Scenario-Based Scales and Situational Judgment Tasks to Measure the Social and Emotional Skills

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Abstract : Social and emotional skills are considered by modern researchers as predictors of a person's success both in specific areas of activity and in the life of a person as a whole. The popularity of this scientific direction ensures the emergence of a large number of practices aimed at developing and evaluating socio-emotional skills. Assessment of social and emotional development is carried out at the national level, as well as at the level of individual regions and institutions. Despite the fact that many of the already existing social and emotional skills assessment tools are quite convenient and reliable, there are now more and more new technologies and task formats which improve the basic characteristics of the tools. Thus, the goal of the current study is to develop a tool for assessing social and emotional skills such as emotion recognition, emotion regulation, empathy and a culture of self-care. To develop a tool assessing social and emotional skills, Rasch-Gutman scenario-based approach was used. This approach has shown its reliability and merit for measuring various complex constructs: parental involvement; teacher practices that support cultural diversity and equity; willingness to participate in the life of the community after psychiatric rehabilitation; educational motivation and others. To assess emotion recognition, we used a situational judgment task based on OCC (Ortony, Clore, and Collins) emotions theory. The main advantage of these two approaches compare to classical Likert scales is that it reduces social desirability in answers. A field test to check the psychometric properties of the developed instrument was conducted. The instrument was developed for the presidential autonomous non-profit organization "Russia - Land of Opportunity" for nationwide soft skills assessment among higher education students. The sample for the field test consisted of 500 people, students aged from 18 to 25 (mean = 20; standard deviation 1.8), 71% female. 67% of students are only studying and are not currently working and 500 employed adults aged from 26 to 65 (mean = 42.5; SD 9), 57% female. Analysis of the psychometric characteristics of the scales was carried out using the methods of IRT (Item Response Theory). A one-parameter rating scale model RSM (Rating scale model) and Graded Response model (GRM) of the modern testing theory were applied. GRM is a polyatomic extension of the dichotomous two-parameter model of modern testing theory (2PL) based on the cumulative logit function for modeling the probability of a correct answer. The validity of the developed scales was assessed using correlation analysis and MTMM (multitrait-multimethod matrix). The developed instrument showed good psychometric quality and can be used by HR specialists or educational management. The detailed results of a psychometric study of the quality of the instrument, including the functioning of the tasks of each scale, will be presented. Also, the results of the validity study by MTMM analysis will be discussed.

Keywords : social and emotional skills, psychometrics, MTMM, IRT

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