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Development and Preliminary Reliability Evidence for a Social Adjustment Scale for High School Teachers

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Abstract:

Social adjustment is an important aspect of teachers' professional lives because teaching requires constructive interaction with students, colleagues, school administrators, parents and the wider community. This paper reports the development process and preliminary psychometric evidence for a Social Adjustment Scale designed for high school teachers. An initial pool of 41 statements was prepared from a review of literature and consultation with education and psychology experts. A pilot study was conducted with 100 high school teachers. Item discrimination was examined using the extreme-groups method, comparing the upper and lower 27% of respondents. Four items (25, 30, 35 and 41) did not meet the stated critical-ratio criterion and were removed. The final instrument contained 37 items. The thesis reports a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .91. Content review was undertaken by 12 experts. These results provide preliminary evidence of item discrimination, expert-reviewed content coverage and internal consistency

Keywords: social adjustment; high school teachers; scale development; item analysis; reliability; teacher assessment

Introduction

Teachers' work is inherently social. In addition to subject knowledge and instructional competence, teachers are required to communicate with students, collaborate with colleagues, respond to school administrators, interact with parents and participate in the wider school community. The quality of these interactions may influence professional functioning and the experience of working in a school. Social adjustment in this context refers to the ways teachers manage interpersonal relationships, communication, cooperation, emotional responses, conflict and participation in professional settings.

Although adjustment has been examined in different educational populations, the thesis identifies a need for an instrument designed specifically to assess the social adjustment of high school teachers. A context-sensitive measure may help researchers examine teachers' interpersonal and professional adjustment in relation to other variables, including growth mindset, organizational climate and professional development.

The purpose of this paper is to document the construction process and preliminary reliability evidence for the investigator-developed High School Teachers' Social Adjustment Scale. .

Aim and construct coverage

The scale was intended to assess teachers' adjustment in relation to students, colleagues, school administrators, parents and the wider school community. The initial item pool covered interpersonal relationships, communication skills, cooperation, social participation, emotional control in social situations, conflict management, adaptability and professional interaction.

Method

Item generation and expert review

The investigator prepared an initial pool of 41 statements following a review of literature, existing adjustment scales, educational psychology texts and research concerning teacher adjustment. Discussions were held with experts in education, psychology and experienced school teachers. The preliminary instrument was submitted to 12 experts, including professors of education, educational psychologists, senior teacher educators and experienced high school headmasters. They reviewed relevance, clarity, language, simplicity and adequacy of the items. The thesis reports that wording was modified, ambiguous and repetitive expressions were revised or removed, and the experts agreed that the items adequately represented the intended construct.

Pilot sample and item analysis

The pilot study involved 100 high school teachers. Item discrimination was examined using the extreme-groups method. Respondents were ranked by total score, and the upper 27% (n = 27) and lower 27% (n = 27) groups were compared. The thesis states that an item t value of 1.96 or above was considered acceptable at the .05 level. Of the 41 initial items, 37 were retained and four items (25, 30, 35 and 41) were removed.

Item	Upper-group mean	Lower-group mean	Critical ratio	Decision
25	3.96	3.48	1.74	Rejected
30	3.93	3.48	1.69	Rejected
35	3.96	3.56	1.58	Rejected
41	3.93	3.63	1.31	Rejected

The retained items had reported critical ratios ranging from 2.21 to 6.90. The item-analysis table in the thesis lists item-level means and critical ratios; the four rejected items are shown above as examples of the decision rule.

Final response format and scoring

The final scale comprised 37 statements with five response categories. For positive statements, Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Undecided = 3, Disagree = 2 and Strongly Disagree = 1. Negative statements were reverse scored (1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, respectively). The total score ranges from 37 to 185, with higher scores

indicating greater social adjustment. The thesis gives interpretive bands of 37–86 (low), 87–136 (moderate) and 137–185 (high).

Reliability

Internal consistency was estimated using Cronbach's alpha based on the pilot responses. $\alpha = .91$ found to be having excellent internal consistency.

Item retention

Thirty-seven of the 41 preliminary statements met the stated item-discrimination criterion and were retained. Four items were rejected because their critical ratios were below 1.96. The reported critical ratios for the rejected items were 1.74, 1.69, 1.58 and 1.31. The lowest reported critical ratio among retained items was 2.21.

Internal consistency

Psychometric evidence	Result reported
Initial item pool	41 statements
Pilot sample	100 high school teachers
Expert review	12 experts
Items retained	37
Items rejected	25, 30, 35 and 41
Retained-item critical-ratio range	2.21–6.90
Cronbach's alpha	0.91
Possible total score	37–185

The alpha coefficient indicates high internal consistency in the pilot sample. Alpha alone, however, does not demonstrate unidimensionality or establish the validity of score interpretations.

Discussion

The scale development process followed several useful preliminary steps: construct-focused item generation, expert review, pilot administration and item discrimination analysis. The retention of 37 items from an initial pool of 41 suggests that most items differentiated between the upper and lower scoring groups in the pilot sample. The reported alpha coefficient of .91 indicates that the retained items had high internal consistency in that sample.

The instrument's content is relevant to the social demands of teaching, particularly interpersonal relationships, communication, cooperation, emotional control, conflict management and professional interaction. A teacher-focused scale may provide a useful basis for research into how social adjustment is associated with organizational climate, growth mindset and professional development.

Limitations

The pilot sample comprised 100 teachers from the study context, and the supplied thesis does not clearly identify the sampling method or geographic composition of this pilot group. The item pool and complete

final questionnaire are not included in the supplied file. No factor analysis, criterion validation, test–retest study or independent replication is reported. Consequently, the scale should be described as a preliminary measure with initial reliability evidence, not as a fully validated diagnostic instrument.

Conclusion

A 37-item Social Adjustment Scale for high school teachers was developed from an initial pool of 41 statements. Expert review, extreme-groups item analysis and a reported Cronbach's alpha of .91 provide preliminary evidence supporting further research use.

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