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CONFERENCE AND TRENDS

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FOREWORD

Dear Colleagues,

We are delighted to welcome you to the International Psychological Applications Conference and Trends 2013, taking place in Madrid, Spain, from 26 to 28 of April.

Our efforts and active engagement can now be rewarded with these three days of exciting new developments about what we are passionate about: Psychology and its connections. We take pride in having been able to connect and bring together academics, scholars, practitioners and others interested in a field that is fertile in new perspectives, ideas and knowledge. We counted on an extensive variety of contributors and presenters, which can supplement our view of the human essence and behavior, showing the impact of their different personal, academic and cultural experiences. This is, certainly, one of the reasons we have many nationalities and cultures represented, inspiring multi-disciplinary collaborative links, fomenting intellectual encounter and development.

InPACT 2013 received over more 338 submissions, from 37 different countries, reviewed by a double-blind process. Submissions were prepared to take form of Oral Presentations, Posters, Virtual Presentations and Workshops. The conference also includes a keynote presentation from an internationally distinguished researcher Prof. Howard S. Schwartz, from Oakland University, U.S.A.. There will be also two Special Talks, one by Michael Wang, Professor of Clinical Psychology in the School of Psychology, College of Medicine, University of Leicester and also Director of the Doctoral Clinical Psychology Training Course at Leicester, UK, and the other by Clara Pracana, founding member of Portuguese Association of Psychoanalysis and Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy, Portugal, to whom we express our most gratitude.

This volume is composed by the proceedings of the International Psychological Applications Conference and Trends (InPACT 2013), organized by the World Institute for Advanced Research and Science (W.I.A.R.S.) and co-sponsored by the respected partners we reference in the dedicated page. This conference addressed important topics in four main fields taken from Applied Psychology: Clinical, Educational, Social, Legal and Cognitive and Experimental Psychology. The areas can, of course, be object of discussion, but extended abstracts were presented in 56 topics within these fields of research:

- *Clinical Psychology*: Emotions and related psychological processes; Assessment; Psychotherapy and counseling; Addictive behaviors; Eating disorders; Personality disorders; Quality of life and mental health; Communication within relationships; Services of mental health; and Psychopathology.
- *Educational Psychology*: Language and cognitive processes; School environment and childhood disorders; Parenting and parenting related processes; Learning and technology; Psychology in schools; Intelligence and creativity; Motivation in classroom; Perspectives on teaching; Assessment and evaluation; and Individual differences in learning.
- *Social Psychology*: Cross-cultural dimensions of mental disorders; Employment issues and training; Organizational psychology; Psychology in politics and international issues; Social factors in adolescence and its development; Social anxiety and self-esteem; Immigration and social policy; Self-efficacy and identity development; Parenting and social support; and Addiction and stigmatization.
- *Legal Psychology*: Violence and trauma; Mass-media and aggression; Intra-familial violence; Juvenile delinquency; Aggressive behavior in childhood; Internet offending;

Working with crime perpetrators; Forensic psychology; Violent risk assessment; and Law enforcement and stress.

- *Cognitive and Experimental Psychology*: Perception, memory and attention; Decision making and problem-solving; Concept formation, reasoning and judgment; Language processing; Learning skills and education; Cognitive Neuroscience; Computer analogies and information processing (Artificial Intelligence and computer simulations); Social and cultural factors in the cognitive approach; Experimental methods, research and statistics; and Biopsychology.

The proceedings contain the results of the research and developments conducted by authors who focused on what they are passionate about: Psychology and its multi-disciplinary connections. It includes an extensive variety of contributors and presenters, who will extend our view of the human psyche and behavior, by sharing with us their different personal, academic and cultural experiences. This is certainly one of the reasons we have so many nationalities and cultures represented, inspiring collaborative links and fostering intellectual encounters.

There will be a special issue of the “PsychNology” Journal with full papers developed from selected conference papers and also a book with the best papers in extended versions.

We would like to express thanks to all the authors and participants, the members of the academic scientific committee, our sponsors and partners and, of course, to our organizing and administration team for making and putting this conference together.

Hoping to continue the collaboration in the future,

Respectfully,

Clara Pracana

Portuguese Association of Psychoanalysis and Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy, Portugal

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SOCIO-EMOTIONAL COMPETENCES IN PORTUGUESE YOUNGSTERS: DEVELOPING OF ASSESSMENT TOOLS FOR PARENTS*

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Abstract

In the last two decades we have seen the proliferation of assessment tools for socio-emotional competences based on self-report, that only inform us about the beliefs that respondents have about their own competences and not about their real competences. The need to overcome this kind of tools' limitations, and develop assessment options that foster the ecological validity of collected information, encouraged the development of hetero-evaluation tools based, namely, in the opinions that parents have about their children socio-emotional competences. In this work, with a convenience sample of 715 mothers of both sex youngsters, we present the structural validity's study of the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I; Portuguese version of Bar-On for parents) and the Perceived Social Competence (PSC-Pa: PSC parents' version). EQ-I is a tool related to beliefs that parents have about their children emotional intelligence, with 38 items (4-point scaled) organized around five factors (Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, Stress Management, Adaptability, and Mood). PSC-Pa is a tool that consists of five subscales related to parent's perceived social competence of their children in five hypothetical interpersonal situations, with 10 items (3-point scaled) organized around five factors (Intimate Relationship, Leadership, Support and Communication with Peers, and Support and Communication with Adults). Based on exploratory factorial analyses (varimax rotation of factors extracted by principal axis factoring method), and also on the examination of factors' convergent and discriminant validity and their reliability, we verified that the factorial structure of both tools was jeopardized.

Keywords: *Social competences, Emotional competences, Assessment, Parents, Youngsters.*

1. Introduction

According to Waters and Sroufe (1983) Social Competence (SC) is an ability to manage behavior, cognition and affection in order to achieve their social objectives. More specifically, SC appears to be multifold and involving several individual components: positive relationships with others; social cognition appropriate to age; deprivation of maladaptive behaviors and effective social skills (Candeias, 2001).

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is defined as the way we understand ourselves and others, how we relate with people, how we adapt and cope with the immediate surroundings in order to successfully deal with environmental demands (Bar-On, 1997).

Information about children's social competence and emotional intelligence comes from several sources: self-perceptions, peer report, parent report, teacher report, and observer or interviewer ratings. Here, we focus on mother's reports and we try to figure it out what are their perceptions about children emotional self-regulation, social cognition, positive communication, and prosocial relationships with family members, peers, and teachers (Bornstein, Hahn, & Haynes, 2010).

2. Design

Assessment tools based in self-perception can be biased towards "the here and now" rather than summative judgments covering a period of time. Then, an alternative/

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complementary approach is to seek information from the children's parents once they have access to important and detailed information about their child's behavior at several contexts (Wigelsworth, Humphrey, Kalambouka, & Lendrum, 2010).

Self-reported EI of the students only correlate with that of their mothers (Sánchez-Núñez, Fernández-Berrocal, & Latorre, 2013) so our work was developed with a convenience sample of 715 mothers of both gender youngsters (24.4% in the first level, $Mdn_{(age)} = 9$ years; 37,2% second level, $Mdn_{(age)} = 11$ years; 38,4% third level, $Mdn_{(age)} = 14$ years).

We used Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQi-pv: Portuguese version of Bar-On for parents) and the Perceived Social Competence Test (PSC-Pa: PSC parents' version). The EQi-pv assess parents' perception of their children EI in five domains: intrapersonal (IA), interpersonal (IE), adaptability (A), stress management (SM) and general mood (GM) on a 4-points Likert-type scale (1 = "Never" and 4 = "Always"). In PSC-Pa the participants are expected to analyze five interpersonal problem-situations – descriptions of interpersonal situations in a verbal format: (1) intimate relationship (IR), (2) leadership (L), (3) support with peers (SP), and (4) support (SA) and (5) communication with adults (CA); in which the participants are requested to evaluate their performance and facility on a 3-points Likert-type scale (1 = "Poor"/"Hard" 2 = "Suficient"/"Neither easy nor difficult" and 3 = "Excellent"/"Easy", according to the type of the question – performance/facility).

Data collection took place during the school year 2011/2012. Students took home the protocols for mothers respond, and returned to the head of class.

Data analysis was based on exploratory factorial analyses, with varimax rotation of factors extracted by principal axis factoring method for the EQi-pv and by generalized least squares factoring method for PSC-Pa (scale free and asymptotically efficient). Besides the examination of instruments' factor structure, we have examined factors' convergent validity (CV), calculated through average variance extracted (AVE), which should be at least .50, discriminant validity (DV; shared variance, or squared correlations, between factors lower than the AVE of each), and also their composite reliability (CR), which should be at least .70.

3. Objective

The aim of this study is to test the applicability of the scales EQi-pv and PSC-Pa in Portuguese mothers, comparing the factor structure of the first one with the instrument original factor structure, and the factor structure of the second one with the factor structure found in previous research with children.

4. Results

EQi-pv. The original five factor structure was tested and several items were excluded due to small factor loadings ($< .45$): four in GM; two in A; three in SM; one in IA; and, two in IE. The calculation of the factors' AVE revealed severe CV problems in IE (AVE = .29), and slightly CV problems in A (AVE = .45) and IA (AVE = .47). The remaining factors showed AVE values above the desired cutoff level: .53 for both GM and SM. All factors showed reliability values above the desired cutoff level, with the exception of IE (CR = .61). Both AVE and CR results for IE, lead to the exclusion of this factor. Correlations between the four factors were small to moderate (range = -.14. to .39), indicating a good DV. The negative relationships occurred between SM and the other three factors.

PSC-Pa. Based on eigenvalues (Kaiser criterion), and on scree plot inspection, we have retained three factors: Interpersonal Negotiation (IN) with four items (AVE = .47; CR = .78), Social Support (SS) with four items (AVE = .41, CR = .73), and Peers Leadership (PL) with only two items (AVE = .49; CR = .84). The correlations between these factors were moderate (range = .26. to .44), denoting a good DV.

5. Discussion

Due to psychosocial and cognitive development, relationships with parents and friends are considerably different in adolescence compared to childhood (De Goede, Branje, Delsing, & Meeus, 2009).

We believe that due to these characteristics, during the adolescence, parents don't have a real and accurate perception about their children interpersonal relationships and we can justified the exclusion of the IE factor of EQi-pv based on principles of developmental theories, considering the prevalence of adolescents' mothers in our sample (cf. design).

According to the theory underlying the construction of PSC-Pa five factors would arise representing the five situational contents, since this is a test in which situational knowledge is organized according to the contents. However, our data are organized in three dimensions (social support, interpersonal negotiation and peers leadership) which suggest that PSC-Pa can be organized according to knowledge and content but also according to the general processes associated with those contents. In this study, mothers perceived their children SC in terms of social support, interpersonal negotiation and peers leadership. This means that the objectives that guide interpersonal behavior, as the situations are important to organize SC perception as previous studies suggest (Ford, 1982). The final dimensions of PSC-Pa seems to express the structure based in the aggregation of contents, as if we have a content as a process of perceived social competence. For further studies we should develop a new situation about peers' leadership in order to have two situations and four items and improve the validity of PSC-Pa (Candeias, 2001).

6. Conclusions

Our results show that these tools will provide a way to assess mothers' perceptions about their children SC and EI. However we'll keep studying EQi-pv and PSC-Pa with confirmatory factorial analyzes for model invariance across study levels.

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