In 1981 Lazarus and colleagues highlighted that daily hassles are better predictors of negative psychological and somatic outcomes than are major life events (Kanner, Coyne, Schaeffer, & Lazarus, 1981). Stress research subsequently focused away from major life events (i.e. accidents and deaths) and onto negative daily events, termed hassles. Hassles and uplifts have been widely employed in research models and in relation to a range of outcomes such as:

- stress buffering (Nierop, Wirtz, Bratsikas, Zimmermann & Ehlert, 2008; Pinquart, 2009);
- depression in children and adolescents (Seidman, Chesir-Teran, Friedman, Yoshikawa, Allen & Roberts, 1999) and adults (Ravindran, Griffiths, Merali & Anisman, 1996);
- health outcomes (Toyama & Sakurai, 1999; Jain, Mills, Von Ka Nel, Hong &Dimsdale, 2007);
- suicidal ideation in youth (Chang, Yang, Lin, Ku & Lee, 2008);
- cultural orientation (Lavee & Ben-Ari, 2008);
- caregiving (Pinquart & Sörensen, 2004); and,
- in relation to work and non-work environments (Hart, 1999).
It is also thought that hassles and uplifts make independent contributions to outcomes, with the former impacting on distress and the latter impacting on wellbeing (Hart, 1992; Headey & Wearing, 1989, 1992; Zautra & Reich, 1983). While the hassle concept has proved important - there have been considerable conceptual and psychometric criticisms of the measurement of day to day events.

This chapter describes some of the important debates and developments in the conceptualisation and measurement of hassles and uplifts over the last 25 years. Initially outlined is the theoretical background of Lazarus and Folkman’s cognitive relational theory along with a critique that highlights an underlying conceptual weaknesses surrounding uplifting events. The concepts of approach and withdrawal are then employed to reconceptualise the uplift concept and a new definition of uplifts is proposed. Then outlined is a detailed critique along with proposed solutions to a number of measurement issues associated with quantifying hassles and uplifts. Concerns with measurement confounding, the distinction between severity versus frequency, problems with content validity, most notably the exclusion of relationships with others, the global or molecular measurement of events and methodological problems with recalling hassles and uplifts according to questionnaire order are outlined. The chapter concludes with a series of recommendations to future researchers regarding measurement issues and fertile areas for future research.

**Why Hassles and Uplifts?**

Since the early work of Holmes and Rahe (1967), events have been considered at two basic levels. Daily events, characterised by everyday transactions with the environment (e.g. traffic jams, weather) and major life events (e.g. marriage, death of a partner, loss of a job). Major life events were thought to have most impact on distress and wellbeing until 1981 when day to day events were shown to be better predictors of stress-related outcomes than are major life events:

...hassles are far superior to life events in predicting psychological and somatic symptoms. Hassles accounted for almost all the outcome variance attributable to life events, whereas life events had little or no impact on health outcomes independent of daily hassles (Kanner, Coyne, Schaefer & Lazarus, 1981).

Lazarus and Folkman suggested that major life events impact on outcomes by disrupting “…social relationships and the habits and patterns of daily living, thereby causing hassles” (1984, p.312). Day to day event measures are thought to capture most of the impact of major events, as well as the smaller events that occur independently of life events, as a result of daily living (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). This makes them better measures of the sources of distressing outcomes.

Hassles have been seen as the little things arising from daily living that can irritate and distress people (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) and have been defined as "...the irritating, frustrating, distressing demands that to some degree characterise everyday transactions with the environment" (Kanner et al., 1981). Uplifts have been referred to as
...positive experiences such as the joy derived from manifestations of love, relief at hearing good news, the pleasure of a good nights rest, and so on (Kanner et al., 1981).

Colleagues of Lazarus and Folkman were involved in developing the two most used hassle and uplift scales. The original scales were developed by Kanner et al. (1981) and included separate scales for hassles (117 items) and uplifts (135 items). In response to criticism of the scales, Delongis (1985) developed an amended version. These two measures have been the most commonly used in the literature\(^1\). The Delongis version is much shorter (53 items) with hassles and uplifts on the one scale. It also used identical, neutrally worded positive and negative events. Lazarus and Folkman have also published a research addition of these Kanner and Delongis scales (1989). Over the years a number of other hassle and uplift scales have been developed including adult measures (Kohn & Macdonald, 1992; Maybery, Neale, Arentz & Jones-Ellis, 2007; Maybery, Jones-Ellis, Neale, & Arentz, 2006), adolescent hassle scale (Kohn & Milrose, 1993) and university student versions (Kohn, Lafreniere & Gurevich, 1990, Maybery, 2002, Maybery, 2004).

Hassle and uplifts have not been the only attempts to measure the impact of the environment on individuals. Stone and colleagues (Stone, 1987, Stone, Kessler & Haythornthwaite, 1991, Stone & Neale, 1982) developed a daily diary methodology of event recall. The diary recording methodology asks subjects to complete self-report instruments on a daily basis (Bolger, Delongis, Kessler & Schilling, 1989). A similar closely related approach is the experience sampling method that employs short recording periods (within day) by participants in their natural environment (Stone et al., 1991) in which participants are electronically reminded at pre-specified times to complete a short questionnaire, often three to four times daily. Diary recording generally aims to illustrate daily event variation in regard to mental and/or physical health outcomes (Bolger et al., 1989). Hassle and uplift scales on the other hand retrospectively record event appraisals (Lazarus & Folkman, 1989). The latter measures normally ask subjects to indicate the frequency or severity of check-listed positive and negative events over the last month (or week).

Although varying in terms of time frames and while not explicitly stated, the literature assumes that diaries and event checklists measure the same events. For example in diaries, daily negative events have been termed “Minor stressors that are a recurrent feature of daily life” (Bolger et al., 1989, p.808) and Lazarus and Folkman suggest that hassle and uplift scales are a measure of psychological stress that was designed to better reflect the daily occurrences in people’s lives...that can be a source of harm, loss, threat or challenge (1989, p.3).

In their article titled “Measuring daily events and experiences: decisions for the researcher” Stone and colleagues, while spending considerable time on methodological issues, did not differentiate theoretically between these types of events. Consequently, hassle and uplift scales and daily diary checklists are regarded as unequivocal (Maybery & Graham, 2001).

\(^1\) They are referred to here as the Kanner and Delongis scales.
Overall the diary methodology has been considered superior to hassle and uplift recordings as recall is more immediate (Stone et al., 1993), are not biased by pre-existing emotional problems (Bolger et al., 1989) and allow for testing the transactional theory of stress (Stone et al., 1993). Although diaries appear the most valid measure of everyday events (Stone & Neale, 1982) the approach does have considerable drawbacks (for a comprehensive review, see Stone et al., 1993). Problems include: high rates of non-response bias, where it is not known if the lack of information is for a systematic reason (Stone et al., 1993); high attrition or drop-out rates during the course of studies (Stone et al., 1993); and, response decay, where it is commonly found that the number of events recorded reduces in relation to the length of time the respondent had been in a study (Stone et al., 1993).

In summary, hassle and uplift recall in retrospective designs (Stone & Neale, 1982) remains the most frequently used methodology in this area of research and Turner and Wheaton suggest that despite many criticisms “...life event inventories collectively represent the traditional, and still dominant, research procedure for estimating variations in stress exposure” (1995, p 30). Their ease of use within the retrospective design gives hassle and uplift measures their distinct advantage.

Theoretical Background and Definitions

The theoretical background to hassles and uplifts has most commonly relied upon the work of Lazarus and his colleagues. However their effort has consistently focused upon the negative dimension - upon stress as an outcome and hassles as a means of capturing the experience of the person in their environment. This has allowed the conceptualisation of hassles to evolve under scrutiny and regular critique. Unfortunately the uplift concept has received minimal critical reflection. Furthermore uplifts have evolved as an extension of the hassle and stress concepts rather than as events in their own right.

Initially outlined in this section is the commonly cited relationship between the environment and the person as outlined by Lazarus’s appraisal theory. This theory has been the driver of the hassle concept over nearly 30 years. A second theoretical distinction is then outlined relying upon the ideas of ‘approach’ (positive events and uplifts) and ‘withdrawal’ (negative events and hassles) to describe the valence of environmental encounters. This distinction clearly places negative events and hassles and positive events and uplifts as conceptually distinct encounters with the environment. Then follows is a detailed discussion of the positive dimension from an ‘approach’ perspective including a newly proposed definition of the uplift concept.

Appraisal Model of Stress

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) proposed a cognitive appraisal (transactual) model of stress that suggests that individuals cognitively evaluate events in relation to their own person-related characteristics (including their coping resources). This evaluative process determines the type and quality of their emotional response to a given event (Barlow, 1988). “Appraisals
are conscious or unconscious judgements about the nature of the environment and one’s ability to respond to it” (Bakal, 1992, p.72). Lazarus and Folkman define psychological stress as the

...relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding his or her resources and endangering his or her well-being (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p.19).

Cognitive appraisal can be broken further down into primary and secondary appraisal (Lazarus, 1991). The former is concerned with judgements regarding the individual’s encounter with the environment (i.e. hassles and uplifts) and the latter involves judgements regarding the individual’s ability (e.g. coping) to manage the event (Lazarus, 1991). Importantly Lazarus suggests that “Relational meaning is at a different level of abstraction than the individual set of variables that have come together to produce it” (Lazarus, 1991, p.90). The meaning of, and subsequent emotions emanating from an event, is dependent on the individual person’s characteristics - such as coping skills and personality – in relation to the circumstances of the event. Unfortunately the model was developed with a consistent focus upon the negative dimension, commonly in relation to stressful outcomes.

**Approach and Withdrawal**

The negative and positive distinction of hassle and uplift scales is rarely commented upon in the event literature. This has partly resulted from the positive (uplifting) dimension being relatively ignored and the central focus being upon stress-related outcomes and responses. While absent in the event literature, the closely related emotion literature does support a conceptual separation of hassle and uplift concepts.

In reviewing the literature Cacioppo and Gardner suggest that although there are multiple emotions, research suggests that emotions can be hierarchically arranged with positivity and negativity at the highest order (1999). They suggest that physical constraints on the organism may restrict behaviour to approach and withdrawal actions where the individual learns when confronted by a stimulus to ‘approach’ or ‘withdraw’ as an adaptive function (1999). Extrapolating to the current circumstances, these authors suggest that individuals have an orienting response to their experiences of the environment developed from answering either of the basic questions; Is this event harmful? or, Is this event helpful?

Further evidence supports the positive and negative emotion distinction. Depression is also now thought better described as a combination of two affect dimensions rather than one (Bouman & Luteijn, 1986). Watson, Clark and colleagues (Watson, Clark & Carey 1988, Clark & Watson, 1991, Watson, Clark, Weber, Smith Assenheimer, Strauss, & McCormick, 1995, Watson, Weber, Smith Assenheimer, Clark, Strauss, & McCormick, 1995) and others (Joiner, 1996, Brown, Chorpita & Barlow, 1998) suggest that high negative and low positive affect are common features in depressed individuals. This distinction has also been notable in event measurement. Zautra and Reich reviewed research on the differential impact of positive and negative events on wellbeing and distress. They identified 17 studies relating negative
Darryl Maybery

events to distress, and only five showing a relationship between positive events and distress (Zautra & Reich, 1983, p. 124).

Alternatively, positive events were consistently correlated with well being. They suggested that

In general, it appears that each type of event related most directly only to a corresponding same-domain affective condition. More broadly, people seem to have two separate systems for experiencing and responding to affective life experiences: one which tallies up negative events and their impacts, and another which tallies the impact of satisfying events (Zautra & Reich, 1983, pp. 125-6).

Similarly, in occupational research Hart (1992) suggested that positive and negative experiences "...operate along separate pathways to determine a teacher's quality of worklife; positive experiences through morale and negative experiences through psychological distress" (p.129) and in a longitudinal study Headey and Wearing (1989, 1992) showed that positive events related to wellbeing and negative events to psychological distress.

In general, people seem to have two separate systems for experiencing and responding to affective life experiences. Together the emotion and evaluative channels research suggests a clear place for the separation of events according to positive and negative domains. Negative experiences with the environment have a relational meaning of a hassle for the individual whereas positive experiences with the environment have a relational meaning of uplift.

Reconceptualising Uplifts

The conceptual ‘approach’ and ‘withdrawal’ distinction between uplifts and hassles is important in relation to developing the positive domain further as there has been a lack of both theoretical and research literature addressed to positive events (Diener, 2000, Edwards & Cooper, 1988, Langston, 1994). Kanner, Feldman, Weinberger and Ford (1991) suggested this is because the positive event literature has been equivocal as to success in predicting outcomes. Reich and Zautra “...believe that more adequate conceptualization and measurement of well-being may move positive events into a more central role” (1988, p.149).

A PsychInfo search using the key terms hassles and uplifts revealed a 7.76 for 1 ratio in favour of hassles (from 1984 to March 2009). Similarly, an examination of the literature for hassle and uplift factor structures shows five studies highlighting hassle structures but none showing uplifts (Maybery & Graham, 2001). Equally, when uplifts are studied they are often placed in a comparison or contrast position (Reich & Zautra, 1988). In addition, it is not uncommon for scale authors to only develop a hassle measure (e.g. adult hassle measure, Kohn & Macdonald, 1992; adolescent hassle scale, Kohn & Milrose, 1993; college student hassle scale, Kohn, Lafreniere & Gurevich, 1990) without considering the measurement of uplifts.

In an effort to reconceptualise uplifts this begs the question, what different role then would negative and positive affect play for an individual? Cacioppo and Gardner (1999) suggest that negative emotions serve as a call for mental or behavioural adjustment. The organism moves away from aversive stimuli or events as a consequence. Of greatest interest
here is the role for positive emotion. Positive emotion has been proposed as a cue to stay focused on the current task or as a mechanism that cues the exploration of the current environment (Cacioppo & Gardner, 1999).

This suggests that positive affect induces an individual to explore their environment. Equally, exploring their environment (e.g. through social events, interactions and so forth) may lead to increased positive affect or uplifts associated with the positive environmental event. This highlights problems with some of the past conceptualisations of the uplift concept, most evident with one of the more commonly used hassle and uplift scales developed by Delongis (1985) and colleagues (Lazarus & Folkman, 1989). The hassle and uplift scales each contain the same 53 neutrally worded events. They can be scored as separate hassle and uplift scales or on a single scale with hassles in the left column to the same event as uplifts in the right. While no clear rationale is given in the manual of the measure this design proposes that uplifting and hassle events come from the same source. Unfortunately, there are major problems with this approach, as outlined in the recall differences section later in this chapter.

Uplifting events that promote approach, attraction and exploration are unlikely to always emanate from the same sources as hassles. The latter are threatening events that individual’s withdraw from or avoid. While some events might co-occur and be summarized in the single item or source (i.e. your parents), many, such as accidents or health problems, are not likely to have a dual outcome. Given that most of the previous focus has been on hassles and coping there appears to be an underdevelopment of the uplift concept and types of events. This may explain why positive event literature has been equivocal as to success in predicting outcomes (Kanner et al., 1991).

Both measurement and theoretical developments to the uplift concept can be drawn from the ‘approach’ idea. Uplifting events should focus on issues and concerns that are likely to promote further examination, interest, joy and creativity within the individual. Event content should be directed towards the focal quality of life goal areas such as work, family and leisure/hobby pursuits.

The approach or volitional nature of uplifts compared to hassles should also be considered in the theoretical definition of an uplift. For example, “Primary appraisal concerns whether something of relevance to the person’s well-being has occurred” (Lazarus, 1991, p.133). In hassle and uplift definitions this suggests that the term ‘something of relevance’ must not remain affectively neutral. Where hassle primary appraisals are unlikely to be sought out by individuals, alternatively, situations that would lead to positive primary appraisals are likely to be regularly sought, investigated and welcomed. That is, as per Cacioppo and Gardner’s suggestion that the organism moves toward positive events and exploration of the current environment (1999). The definition of positive primary appraisals in the form of uplifts should include the individual being drawn towards positive events - noting the volitional nature of positive events.

Others suggest that there are large differences between individuals in their levels of positive affect and within individuals, positive mood also “…fluctuates widely from day and from moment to moment” (Watson, Clark & Carey, 1988, p 351). Kahneman has suggested that such positive mood fluctuations may be dependent upon literally moment by moment interactions of an individual and their environment (2000). Others have shown that uplifts
occur much more frequently than hassles (Maybery, 1999) but that uplifts occur with less impact and may be held less strongly in memory (Maybery et al., 2002).

Taking these key features of the positive dimension, a new definition of uplifts might be as follows.

Uplifts are frequently occurring positive experiences, commonly of a volitional and ephemeral nature that result in positive emotions such as joy, pleasure or relief.

This definition maintains the positive nature of the event and the positive emotional response but it also orients the definition towards the frequent, volitional and transient nature of a positive event and an uplifting experience.

**Measurement Issues**

The measurement of hassles has consistently received critical acclaim. On one hand the new measures provided considerable improvement to major life events and were relatively easy to administer. On the other hand, there have been multiple criticism of the conceptualisation and resultant measurement of events. The following outlines measurement confounding, the distinction between severity versus frequency, problems with content validity most notably the exclusion of interpersonal events (or relationships with others), the issue of global or molecular measurement of events and finally methodological problems with recalling hassles and uplifts according to questionnaire order. This section concludes with a series of recommendations regarding future measurement of hassles and uplifts.

**Measurement Confounding**

It is commonly claimed that assessing hassles and uplifts in questionnaires may be confounded with other measures (notably outcomes) in survey packages. Kohn and colleagues suggest hassle items such as “…drug use, sexual difficulties, physical illness, and personal fears…” are probably contaminated with outcome measures of distress (1990, p.620). This suggests that when questionnaire respondents subjectively respond to a hassle (uplift) measure their response is also partly contained in their response on dependent measures used in the study (e.g. their perceived distress). This leads to measurement error resulting from the spurious inflated correlation between the hassle score and the outcome being measured.

While this is of concern within research models, Lazarus and Folkman suggest the following.

Our position is that, despite wishes to the contrary, psychology has no satisfactory way to assess the environment as an objective set of conditions except through subjective consensual judgement, which may not prove applicable to a particular individual. We believe it is quite appropriate to rely on the person’s appraisal of the environment, especially when measuring psychological stress and emotion (1989, p.23).
It is also noted that distressing outcomes in themselves can lead to events or outcomes that induce additional distress at a later time. This is best illustrated in the case of physiological outcomes (e.g. headaches) as a consequence of earlier distress (or some other unrelated cause). While these items are somewhat confounded with distressing outcomes they are likely to become a new hassle event experienced by the individual. Consequently, it can be argued that at a specific time, these items are valid hassle indices that should be included on such a scale.

Nevertheless these concerns did lead to changes in the Delongis scale with,

“The scale was created from the previous one by eliminating items that tapped similar content areas, deleting items that might be confounded with outcomes, and collapsing similar items into single, more generically phrased items. A number of items were reworded so as to de-emphasize subjective reactions (Lazarus & Folkman, 1989, p.4).

The overall message is that confounding is a problem with such measures. However, minimising subjectivity in items but also being cognisant that some outcomes can be in themselves events acknowledges the reality of the environment-person relationship.

Severity Versus Frequency

A further problem within hassle and uplift measures has been the confounding of frequency and intensity of event occurrence within scaling. Dohrenwend and Shrout (1985, as cited in Reich Parrella & Filstead, 1988) have argued that the Kanner hassle scale is flawed because it confounds frequency of event occurrence and severity information in each item. They suggest that a distinction must be made between objective sources of stress and the subjective reaction of individuals to it.

Kohn and colleagues (1990) supported this argument, and provided a partial solution by measuring a person’s frequency of exposure, and not the event’s severity. They suggested that this reduces the amount of common distress variance associated with the hassle item, thereby removing the outcome confounding. They supported this contention by suggesting that 20 of the 21 intercorrelations among their sub-scale factors fell below .40 whereas only 1 of the 48 intercorrelations for the Kanner scale fell that low (Kohn & Macdonald, 1992).

Reich and colleagues (1988) argued that distinguishing between the two major summary scores on the original hassle scale-hassle number and hassle intensity-also disentangles this confound. In a study of alcohol and substance abuse in-patients they found that number of hassles and their intensity, record different aspects of the stress experience (Reich et al., 1988). Conversely to the Kohn argument, they suggest that severity may be related to factors such as emotional sensitivity or neuroticism (Reich et al., 1988) and that the frequency and severity components may be independently as well as jointly associated with psychological distress (Reich et al., 1988).

Two recent studies set out to examine this issue further. Maybery and colleagues separated uplift intensity (severity for hassles) and frequency for all items on their hassle and uplift measures (2006, 2007). They did so to isolate the strength of intercorrelation between
frequency and severity for each item (sub-scales) and to determine the relative strength of
relationship that the distinct recordings had with stress and wellbeing outcomes.

Figure 1 below illustrates the measure employed to separate frequency and severity. The
uplift measure is shown with frequency measured on a five-point ‘How Often?’ (left column)
response format and intensity in the right column on a ‘How much of an uplift?’ response
format. A similar configuration has been employed for hassles. Also shown in the lower half
of Figure 1 is a recommended combined response format that is discussed later in detail.

(a) Separated frequency (how often) and intensity (how much) format

Positive Event (Uplift) Scale

This scale asks you to think about the positive events (uplifts) that you experienced in the last month. Positive
daily events are the small day to day happenings that lead people to feel uplifted. From such events people can
feel inspired, alert, attentive or active. Positive events can also lead to feeling emotions such as interest,
excitement, strength, pride, determination and enthusiasm.

For each item, circle in the left column how often the event occurred (for example, circle 1.3 if the event
happened 1 to 3 times). It is important that you try to remember the number of times the event occurred
during the last month. Then in the right column, indicate how much of an uplift each of these events were (on average)
during the same period (for example circle 1 if it was a little of an uplift or 4 if it was an extreme uplift). If the
event did not occur, circle 0 in the left column and then move on to the next item without scoring a number in the
right column. Please consider each item only with the last 4 weeks (previous month) in mind.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Often?</th>
<th>How much of an Uplift (average)?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 = did not happen</td>
<td>0 = no uplift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3 = happened 1 to 3 times</td>
<td>1 = a little of an uplift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6 = happened 4 to 6 times</td>
<td>2 = somewhat of an uplift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-9 = happened 7 to 9 times</td>
<td>3 = a lot of an uplift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10+ = happened 10 times or more</td>
<td>4 = extreme uplift</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Type of Positive Event

Your Friends

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Often</th>
<th>How much of an Uplift (average)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 1-3 4-6 7-9 10+</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 1-3 4-6 7-9 10+</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 1-3 4-6 7-9 10+</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 1-3 4-6 7-9 10+</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) Combined frequency with intensity format

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How uplifted did you feel by this positive event?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 = Did not occur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 = Event occurred but was no uplift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 = Event occurred and a little uplifting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 = Event occurred and somewhat uplifting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 = Event occurred, a lot uplifting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 = Event occurred and extremely uplifting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the last month

Your Friends

1. Support received from friends
   | 0 1 2 3 4 5 |

2. Support given to friends
   | 0 1 2 3 4 5 |

3. Positive feedback from your friends
   | 0 1 2 3 4 5 |

4. Positive communication with friends
   | 0 1 2 3 4 5 |

Figure 1. Examples of two uplift (or hassle) measures that allow (a) separate frequency (How often)
and intensity (How much) or (b) combined frequency and severity response formats.
With few exceptions Maybery and colleagues found moderate to strong correlations between frequency and intensity scores (mostly ranging between .50 and .84) on the same items. This was found for both hassles and uplifts. These stronger correlations were much higher than the .15 correlation found in comparable hassle data from Reich et al. (1988). However it should be noted that Reich and colleagues totalled over 100 negative events to obtain their global frequency and global intensity scores. Maybery and colleague’s work created subscales associated with multiple sub domain areas (e.g. hassles with parents, uplifts with your friends). The current findings indicate that there appear to be relatively strong relationships between frequency and intensity scores of the same hassle or uplift event.

Contrary to the argument engendered by Dohrenwend, Shrout and colleagues, Maybery et al also found intensity correlations with stress and wellbeing outcomes to be only modestly higher than the frequency correlations for both uplifts (.05 and .07 higher) and hassles, with only one hassle (work) having a significantly stronger correlation for severity than for frequency. Although frequency and intensity are closely correlated there is lukewarm evidence for confounding with outcomes with the severity ratings having similar strength item-outcome correlations. However it should not be concluded that this research was a true test of the impact of frequency and severity on outcomes. Future research should test the relative impact of frequency compared to intensity on distress and wellbeing. This would establish if hassle frequency and intensity make distinctive contributions to distress.

Figure 1 also clearly shows the scaling options of frequency, intensity and a combined version for measuring participant responses to the listed hassles and uplifts. The frequency alternative allows for a 5 point interval recall response option that is calibrated to the number of times the event occurred in the recall time period. The intensity measure is also scored on a five point response scale that asks participants to estimate the intensity of the uplift or hassle on a scale from none to extreme. While frequency and intensity are here shown together, the format can be separated into individual frequency or intensity response formats. However, perhaps the most commonly employed approach is the combined format shown in Figure 1. This format combines frequency and intensity on a 6 point scale from 0=event did not occur and 1=event occurred but was no uplift through to 5=event occurred and was extremely uplifting. This allows both intensity and frequency to be recorded. Intensity is scored in an equivalent manner to the separated format above (i.e. on a scale of 1-5) and frequency in a reduced dichotomous format (i.e. did or did not occur). Together the three formats allow four possible options for scaling of hassle and uplift measures;

- a dual measure that includes both frequency and intensity,
- single frequency measure,
- a single intensity measure, and
- a combined measure of frequency and intensity on a single scale.

Global Versus Molecular Events

Most hassle and uplift researcher’s aggregate events for their impact on outcomes (Kanner, Coyne, Schaeffer & Lazarus, 1981; Miller & Wilcox, 1986; Ivancevich, 1986;
Maybery & Graham, 2001; Jain et al., 2007; Chang et al., 2008) rarely specifying event subtypes (Bolger, Delongis, Kessler & Shilling, 1989; Maybery & Graham, 2001). In addition, factor structures outlining event sub-types are rarely illustrated in the development of measures (Maybery & Graham, 2001). This is particularly the case for uplift scales,

No uplift factor structure could be found. It appears that Kanner and Delongis did not factor their uplift measures during development and the Manual for the Hassle and Uplift Scales does not report such structures (Maybery & Graham, 2001, p.93).

Maybery (2003) in a PsychInfo search highlighted that from 55 abstracts found in the search (using the terms 'hassles and uplifts') only seven studies clearly highlighted molecular hassles or uplifts. The remainder generally utilised global hassles and/or uplifts scores in their research models. Conversely, diary researchers almost always report events at a molecular level (Maybery & Graham, 2001).

Considering hassle and uplifts as global or specific (here called molecular events) has important theoretical and practical implications for future research. For example, if a single global score is calculated from the Kanner hassle scale this entails totalling 117 separate events. More recent rigorously developed measures have between 10-15 valid, reliable and distinct subscales (see Table 1) corresponding to between 40-60 items. Molecular events (subscales) have now been shown to cover a wide range of hassle and uplift subtypes. Consequently, depending upon the research model, it is now becoming much more difficult to justify combining all daily hassles into a single global score. Since distinct and quite divergent molecular hassles have now been identified (e.g. health hassles versus hassles with friends) it has become considerably harder to combine molecular events on the assumption that they are equivalent. On the other hand, with these new measures comes the opportunity to investigate the stress or wellbeing impact of specific events on individuals.

While a rationale to not use hassles or uplifts at a molecular (ie subscale) level might be to reduce family wise error in statistical models there are multiple reasons to employ subscales in research. First and foremost is the greater degree of specificity and importance that can be placed on specific hassles or uplifts within the model. In addition it has also been shown that when combining events into global hassles the predictive power of the model is reduced (for detailed comparisons see Maybery, 2003).

In addition it has also been found that global life satisfaction varies with the value orientations individuals place on different domains of life (Oishi, Diener, Suh & Lucas, 1999). This suggests that the positive events that emanate from domains of life that individuals place value (importance) on should be more important for corresponding positive affect than those with little importance. Swindle and Moos have suggested that distress and coping are partly dependent “…on the individual’s personal striving and goals in the life domain in which the events occur…” (1992, p. 11). This again suggests the importance of focusing upon molecular rather than global hassles or uplifts in research models.

Table 1 below illustrates the principle component structures of five of the more commonly used hassle scales. The subscale structures of the Kanner and Delongis measures are shown along with a further recently developed adult measure by Maybery and colleagues (2007). Also shown are two University/college student measures.
Table 1. Comparison of hassle factor structures in adult and student measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author/ Sample</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Kanner et al., 1981</th>
<th>Delongis, 1985</th>
<th>Maybery et al., 2007</th>
<th>Kohn et al., 1990</th>
<th>Maybery, 2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>University Students</td>
<td>University Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kanner Hassle Scale.</td>
<td>Delongis Hassle Scale.</td>
<td>Negative Event Scale.</td>
<td>ICSRLE.</td>
<td>Negative Event Scale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor/content</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time Pressures</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Time Pressures</td>
<td>Time Pressures</td>
<td>Time Pressures</td>
<td>Study Time Pressures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Work</td>
<td>Work</td>
<td>Work H...</td>
<td>Work Hassles</td>
<td>Problems with your Employer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Money</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Financial Responsibilities</td>
<td>Finances</td>
<td>Money H...</td>
<td>Money Hassles</td>
<td>Money Hassles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Health H...</td>
<td>Health Hassles</td>
<td>Health Hassles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Neighbourhood/ Environment</td>
<td>Environmental/Soci al Issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inner Concerns</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Household</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Household</td>
<td>Household,</td>
<td>Household</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Future</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Future Security</td>
<td>Home Maintenance</td>
<td></td>
<td>Developmental Challenge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>University/ College</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Academic Alienation</td>
<td>Academic Limitations Course Interest Problems with Lecturers/teachers Problems with other Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spouse or Partner</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Personal Life</td>
<td>Problems with Spouse/partner</td>
<td>Romantic Problems</td>
<td>Problems with Boy/girlfriend</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Family and Friends</td>
<td>Problems with Children Problems with Relatives Problems with Parents</td>
<td>Problems with Children, Problems with Relatives Problems with Parents</td>
<td>Problems with Friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friends</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>See above</td>
<td>Problems with Friends</td>
<td></td>
<td>Friendship Problems</td>
<td>Problems with Friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>General Social Mistreatment. Assorted Annoyances</td>
<td>Problems with Friends</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A clear anomaly when illustrating scale factor structures in Table 1 is the notable lack of interpersonal factors in the original Lazarus and Folkman scales of Kanner and Delongis. Their most commonly reported hassle items were related to time constraints. Participant’s reported too many things to do (Kanner et al., 1981), amount of free time (Delongis, 1985), not enough time to do the things you need to (Lazarus & Folkman, 1989) and a lot of responsibilities. These items were consistently reported across other age ranges and for different occupational samples (e.g. students, community residing adults).

These findings are not surprising given the structure and content of their measures. Maybery and Graham took this one step further when they compared hassle and uplift scale content to that found in diary research where considerable weight is given to interpersonal items (for a review and comparison of hassles and diary content see Maybery and Graham, 2001). The following section extends the global and molecular discussion into the content validity of hassle and uplifts scales, highlighting the key role of interpersonal functioning as a central source of important hassles and uplifts.

Content Validity; The Exclusion of Interpersonal Events

Maybery and Graham undertook a comparative content review of hassle and uplift scales and diary research that revealed that interpersonal positive and negative events are prominent within the latter for their impact on distress and well-being outcomes but generally absent from hassle and uplift scales (2001). They then showed additional predictive utility of including a range of additional interpersonal events to the Delongis (1985) on both hassle and uplift measures. Since that time a number of studies have confirmed the importance of including interpersonal events on hassle and uplift scales (Maybery, 2003a; 2003b; 2004).

This is perhaps not surprising considering that much has been written about the essential role of interpersonal contact (e.g. attachment theory) for human functioning (e.g Bowlby, 1969, 1973; 1980; Ainsworth, 1991, Henderson, Byrne, & Duncan-Jones, 1981, Weiss, 1986). Attachment refers to behaviours that are engaged in by all humans to attain or maintain closeness to another (Bowlby, 1980). Such behaviours are thought innate, considered essential for normal human development, and, to endure for the life cycle (Bowlby, 1969). Survival, belonging and acceptance are three important functions of close attachment relationships with others (Myers, 1999)

Attachment has been linked to wellbeing (Bowlby, 1969, Henderson et al., 1981, Ainsworth, 1991) and happiness is thought to ensue from secure attachment (Bowlby, 1980). The literature has generally considered attachment from a childhood perspective but it is also thought that these early attachments can predict the qualities of later life relationships (Ainsworth & Marvin, 1995). They are thought to be prototypic of subsequent affective relationships (Ainsworth & Marvin, 1995). Social and emotional relationships are adult forms of attachment that are thought to be a source of wellbeing (Henderson et al., 1981, Weiss, 1986). Weiss suggests that “…adults need both a social network to provide engagement and an attachment figure to provide security” (1973, p.148). Myers (1999)
indicates that close relationships impact on happiness and well-being and have value as social support in times of crisis.

It is not unreasonable to expect that an individual's day to day expression of their quality of attachment would result in them experiencing positive and negative events on a daily basis. Each individual's quality of attachment should influence the daily events that they and others, in contact with them, experience. For example, an individual's daily involvement in their social network would see both themselves and their friends experience uplifts. Equally, insecure attachment behaviours would probably result in disharmony and/or conflict (i.e. hassles) for both the individual and those close to them. In summary, attachment theory indicates that interpersonal behaviours should influence distress and wellbeing outcomes through primary appraisals.

Life domain researchers and the personality literature also highlight the importance of interpersonal relationships for distress and wellbeing outcomes. Swindle and Moos suggest marriage, family life and friendships as important life domains (1992) and others suggest friendships and marriage as key interpersonal event domains related to life satisfaction and distress (Headey, Holstrom & Wearing, 1985, as cited in Headey & Wearing, 1992). The personality literature also highlights interpersonal relationships as the conduit through which individual differences impact on both negative and positive mental health outcomes. Bolger and Zuckerman (1995) suggest that a defining feature of the neuroticism personality trait appears to be interpersonal conflict. Others have proposed that it is “…one of the key mechanisms linking this disposition to distress in daily life” (Bolger & Shilling, 1991, p.379). Equally, a clear link has been demonstrated between personality and positive outcomes (DeNeve & Cooper, 1998, Lucas & Fujita, 2000). Higher levels of extraversion leads to better relationships and correspondingly greater positive mental health outcomes (e.g. DeNeve & Cooper, 1998, Argyle & Lu, 1990, Watson, Clark, McIntyre, & Hamaker, 1992). Given that these literatures (i.e. domains of life and personality) represent the environment and person in the definition of primary appraisal and along with attachment theory, it would seem that interpersonal relationships should figure in the conceptualisation and measurement of hassles and uplifts.

Recall Differences According to Questionnaire Order of Hassles and Uplifts

Another more recent issue regarding hassle and uplift measurement concerns the order in which the scales are administered. Maybery et al in two studies demonstrated differences in hassle and uplift ratings of daily events as a function of questionnaire order and format (2002). In the first study, the order of completion of hassle and uplift ratings had a substantial impact on uplift ratings (uplifts were reduced by approximately 30 percent), but had only a minor impact on hassle ratings. Events were rated less uplifting when these ratings followed rather than preceded hassle ratings.

2 Others have noted these two groups as close or loving relationships and friendships (e.g. Myers, 1999).
In a follow up study that employed only the items from the Delongis scales and to mature-age participants in either separated or in the more typical combined format. The second study replicated the asymmetric order effect for hassle and uplift ratings. Prior hassle ratings suppressed uplift ratings not only when the two sets of ratings were separated, but also when the typical combined format of the Delongis scale was used.

The findings highlight the potentially differential impact of negative and positive events on individuals and provide a clear direction for the ordering of scales (i.e. positive before negative) in questionnaire packages (Maybery et al., 2002, p.19).

Researchers should order uplift scales before hassles in their questionnaire packages to optimize uplift recall and evaluation. This ordering will not have a significant influence on hassle ratings.

The mood-memory literature may provide an explanation for these findings, with qualifications for the lack of hassle results. Given Erber and Erber’s suggestion that “…remembering an instance of past failure may lead to a sad mood” (1994, p.80), the prior recall or evaluation of hassles in the studies reported here may have induced negative mood that was then incompatible with the later recall or evaluation of uplifts. But why are hassle ratings not affected to the same degree?

One explanation is that event recall or the level of mood induced by such recall is stronger for negative events. Life’s hassles are generally unplanned and unwelcome and so may have a greater impact on individuals, requiring more time and effort to manage (i.e. coping efforts) than positive events (Langston, 1994). As a result, hassles may be remembered in greater detail than uplifting events. In addition, the level of negative mood induced by hassle recall may be stronger than the level of positive mood induced by the recall of uplifts. The experience of positive events is thought to lead to less intense positive emotions through greater feelings of control, lower arousal and less threat (Langston, 1994). Thus the differential order effect for hassle and uplift ratings may reflect either more vivid memories of hassles or a more pronounced effect of their recall on current mood, relative to uplifts.

Recommendations and Future Research

The debate and developments in the conceptualization and measurement of hassles and particularly uplifts indicates a clear need for future researchers to take care when considering the measure and methodology that they employ. Table 2 summarises some of the key issues and makes recommendations to future researchers in the area.

Given these key issues and recommendations there are also a number of possibly fruitful areas for further research. Considerable research and debate needs to focus upon the role and function of uplifting events. Such research should be in relation to uplifting events in their own right and taking the earlier outlined definition could perhaps focus upon the frequent, volitional and transient nature of a positive event and uplifting experience. Research could examine questions such as: Are more frequent uplifts better? Does increasing event frequency
have a corresponding impact upon wellbeing outcomes? and Which positive events matter most?

Uplifts could also be examined in relation to the severity and frequency discussion. Future research could examine whether frequency or intensity of uplifts is more important for wellbeing. This could also be contrasted with similar research regarding the most important hassle events for distressing outcomes.

**Table 2. Key issues and recommendations to future researchers in the hassle and uplift field**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uplifts</td>
<td>Research and debate the role of uplifts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Include valid content in uplift measurement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employ, reflect upon and focus research based on the new uplift definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing items</td>
<td>Minimise subjectivity in items/measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Remove items confounded with outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severity versus</td>
<td>Choose a response format that reflects research questions and needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>frequency</td>
<td>Frequency scaling should invite recall of the numbers of events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intensity should invite recall of subjective experience of event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Combined format should allow for separation of frequency and intensity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale content</td>
<td>Include a broad range of interpersonal relationships on hassle and uplift measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Content should reflect domains of life relevant to participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>Order uplifts before hassles in survey packages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>administration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other areas of research should look broader than merely within hassle and uplift measurement. Given the new influence on interpersonal relationships, future research might identify any overlap between social support and coping with interpersonal hassles and uplifts. For example, do prior interpersonal uplifts provide the foundations for quality coping and social support actions when a negative event occurs? Other areas of hassle relationship research might include such things as the importance of interpersonal conflict within hassle measurement.

In conclusion, since 1981 when Lazarus and colleagues highlighted the importance of daily hassles the field has moved considerably to recognising the potential of uplifting events along with the important limitations of early hassle and uplift measures. The period has shown important psychometric developments to hassle and uplift scales with considerably improved sub-scale structures and increased validity compared to the initial efforts. The importance of distinguishing event frequency and intensity has also been a considered debate and the recently developed scales to measure the different aspects of these events should prove important for future research. It is hoped that the next 20 or so years will see continual improvements in the conceptualisation of the interaction of the individual with their environment.
References


Hassles and Uplifts: Issues and Improvements in Measuring Day to Day Events


