

MEASURING A SOCIO-EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING AND RESILIENCE IN PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN

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1 Introduction

„A child's present and future well-being is a purpose of all direct and indirect participants in education“ (NOK, 2011, p.50).

The context of the institution of early and pre-school education, such as kindergarten presents very important factor in monitoring, identifying and promoting the well-being of children, especially in the case of socio-emotional well-being and resilience. However, there is a very small number of objective, valid and reliable measuring scales that are available for use within preschool teachers' work. Therefore, the main goal of this study was to validate Socio-emotional well-being and resilience scale for pre-school children (*Positive Entwicklung und Resilienz im Kindergartenalltag* (PERIK, Mayr & Ulich, 2009).

2 Methods

Subjects. The study included N=112 pre-school teachers who are observing pre-school children behavior by using this scale. The total of N=1792 children (939 girls and 853 boys) with a mean age of M = 4.891 years have been observed at six dimensions: Making contact and social performance (EI); Self-control and thoughtfulness (SC); Self-assertiveness (SA); Emotional stability and coping with stress (ES); Task orientation (TO); and Pleasure in exploration (PE).

Instrument. After obtaining rights for using *Scale of Positive Development and Resilience in Kindergarten* (Mayr & Ulich, 2009.) and conducted back translation, some original items (N=13) were added to the existing ones in original scale. Applied scale was consisted of previously mentioned 6 categories, of which each had 8 items (only Self-assertiveness had 9).

Procedure. After obtaining informed consent of randomly chosen kindergarten principals, data was collected in kindergartens from Primorsko-goranska, Istarska and Zagrebačka county. All preschool teachers received the same instructions for using the observing scale.

PERIK-subscale	AGE	N	M	SD	Anova* AGE	GENDER	N	M	SD	Anova* GENDER	
											F(1,1792)
EI	a:3	239	3.504 _{c,d}	0.958	F(3,1792)= 30.781**	M	938	3.682	0.969	F(1,1789)= 28.047**	
	b:4	501	3.619 _{c,d}	0.936			939	3.682	0.969		
	c:5	474	3.866 _{a,b,c}	0.876		F(1,1789)= 49.555**	F	852	3.914		0.869
	d:6-7	542	4.057 _{a,b,c}	0.867				853	3.99		0.795
SC	a:3	239	3.576 _{c,d}	0.848	F(3,1753)= 20.750**	M	938	3.702	0.932	F(1,1789)= 49.555**	
	b:4	501	3.711 _{c,d}	0.869			939	3.702	0.932		
	c:5	474	3.965 _{a,b}	0.818		F(1,1789)= 20.868**	F	850	3.86		0.822
	d:6-7	543	4.001 _{a,b}	0.899				850	3.86		0.822
SA	a:3	238	3.580 _{c,d}	0.805	F(3,1747)= 25.150**	M	935	3.68	0.859	F(1,1783)= 20.868**	
	b:4	500	3.593 _{c,d}	0.867			935	3.68	0.859		
	c:5	473	3.858 _{a,b}	0.774		F(1,1783)= 20.937**	F	850	3.56		0.760
	d:6-7	540	3.978 _{a,b}	0.826				850	3.56		0.760
ES	a:3	238	3.294 _{c,d}	0.716	F(3,1747)= 14.019**	M	935	3.39	0.766	F(1,1783)= 20.937**	
	b:4	500	3.403 _b	0.724			935	3.39	0.766		
	c:5	473	3.476 _{a,d}	0.765		F(1,1783)= 14.455**	F	853	3.91		0.783
	d:6-7	540	3.636 _{a,b,c}	0.809				853	3.91		0.783
PE	a:3	239	3.811 _b	0.833	F(3,1754)= 11.566**	M	939	3.76	0.880	F(1,1790)= 14.455**	
	b:4	501	3.679 _{c,d}	0.879			939	3.76	0.880		
	c:5	474	3.851 _b	0.792		F(1,1790)= 14.455**	F	853	3.91		0.783
	d:6-7	544	3.981 _{a,b}	0.819				853	3.91		0.783

Table 1. Anova results of age and gender differences for five PERIK-subsubscales: Main effects and Bonferroni test for intergroups' differences

*p<0.05; **p<0.01

3 Results

Table 2. The final rotated factor matrix on principal components (1- Self-control and thoughtfulness (SC), 2- Pleasure in exploration (PE), 3- Self-assertiveness (SA), 4- Emotional stability and coping with stress (ES) and 5- Making contact and social performance (EI) with Varimax rotation and communalities

Items	communalities	Principal components				
		1	2	3	4	5
SC5 Respects "do's" and "don'ts", e.g. concerning the use of certain rooms or objects	.708	.856				
SC2 Respects the boundaries and needs of other children	.735	.828				
SC1 The child can wait for his/her turn, e.g. in group discussions, when food or materials are handed out	.688	.807				
SC4 Has respect and empathy for feelings and mood of adults, e.g. when I ask the children to be a little quiet, because I am not feeling well	.667	.781				
SC8 The child is following the rules and is staying in the line when a group excursion is organized outside from the kindergarten	.678	.780				
SC3 Is worried when he/she has hurt another child or damaged something: apologises, tries to make up	.744	.749				
SC7 The child is not impulsive and neglectful in reactions	.679	.690				
SC6 Can be glad for other children, shares their joy ans success, e.g. when a child gets a present	.746	.673			.306	
PE8 The child is very curious and aimed to new things	.660	.791				
PE4 Explores new things independently	.694	.782				
PE1 The child likes to explore new things	.768	.780				
PE7 The child likes to explore new things and to share his/her insights with others	.598	.755				
PE6 Will try things that seem difficult or might not succeed	.531	.742				
PE2 Is optimistic and positive when beginning something new	.633	.729				
PE3 Asks questions, wants to know about things	.534	.701	.346			
PE5 Gives himself/herself time to get acquainted with new situations and things	.673	.308	.653			
SA2 When an adults does not treat him/her justly, the child will speak up for himself/herself	.726		.762			
SA3 Is able to make justified demands on adults, e.g. reminding them of a promise	.558		.742			
SA6 Does not allow himself/herself to be put under pressure, e.g. Holds an opinion that others do not share	.586		.697			
SA5 Can defend himself/herself verbally or physically when attacked by other children	.608		.675			
SA9 The child is persistent in his/her initiatives	.570	.364	.608			
SA4 When something is wrong/disagreeable or something bad happens among children, he/she will speak up, e.g. will say "stop it", "no I don't want to do that"	.495	.439	.536			
SA1 The child enjoys relating tells his/her experiences, e.g. about the weekend	.535	.357	.490	.372		
ES6 Quickly loses his balance, feels distresse easily	.686		.704			
ES5 Takes relatively long to recover after stress and excitement	.467		.701			
ES8 After stressful situation a child calms down quickly	.533		.664			
ES3 Appears well-balanced	.516	.331	.637			
ES7 Emocionalne reakcije djeteta su primjerene situaciji	.646	.426	.630			
ES4 Doesn't mind too much when he/she makes a mistake, loses at a game...	.574		.608			
ES2 He/she calms down on his/her own following excitement or stress	.673		.607			
ES1 The child remains reachable when in distress, e.g. when he/she is cross, disappointed, sad	.655		.405	.462		
EI6 Has close relationships (friendships) with other children	.674		.703			
EI2 Initiates games which are attractive for other children	.710	.328	.701			
EI1 The child makes (positive) contact easily with peers	.598		.680			
EI8 The child easily arises other children to play and engage in group activities	.621	.325	.329	.672		
EI5 His/her opinion is important among peers	.716		.354	.614		
EI3 Tells other children about his/her experiences	.737	.334	.419	.606		
Eigenvalues	14.005	4.277	2.304	1.797	1.233	
% of explained variance	37.853%	11.559%	6.226%	4.857%	3.332%	

PERIK-subsubscales	M	SD	Cronbach alpha	PERIK-subsubscales intercorrelations				
				2	3	4	5	
1. Making contact and social performance (EI) (N=6)	3.793	0.930	0.914	0.488**	0.714**	0.512**	0.657**	
2. Self-control and thoughtfulness (SC) (N=8)	3.840	0.881	0.924	1.00	0.340**	0.484**	0.352**	
3. Self-assertiveness (SA) (N=7)	3.765	0.846	0.874		1.00	0.433**	0.656**	
4. Emotional stability and coping with stress (ES) (N=8)	3.472	0.767	0.849			1.00	0.418**	
5. Pleasure in exploration (PE) (N=8)	3.831	0.839	0.925				1.00	

Table 3. Descriptives for all PERIK-subsubscales: Means (M) Standard Deviations (SD), Cronbach Alphas and Correlation Coefficients (N=1792)

*p<0.05; **p<0.01

3 Results

4 Discussion & Conclusion

Exploratory factor analysis with Varimax rotation resulted in a final scale consisting of five subscales with a structure almost identical to those from the original study with the exception of subscale Task orientation, which is not retained. In addition, age and gender differences in the assessed dimensions showed the expected direction, except for specific and unexpected results associated with a significant decrease in the pleasure in exploration between three-year and four-year olds. Finally, the contribution of this study is mostly related to the definition of valid measuring instrument that has applicable function within the work with pre-school children, and provided significant further research directions in this area.

Key words:

the observation scale, pre-school teachers, pre-school children, resilience, socio-emotional well-being

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