test consists of 152 statements with which it is necessary to express one’s degree of agreement on a five-level scale.

**Statistical Analysis**

The sample size was based on the ability to verify an adequate fit of CSI starting with a translation of the full English version that included a six-factor model with 96 manifest variables. Using the root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) as the measure of model fit, a minimum of 960 participants provides a 90% power level to test RMSEA ≤ 0.05 when RMSEA = 0.08, using a 0.05 significance level (MacCallum et al., 1996). The main statistical analyses carried out were the following: verification of the assumptions of univariate and multivariate normality; explorative factorial analysis (EFA) with Parallel Analysis (PA), Maximum Likelihood (ML), and Principal Axis Factoring (PAF) as extraction methods, Promax rotation; Confirmatory Factorial Analysis (CFA); assessment of internal consistency through Cronbach’s alpha coefficient and McDonalds omega; evaluation of significance of correlation coefficients to test concurrent validity of the tool. EFAs were performed according to the methodological recommendations of Goretzko et al. (2019). Statistical analyses were performed using the packages SPSS version 22, JASP 0.12.2, and IBM Amos Graphics 18.

To test the adequacy of the model the following ten indices were considered: (1) chi square; (2) the relationship between the chi-square value and the degrees of freedom ($\chi^2$/d.f.), values between 1 and 3 are considered acceptable; (3) GFI (Goodness of Fit Index), with values higher than 0.90 indicating an acceptable fit of the model, while a good fit with values higher than 0.95; (4) AGFI (Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index), with values higher than 0.90 indicating an acceptable fit of the model, while a good fit with values higher than 0.95; (5) RMSEA (Root-Mean-Square Error of Approximation), with values between 0.05 and 0.8 indicating an acceptable fit of the model, while a good fit with values lower than 0.05; (6) $p$-value for the test of close fit, with values between 0.50 and 1 indicating an acceptable fit of the model, while a good fit with values between 0.05 and 0.50; (7) CFI (Comparative

| Item | Factor 1 | Factor 2 | Factor 3 | Factor 4 | Uniqueness |
|------|----------|----------|----------|----------|------------|
| 17   | 0.485    |          |          |          | 0.671      |
| 18   |          |          |          |          | 0.871      |
| 19   |          | -0.461   |          |          | 0.801      |
| 20   |          | 0.342    |          |          | 0.899      |
| 21   |          | 0.528    |          |          | 0.660      |
| 22   |          |          |          |          | 0.815      |
| 23   |          | 0.548    |          |          | 0.890      |
| 24   | 0.588    |          |          |          | 0.602      |
| 25   |          | 0.383    |          |          | 0.766      |
| 26   |          | -0.419   |          |          | 0.790      |
| 27   |          |          |          |          | 0.767      |
| 28   |          |          |          |          | 0.755      |
| 29   |          | 0.586    |          |          | 0.658      |
| 30   | 0.499    |          |          |          | 0.649      |
| 31   |          | -0.415   |          |          | 0.766      |
| 32   |          | 0.791    |          |          | 0.467      |
| 33   | 0.475    |          |          |          | 0.725      |
| 34   |          |          |          |          | 0.845      |
| 35   | 0.491    |          |          |          | 0.721      |
| 36   | 0.639    |          | 0.454    |          | 0.604      |
| 37   |          | 0.517    |          |          | 0.596      |
| 38   |          | -0.533   |          |          | 0.674      |
| 39   |          | 0.477    |          |          | 0.765      |
| 40   |          | 0.435    |          |          | 0.791      |
| 41   |          | 0.337    |          |          | 0.713      |
| 42   | 0.562    |          |          |          | 0.595      |
| 43   | 0.470    |          | 0.370    |          | 0.765      |
| 44   | 0.508    |          |          |          | 0.714      |
| 45   |          | -0.629   |          |          | 0.620      |
| 46   | 0.333    |          |          |          | 0.815      |
| 47   | 0.572    |          |          |          | 0.889      |
| 48   | 0.697    |          |          |          | 0.540      |
| 49   | 0.491    |          | 0.379    |          | 0.849      |
| 50   |          | 0.626    |          |          | 0.627      |
| 51   | -0.449   |          |          |          | 0.780      |
| 52   |          | 0.390    |          |          | 0.635      |
| 53   | 0.364    |          |          |          | 0.823      |
| 54   |          | 0.314    |          |          | 0.648      |
| 55   | 0.418    |          |          |          | 0.625      |
| 56   |          | -0.310   |          |          | 0.849      |
| 57   | 0.516    |          |          |          | 0.567      |
| 58   |          | 0.390    |          |          | 0.626      |
| 59   | 0.561    |          |          |          | 0.868      |
| 60   |          | -0.428   |          |          | 0.726      |
| 61   | 0.568    |          |          |          | 0.622      |
| 62   |          | 0.405    |          |          | 0.783      |
| 63   |          | 0.308    |          |          | 0.807      |
| 64   | 0.432    |          |          |          | 0.670      |
| 65   | 0.667    |          |          |          | 0.564      |
| 66   | 0.566    |          |          |          | 0.614      |
| 67   | 0.379    |          |          |          | 0.655      |

(Continued)
TABLE 2 | Continued

| Item  | Factor 1 | Factor 2 | Factor 3 | Factor 4 | Uniqueness |
|-------|----------|----------|----------|----------|------------|
| Item 80 | 0.717 | 0.544 |          |          |            |
| Item 81 | 0.498 | 0.751 |          |          |            |
| Item 82 | 0.348 | 0.749 |          |          |            |
| Item 83 | 0.689 | 0.566 |          |          |            |
| Item 84 | 0.686 | 0.564 |          |          |            |
| Item 87 | 0.481 | 0.773 |          |          |            |
| Item 88 | 0.313 | 0.724 |          |          |            |
| Item 89 | 0.602 | 0.547 |          |          |            |
| Item 90 | 0.329 | 0.894 |          |          |            |
| Item 91 | 0.448 | 0.722 |          |          |            |
| Item 92 | 0.409 | 0.813 |          |          |            |
| Item 94 | 0.305 | 0.719 |          |          |            |
| Item 95 | 0.369 | 0.728 |          |          |            |
| Item 14 |          | 0.788 |          |          |            |
| Item 40 |          | 0.821 |          |          |            |
| Item 51 |          | 0.885 |          |          |            |
| Item 62 |          | 0.885 |          |          |            |
| Item 68 |          | 0.830 |          |          |            |
| Item 70 |          | 0.763 |          |          |            |

Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood. Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 11 iterations. Item number relates to CSI 2013.

**Fit Index**, with values between 0.95 and 0.97 indicating an acceptable fit of the model, while a good fit with values between 0.97 and 1; (8) NFI (Normed Fit Index), with values between 0.90 and 0.95 indicating an acceptable fit of the model, while a good fit with values between 0.95 and 1 (Infante and Wigley, 1986; Hu and Bentler, 1999; Byrne, 2001; Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003; Barbaranelli and Ingoglia, 2013) (9) PNFI (Parsimony Normed Fit Index), with values between 0.50 and 0.60 indicating an acceptable fit of the model, while a good fit with values between 0.60 and 1; (10) PCFI (Parsimony Comparative Fit Index), with values between 0.50 and 0.60 indicating an acceptable fit of the model, while a good fit with values between 0.60 and 1 (Infante and Rancer, 1982; Mulaik et al., 1989).

Concurrent validity was determined by comparing the correlations between the Communication Styles Inventory factors and the five factors that make up the MPP personality measurement model. To measure concurrent validity, Pearson coefficients were computed.

RESULTS

The verification of the assumptions of univariate and multivariate normality has been conducted using the procedure for the standardization of the variables, erasing the outlier cases with values greater than 3, then secondly, after calculating the Mahalanobis Distance, eliminating the multivariate outlier cases with D² greater than the critical value, calculated by considering chi-square as the reference distribution (level p < 0.001) with p degrees of liberty equal to the number of variables (Cattell and Vogelmann, 1977; Barbaranelli, 2006). The calculation of

TABLE 3 | EFA loadings pattern matrix sorted by dimension.

| Item  | Factor 1 | Factor 2 | Factor 3 | Factor 4 |
|-------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Item 54 | 0.697 | −0.054 | −0.057 | −0.003 |
| Item 84 | 0.686 | −0.099 | 0.012 | 0.016 |
| Item 12 | 0.656 | −0.199 | 0.072 | −0.080 |
| Item 36 | 0.639 | −0.096 | 0.060 | −0.003 |
| Item 24 | 0.588 | 0.044 | −0.293 | 0.003 |
| Item 78 | 0.566 | 0.110 | −0.222 | −0.067 |
| Item 46 | 0.562 | −0.038 | 0.237 | 0.022 |
| Item 6 | 0.513 | 0.072 | −0.268 | −0.054 |
| Item 48 | 0.508 | −0.055 | −0.281 | 0.129 |
| Item 30 | 0.499 | 0.081 | −0.335 | −0.052 |
| Item 81 | 0.498 | 0.001 | −0.032 | 0.039 |
| Item 57 | 0.491 | −0.024 | 0.022 | −0.075 |
| Item 87 | 0.481 | −0.034 | 0.004 | −0.123 |
| Item 33 | 0.475 | 0.046 | 0.142 | −0.021 |
| Item 60 | −0.449 | 0.294 | 0.024 | 0.132 |
| Item 76 | 0.432 | 0.097 | 0.260 | 0.028 |
| Item 72 | −0.428 | 0.256 | 0.254 | 0.159 |
| Item 79 | 0.379 | −0.008 | 0.364 | 0.071 |
| Item 63 | 0.364 | 0.007 | 0.183 | −0.054 |
| Item 52 | 0.333 | 0.095 | 0.124 | 0.073 |
| Item 4 | 0.322 | 0.164 | 0.211 | −0.101 |
| Item 83 | −0.116 | 0.689 | 0.070 | −0.051 |
| Item 77 | −0.061 | 0.667 | 0.099 | −0.022 |
| Item 59 | −0.077 | 0.626 | 0.009 | −0.109 |
| Item 89 | 0.006 | 0.602 | −0.326 | 0.032 |
| Item 29 | −0.060 | 0.586 | 0.126 | −0.026 |
| Item 53 | −0.077 | 0.572 | 0.042 | 0.004 |
| Item 71 | −0.071 | 0.561 | −0.133 | −0.123 |
| Item 23 | 0.023 | 0.548 | −0.068 | −0.017 |
| Item 41 | 0.037 | 0.517 | −0.381 | 0.016 |
| Item 5 | −0.159 | 0.505 | −0.023 | 0.015 |
| Item 35 | 0.087 | 0.491 | 0.071 | −0.030 |
| Item 17 | 0.097 | 0.485 | −0.278 | 0.017 |
| Item 3 | 0.121 | 0.386 | 0.059 | −0.066 |
| Item 11 | 0.130 | 0.372 | −0.146 | 0.045 |
| Item 47 | 0.040 | 0.370 | −0.103 | −0.278 |
| Item 90 | −0.059 | 0.329 | 0.075 | −0.009 |
| Item 66 | 0.221 | −0.310 | −0.055 | 0.234 |
| Item 75 | 0.229 | 0.308 | −0.018 | −0.132 |
| Item 49 | −0.078 | 0.156 | −0.629 | 0.127 |
| Item 73 | 0.172 | 0.178 | 0.568 | −0.170 |
| Item 7 | 0.293 | −0.025 | 0.545 | 0.064 |
| Item 42 | 0.209 | 0.161 | −0.533 | 0.031 |
| Item 67 | 0.151 | −0.201 | 0.516 | 0.181 |
| Item 13 | 0.459 | −0.046 | 0.463 | −0.085 |
| Item 19 | 0.182 | −0.121 | −0.461 | 0.161 |
| Item 37 | 0.057 | −0.117 | 0.454 | 0.001 |
| Item 91 | 0.157 | 0.274 | −0.448 | 0.104 |
| Item 26 | 0.125 | 0.198 | −0.419 | 0.069 |
| Item 65 | 0.090 | −0.332 | 0.418 | 0.198 |
| Item 31 | −0.023 | 0.300 | −0.415 | 0.109 |
| Item 1 | 0.085 | 0.202 | 0.409 | 0.000 |
| Item 61 | 0.332 | 0.100 | 0.390 | 0.074 |

(Continued)
TABLE 3 | EFA loadings pattern matrix sorted by dimension (three factors).

| Item | Factor 1 | Factor 2 | Factor 3 | Factor 4 |
|------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 25   | 0.176    | 0.207    | 0.383    | −0.139   |
| 58   | 0.010    | −0.070   | 0.379    | 0.012    |
| 95   | 0.077    | 0.365    | −0.369   | 0.010    |
| 10   | −0.056   | 0.099    | 0.352    | −0.050   |
| 82   | −0.049   | 0.308    | 0.348    | 0.096    |
| 64   | 0.169    | 0.186    | 0.314    | 0.266    |
| 32   | 0.021    | −0.112   | −0.263   | 0.791    |
| 80   | 0.007    | −0.115   | −0.145   | 0.717    |
| 8    | −0.096   | −0.126   | −0.241   | 0.680    |
| 21   | −0.128   | −0.046   | 0.117    | 0.528    |
| 43   | 0.108    | 0.018    | −0.357   | 0.477    |
| 44   | −0.011   | −0.231   | −0.071   | 0.435    |
| 16   | −0.037   | 0.211    | 0.111    | 0.424    |
| 92   | −0.034   | −0.111   | 0.041    | 0.409    |
| 74   | −0.078   | −0.050   | 0.125    | 0.405    |
| 69   | −0.195   | 0.252    | 0.275    | 0.390    |
| 20   | −0.050   | 0.091    | −0.058   | 0.342    |
| 45   | −0.158   | 0.313    | 0.176    | 0.337    |
| 88   | 0.059    | 0.121    | 0.270    | 0.313    |
| 94   | 0.253    | 0.212    | 0.057    | 0.305    |

Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood. Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 11 iterations. Item number relates to CSI 2013. Bold indicates the groupings of factors ordered by size.

TABLE 4 | EFA loadings pattern matrix sorted by dimension (three factors).

| Item | Factor 1 | Factor 2 | Factor 3 |
|------|----------|----------|----------|
| 69   | 0.574    | −0.218   | 0.194    |
| 67   | 0.561    | 0.140    | −0.275   |
| 7    | 0.548    | 0.290    | −0.101   |
| 84   | 0.527    | 0.144    | 0.139    |
| 88   | 0.504    | 0.031    | 0.077    |
| 82   | 0.466    | −0.055   | 0.247    |
| 45   | 0.458    | −0.178   | 0.271    |
| 21   | 0.451    | −0.165   | −0.070   |
| 49   | −0.449   | −0.098   | 0.246    |
| 65   | 0.448    | 0.078    | −0.390   |
| 61   | 0.442    | 0.326    | 0.047    |
| 73   | 0.441    | 0.192    | 0.090    |
| 70   | 0.437    | 0.120    | 0.107    |
| 16   | 0.437    | −0.069   | 0.185    |
| 42   | −0.424   | 0.194    | 0.247    |
| 1    | 0.422    | 0.090    | 0.137    |
| 79   | 0.403    | 0.370    | −0.052   |
| 54   | −0.055   | 0.690    | −0.021   |
| 84   | 0.008    | 0.679    | −0.078   |
| 12   | −0.026   | 0.659    | −0.185   |
| 36   | 0.041    | 0.635    | −0.084   |
| 24   | −0.246   | 0.575    | 0.109    |
| 78   | −0.216   | 0.562    | 0.161    |
| 46   | 0.243    | 0.553    | −0.056   |
| 6    | −0.260   | 0.508    | 0.131    |
| 57   | −0.025   | 0.491    | −0.011   |
| 30   | −0.316   | 0.490    | 0.149    |
| 81   | 0.013    | 0.485    | 0.023    |
| 67   | −0.071   | 0.482    | −0.018   |
| 48   | −0.167   | 0.480    | 0.007    |
| 33   | 0.139    | 0.471    | 0.039    |
| 13   | 0.365    | 0.465    | −0.102   |
| 60   | 0.174    | −0.457   | 0.260    |
| 72   | 0.393    | −0.431   | 0.197    |
| 76   | 0.298    | 0.424    | 0.068    |
| 83   | 0.177    | −0.104   | 0.662    |
| 89   | −0.141   | −0.001   | 0.641    |
| 77   | 0.225    | −0.054   | 0.639    |
| 59   | 0.066    | −0.061   | 0.610    |
| 71   | −0.090   | −0.055   | 0.571    |
| 41   | −0.218   | 0.000    | 0.567    |
| 29   | 0.227    | −0.051   | 0.554    |
| 53   | 0.163    | −0.071   | 0.552    |
| 23   | 0.044    | 0.028    | 0.551    |
| 17   | −0.127   | 0.090    | 0.522    |
| 5    | 0.097    | −0.155   | 0.494    |
| 35   | 0.158    | 0.089    | 0.474    |
| 95   | −0.251   | 0.072    | 0.419    |

Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood. Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 7 iterations. Item number relates to CSI 2013. Bold indicates the groupings of factors ordered by size.

the Mardia Index (average of the squares of the Mahalanobis Distances) produced a coefficient (9285.81) lower than the limit value (9408). This selection of cases from the original matrix implied the elimination of 186 participants. Therefore, the rest of the validation procedure was carried out with 1,044 cases, 360 of which were males (34.5%) and 684 females (65.5%). The average age was 31.45 with DS = 10.37.

The evaluation of the metric properties of the scale was conducted both through an explorative factor analysis (EFA) and a confirming analysis (CFA) designed to test the goodness of the multidimensional model adopted by De Vries et al. (2013). The averages and standard deviations for the single items and those differentiated by gender are reported in Table 1.

An Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) with PA and estimation method of ML was conducted on the 96 items of the first version of the questionnaire, producing a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) index score of 0.815, a statistically significant Bartlett’s test ($p < 0.001$) a Chi-squared Test $<0.001$, RMSEA = 0.040, RMSEA TLI = 0.83. Considering Promax as rotation method and Cattell’s scree test indications (that only four main factors lay above the debris), 86 items resulted in the factor loadings Structure Matrix. For comparison purposes, a further PA with an estimation method of PAF was conducted. Once again, Cattell’s scree test indicated four factors above the debris, and 84 items resulted in the factor loadings Structure Matrix.

From the combination of the two estimation methods, before proceeding with the confirmatory analysis, four factors have therefore been reaffirmed and the 84 items common to both factor loadings SMs have been selected. This selection was subjected to a final EFA with ML and manual input of a maximum of four factors. Factor loadings indicated the elimination of
eleven more items, arriving at a final number of 73 items. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) index score was 0.820, Bartlett’s test $p < 0.001$; Chi-squared Test $<0.001$; RMSEA = 0.055, RMSEA 90% confidence 0.04 - na; TLI = 0.66. Loadings pattern matrix is reported in Table 2.

Considering the saturations obtained and comparing with the subscales of the CSI items congruent with the content have been gathered on each component and reported in Table 3.

As can be observed in Table 3, the first factor comprised the subscales that De Vries indicated as Ingratiation, Charm and Authoritarianism. We referred to the underlying main factor that brought them together as Impression Manipulativeness. The second factor included the subscales of Worrisomeness, Sentimentality, Tension and Defensiveness. We indicated this underlying factor as Emotionality. The third factor presented the aggregation of Talkativeness, Conversational Dominance, Humor and Philosophicalness. The underlying factor that brought them together has been indicated as Expressiveness. The fourth factor presented the aggregation of Inquisitiveness, Thoughtfulness, Non-supportiveness, and Conciseness with an underlying factor which was called Preciseness.

In order to examine the validity of a 73-item CSI construct, a CFA was performed, using the Amos Graphics 18 software. The results obtained considering four factors did not show a good adaptation to the data. Therefore, the existence of a lower number of factors was verified. A further EFA with ML and manual input of maximum three factors was performed. Factor loadings indicated the elimination of thirty more items, arriving at a final number of 48 items. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) index score was 0.820, Bartlett’s test $p < 0.001$; Chi-squared Test $<0.001$; RMSEA = 0.06; TLI = 0.58. Pattern matrix is reported in Table 4.

The CFA bore out that the model with three related factors presented overall good indices of adaptation to data (see Table 5 and Figure 1). Overall, the model included 18 items. The first factor measures Impression Manipulativeness (6 items) and includes ingratiation and charm. The second factor measures the Emotionality (6 items) and includes sentimentality, worrisomeness and defensiveness. The third factor measures the Expressiveness (6 items) and includes talkativeness, conversational dominance and inquisitiveness.

Finally, a further EFA with ML on the list of the 18 items. Table 6 shows the model matrix with saturations on the three identified factors, McDonald’s $\omega$ and Cronbach’s Alpha values, Guttman Split-Half Coefficients, Corrected item/total correlations.

Concurrent validity was tested by examining the significance of correlation coefficients between Communication Styles Inventory factors and the five factors that make up the MPP personality measurement model, relating to a second administration carried out on a sample of 518 individuals (228 males and 290 females) with an average age of 26.40 and SD = 9.50. In relation to the results of this association, three hypotheses have been formulated: (1) the higher the Impression Manipulativeness, the higher the Cynicism and Impression Management would have been; (2) the higher the Emotionality in Conversation, the higher the Social-Emotional Intelligence would have been and the lower the Ability to Cope; (3) the higher the Expressiveness, the higher the Agentivity and the Self-Regulation would have been. As shown in Table 7, the results have confirmed the assumed directions of correlation; therefore, the measure proved good convergent validity with Multidimensional Personality Profile (MPP) by Caprara et al. (2006) and consequently its usefulness in describing communication styles in relation to personality traits. McDonald’s $\omega$ and Alpha coefficients for this second administration were 0.80 and 0.80 (Impression Manipulativeness), 0.80 and 0.79 (Emotionality), 0.74 and 0.74 (Expressiveness), respectively.

The following Table 8 reports English and Italian versions of the CSI-B, and the grouping of the items on respective factors. As far as the scoring of the instrument is concerned, the 18 items in total are distributed over three factors, each comprising six items. Every item has a scoring range from 1 (completely disagree) to 5 (completely agree). The scoring calculation will produce, through a summation of the scores of the component items, separate measurements for each factor. Therefore, Impression Manipulativeness: $1 + 4 + 7 + 10 + 13 + 16$; Emotionality: $2 + 5 + 8 + 11 + 14 + 17$; Expressiveness: $3 + 6 + 9 + 12 + 15 + 18$. Each factor can have a total score range from 6 to 30. Based on the distribution of the scores obtained from the normative sample, the cut-off criteria, differentiated by gender, have been identified and reported in the following Table 9.

### DISCUSSION

The analyses carried out led to the definition of a scale composed of a total of 18 items, aggregated into eight subscales, which in turn converge separately on three factors. The first factor measures the ability of the person to exercise an effective Impression Manipulativeness during the conversation. Two components were also identified in this case: Charm and Ingratiation. Charm is a mixture of attractive appearance, sensuality and inner security. When in a communication one of the interlocutors appeals to one’s charisma or aesthetic attractiveness, one speaks of arguing through one’s personal charm. We usually measure the success of a conversation by how fascinated we are by what the other person has told us. The person who has charm attracts attention and involves people, despite their own will. In all of this, the voice is an important
vehicle of suggestion that can positively influence the interlocutor and deepen the relationship, creating an empathic atmosphere, fundamental for the successful outcome of the conversation. The expert speaker succeeds in exerting a sometimes hypnotic charm on his listeners, to the extent that they hang on to his voice and his words. The ingratiation in the conversation refers to the idea of a conscious expressive choice, of a rational strategy aimed at achieving goals, and which consists in captivating the
interlocutor, almost appealing or seducing him. This mode of communication is based on the pleasure of others, so that they are well prepared to accept the requests that are addressed to them. Individuals need to keep other people's impressions in line with the perceptions they wish to convey, so as to determine important consequences on the perception and evaluation of others and influence interpersonal dynamics.

The second factor, indicated as Emotionality, refers to the emotional activation produced in the individual as a result of verbal interaction. Three distinct components were identified. The first (Sentimentality) indicates the emotional transport that tends to accompany the person's conversation, which with difficulty contains their emotions, both when the subject is current and when it relates to stories that refer to the person's past. The individual has a pronounced empathic capacity, so that the intense emotional states of others do not leave him/her indifferent, rather he/she tends to try to identify with the emotions of others. The individual is aware of being particularly “sensitive” toward certain topics in particular which emotionally touch him/her more closely. The second component, called the Defensiveness, indicates the level of vulnerability perceived by the person following criticisms or verbal attacks received from the interlocutors. Negative comments can cause concern and an immediate closing reaction. The person feels hurt and is aware that he/she will need time to overcome the attacks and criticisms received. The most sensitive individuals tend to assume an acquiescent role in the conversation, in order to avoid situations of blatant opposition, or they prefer to listen in silence, minimizing participation in the speech. The third component was called Worrisomeness and refers specifically to the incapacity of the person to mask his/her emotional state in verbal interaction; therefore, the individual fears that every negative emotional state will be immediately grasped by the interlocutor.

The third factor, referred to as Expressiveness, refers to the individual's ability to be effective in conversation, by monitoring and balancing the elements of communication, such as the quality of the topic illustrated, supported with an adequate amount and variety of data and sources; the clear and consistent presentation of the topic to keep interest and attention alive; the enhancement of non-verbal resources, such as posture, gestures, eye contact, pauses and silences; the ability to reposition the speech if it deviates and not least a shrewd management of the time available. Three specific characteristics that define this ability were identified: the disposition or tendency to talk a lot and willingly; choosing and addressing the topics of the conversation; involving the interlocutor with many questions aimed at testing the validity of his opinions.

The positive loquacity of an expressive style serves to better explain concepts and ideas, and is typical of the eloquent person, that is, able to express himself with verbal richness and linguistic knowledge and illustrate even complex concepts with his own words. The above mentioned loquacity can be a “fixed” characteristic of a person, something that is fixed in character, or an occasional behavior: for example, some who becomes loquacious suddenly, because he feels uncomfortable, or instrumentally, because he thinks that in a certain context such behavior is beneficial to him. Those who show a low level of loquacity, on the other hand, might show good listening skills, but also have difficulty expressing their ideas, expressing their desires and intervening in discussions.

Expressive assertiveness is also manifested as conversational dominance, exercising control over the arguments brought into discussion and with the ability to impose one's own point of view. In this case, the person activates moves that initiate the sequence, i.e., questions, statements through which the subsequent development of the interaction is determined. He therefore exercises control over the topics under discussion, their articulation into sub-themes, their development and their conclusion. In cases where the participants' agreement on the definition of the current situation seems to be lacking, he has the power to re-establish the interactional order through meta-communicative comments that redefine the contextual framework and the type of activity in which one is involved. Those who instead have low levels of dominance in the conversation tend to play a passive role and adapt to the arguments proposed by others.

The active and reflective attitude of the person during the conversation is also manifested through the tendency to ask the interlocutor precise questions about the content of the conversation, even if they are strict about the truthfulness and plausibility of the conclusions presented. The attention required of the interlocutor to the thematic focus is always

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**TABLE 6** | Pattern matrix EFA (18 items).

| Impression | Manipulativeness | Emotionality | Expressiveness |
|------------|------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Item 54    | 0.745            | 0.050       | 0.026         |
| Item 84    | 0.716            | –0.034      | 0.086         |
| Item 12    | 0.691            | –0.101      | 0.042         |
| Item 36    | 0.648            | –0.078      | 0.111         |
| Item 6     | 0.516            | 0.132       | –0.138        |
| Item 30    | 0.497            | 0.160       | –0.216        |
| Item 83    | –0.033           | 0.730       | 0.058         |
| Item 59    | –0.026           | 0.662       | 0.060         |
| Item 71    | 0.082            | 0.642       | –0.195        |
| Item 77    | –0.061           | 0.629       | 0.175         |
| Item 23    | 0.109            | 0.544       | –0.023        |
| Item 53    | 0.018            | 0.534       | 0.083         |
| Item 7     | 0.043            | –0.084      | 0.749         |
| Item 79    | 0.109            | –0.069      | 0.585         |
| Item 64    | –0.032           | 0.077       | 0.533         |
| Item 1     | –0.078           | 0.125       | 0.520         |
| Item 88    | –0.096           | –0.013      | 0.501         |
| Item 73    | 0.029            | 0.163       | 0.498         |
| α          | 0.80             | 0.79        | 0.74          |
| ω          | 0.80             | 0.80        | 0.74          |
| λ6         | 0.79             | 0.78        | 0.73          |
| r*         | 0.39             | 0.39        | 0.32          |

*Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood. Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 5 iterations. Item number relates to CSI 2013. α, Cronbach’s alpha; ω, McDonald’s omegas; λ6, Gutmann’s lambda; r*, average inter-item correlation. Bold indicates the groupings of factors ordered by size.*
TABLE 1 | Correlations of the Italian version of the Communication Styles Inventory-Brief (CSI-B/I) with the Multidimensional Personality Profile (MPP).

|            | IMP   | EM    | EX    | AG    | SEI   | SR    | AC    | IN    | CY    | IMG   |
|------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|CSI         | IMP   | 1     |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
|            | EM    | 0.063 | 1     |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
|            | EX    | 0.199 | 0.147 | 1     |       |       |       |       |       |       |
|MPP         | AG    | 0.146 | −0.122 | 0.498 | 1     |       |       |       |       |       |
|            | SEI   | −0.096 | 0.271 | 0.335 | 0.320 | 1     |       |       |       |       |
|            | SR    | 0.065 | 0.026 | 0.313 | 0.663 | 0.292 | 1     |       |       |       |
|            | AC    | 0.222 | −0.405 | 0.111 | 0.550 | 0.433 | 0.440 | 1     |       |       |
|            | IN    | −0.185 | 0.202 | 0.221 | 0.430 | 0.310 | 0.418 | 0.257 | 1     |       |
|            | CY    | 0.416 | −0.118 | 0.114 | 0.191 | −0.285 | −0.064 | 0.005 | 0.144 | 1     |
|            | IMG   | 0.283 | 0.037 | 0.498 | 0.497 | 0.395 | 0.367 | 0.212 | 0.118 | 0.049 | 1     |

**IM** Impression Manipulation; **EM** Emotionality; **EX** Expressiveness; **AG** Agentivity; **SEI** Socio-Emotional Intelligence; **SR** Self-Regulation; **AC** Ability to Cope; **IN** Innovation; **CY** Cynicism; **IMG** Impression Management. *Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

TABLE 8 | Communication Styles Inventory – Brief (CSI-B).

| English version                                                                 | Italian version                                                                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. I sometimes use my charm to get something done (IM-Charm).                    | 1. Qualche volta uso il mio fascino per ottenere qualcosa.                       |
| 2. People can tell that I am emotionally touched by some topics of conversation (EM – Sentimentality). | 2. Le persone potrebbero dire di me che vengo emotivamente toccato da alcuni argomenti di conversazione. |
| 3. I often take the lead in a conversation (EX – Conversational Dominance).     | 3. Mi capita spesso di prendere l’iniziativa e condurre il discorso in una conversazione. |
| 4. I sometimes put on a very seductive voice when I want something (IM – Charm).  | 4. Qualche volta tiro fuori una voce molto seduttiva quando voglio qualcosa.      |
| 5. When describing my memories, I sometimes get visibly emotional (EM – Sentimentality). | 5. Quando racconto del mio passato qualche volta posso apparire visibilmente emozionato. |
| 6. I often determine the direction of a conversation (EX – Conversational Dominance). | 6. Spesso decido io la direzione di una conversazione.                          |
| 7. I sometimes flirt a little bit to win somebody over (IM – Charm).             | 7. A volte flirto un po’ per conquistare qualcuno.                               |
| 8. People can tell when I feel anxious (EM – Worrisomeness).                    | 8. Gli altri possono riconoscere quando io mi sento in ansia.                    |
| 9. I ask a lot of questions to uncover someone’s motives (EX – Inquisitiveness) | 9. Pongo molte domande per scoprire le motivazioni degli altri.                  |
| 10. I sometimes praise somebody at great length, without being really genuine, in order to make them like me (IM – Ingratiation). | 10. Qualche volta esprimo ampie lodi per qualcuno, senza essere realmente sincero, al fine di piacergli. |
| 11. When I worry, everybody notices (EM – Worrisomeness).                       | 11. Quando sono preoccupato tutti se ne accorgono.                               |
| 12. I always ask how people arrive at their conclusions (EX – Inquisitiveness).  | 12. Chiedo sempre alle persone come arrivano alle loro conclusioni.              |
| 13. Sometimes I use flattery to get someone in a favorable mood (IM – Ingratiation). | 13. Qualche volta faccio uso dell’adulazione per provocare in qualcuno un atteggiamento favorevole. |
| 14. When people criticize me, I am visibly hurt (EM – Defensiveness).           | 14. Quando le persone mi criticano sono visibilmente ferito.                    |
| 15. I like to talk a lot (EX – Talkativeness)                                    | 15. Mi piace parlare molto.                                                     |
| 16. In discussions I sometimes express an opinion I do not support in order to make a good impression (IM – Ingratiation). | 16. Al fine di fare una buona impressione, nelle discussioni qualche volta esprimo un’opinione alla quale non credo veramente. |
| 17. The comments of others have a noticeable effect on me (EM – Defensiveness).  | 17. I commenti degli altri hanno un effetto evidente su di me.                  |
| 18. I always have a lot to say (EX – Talkativeness).                            | 18. Ho sempre molto da dire.                                                    |

**IM**, Impression Manipulativeness; **EM**, Emotionality; **EX**, Expressiveness.
TABLE 9 | Scoring directions of CSI-B/I.

| Factor | Low | Medium | High | M   | DS  | SE  | SK  | SE  | KU  | SE  |
|--------|-----|--------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Total sample (N = 1,044) |     |        |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| IM     | 6–12 | 13–16  | 17–30| 14.41| 4.49| 0.24| 0.46| 0.13| 0.17| 0.26|
| EM     | 6–19 | 20–22  | 23–30| 20.08| 4.11| 0.22|−0.27| 0.13| 0.31| 0.26|
| EX     | 6–19 | 20–21  | 22–30| 19.84| 3.63| 0.19|−0.22| 0.13| 0.08| 0.26|
| Males (N = 447) |     |        |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| IM     | 6–13 | 14–17  | 18–30| 15.16| 4.39| 0.40| 0.32| 0.22|−0.45| 0.44|
| EM     | 6–16 | 17–20  | 21–30| 18.40| 4.19| 0.38| 0.07| 0.22|−0.18| 0.44|
| EX     | 6–19 | 20–22  | 23–30| 20.16| 3.77| 0.34|−0.13| 0.22| 0.003| 0.44|
| Females (N = 783) |     |        |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| IM     | 6–12 | 13–15  | 16–30| 14.02| 4.50| 0.30| 0.55| 0.16| 0.58| 0.32|
| EM     | 6–20 | 21–22  | 23–30| 20.96| 3.79| 0.25|−0.39| 0.16| 0.98| 0.32|
| EX     | 6–19 | 20–21  | 22–30| 19.67| 3.60| 0.24|−0.29| 0.16| 0.13| 0.32|

IM, Impression Manipulation; EM, Emotionality; EX, Expressiveness; M, Mean; SD, Standard Deviation; SE, Standard Error; SK, Skewness; KU, Kurtosis.

put one's own interests before those of others, and to bend others and circumstances to one's own ends and objectives. The further negative correlation with Innovation is consistent with a profile that is not very open to values, principles and behavioral habits that are different from one's own, and which is above all concerned with concreteness in situations. Finally, the positive correlation with the MPP subscale of impression management confirms the tendency to use communication tools, using charm and ingratiating to obtain appreciation, esteem and trust.

The predictive measure of Emotionality could provide in the first place useful inferences on the dimension of Emotional Intelligence of the person, by virtue of the positive association found, i.e., on the individual abilities that manifest themselves in knowing how to put themselves in other people's shoes and in knowing how to recognize and express emotions, in knowing how to take into account the needs and requirements of others, in knowing how to put others at ease. At the same time, the inverse relationship with Ability to Cope would allow to infer the measure of the vulnerability of the person in maintaining calm and tranquility in the presence of difficulties and stressful situations, in experiencing states of discomfort and general mood swings, in showing difficulties in recovering after failures, tending to brood over what happened.

The Expressiveness factor showed strong positive correlations with the dimensions of Agentivity, Self-regulation and Emotional Intelligence. It would be useful to firstly note the predictive value of the measure of this style of communication on those of Agentivity and Self-Regulation. In the first case, it would mean obtaining useful inferences on the person's ability to assert his or her own opinions, to set ambitious goals, to know how to guide and motivate others and to conduct one's activities with vigor and promptness. In the second case, the inferences would concern the individual's abilities with regard to planning and persistence in achieving a goal, in self-discipline understood as a self-reflexive ability to organize, as well as tenacity in success, love of order and accuracy, which transpires in the desire to do things well. A further positive correlation with emotional intelligence indicates the predictive value of the measure of expressiveness also with respect to the person's ability to actively listen, to feel at ease with others, and to put others at ease through one's own behavior. The expressiveness factor therefore demonstrates an important predictive relationship with the assertive capacity and effectiveness in communication.

The tool appears agile and versatile, prefiguring an application during the assessment in multiple contexts where it could be important to obtain information on the communicative attitudes of the person: companies, institutions, staff selection, individual, and group profile analysis, coaching, psychotherapy, counseling, career guidance. Several recent contributions have emphasized the importance of taking into account communication styles in education, health and in the dissemination of news by the media (Ashton et al., 2004; Minnema, 2014; Fourie, 2018; Chlopicki and Laineste, 2019; Labreche et al., 2019; Lörincz, 2019; Ramachandiran and Mahmud, 2019; Trant et al., 2019; Iskandarova and Griffin, 2020).

CONCLUSION

This first Italian validation study of the Communication Styles Inventory turned out to be a significantly reduced version compared to the original instrument of De Vries et al. (2013) which presented 16 scales and six main domains (expressiveness, precision, verbal aggression, critical spirit, emotionality, manipulation of the impression). De Vries’ main objective was to obtain a tool capable of understanding most of the main lexical dimensions together with the behavioral components of the communicative style. The result was a particularly large and composite instrument (96 items). Instead, in our study, starting from the original instrument and through a subsequent analysis of factorial refinement and confirmatory verification, we have achieved a brief tool that displays good fit indices which are suitable for Italians. Future studies could test the adequacy of the model on specific samples of
the population and explore the possibility of recovering the dimensions previously excluded in this first work.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The datasets generated for this study are available on request to the corresponding author.

ETHICS STATEMENT

The studies involving human participants were reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB_SUSS) of the University of Cassino and Southern Lazio. The patients/participants provided their written informed consent to participate in this study.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

PD, GV, and SM designed the study, analyzed the data, and discussed the results. PD, GV, and AG drafted the manuscript. SM and AG revised the manuscript. All authors approved the final manuscript. Finally, the authors have agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the manuscript in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of it are appropriately investigated and resolved.

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**Conflict of Interest:** The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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