

Metric characteristics of the Family Resilience Assessment Scale (FRAS) in Croatian context



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Introduction

Resilience, or the capacity for adjustment and achieving good outcomes in the face of adversity is one of the most significant concepts in contemporary social sciences (Liebenberg & Ungar, 2009). It is widely accepted that resilience can occur at various levels, including the individual, family, community and society as a whole.

In consonance with the current phase of the resilience concept development and the comprehensive systemic approach, Masten (2011) provided the new definition of resilience: "Resilience is the capacity of a dynamic system to withstand or recover from significant challenges that threaten its stability, viability, or development".

Dominant understanding of family resilience in literature is that it is a process for which operationalization three elements should be considered (adapted from Patterson, 2002a):

- A **risk** – condition which is prerequisite for resilient process to start
- **Protective factors/mechanisms** – facilitate process of resilience
- **Good outcome/s** – condition with which (observed) process of resilience ends.

Defining family resilience

„...family resilience is a dynamic process of perseverance, self-governance and growth which occurs during response to crisis and challenges.” (Walsh, 2003)

From Walsh Family Resilience Framework

Key process in family resilience

Family belief systems

- Make meaning of adversity
- Positive outlook
- Transcendence and spirituality

Family organization and resources

- Flexibility
- Connectedness
- Social and economic resource

Family communication/problem solving

- Clear, consistent messages
- Open emotional expression
- Collaborative problem solving

It is important to stress that this is not a typology of traits of a “resilient family.” Rather these are dynamic processes involving strengths and resources that families can access and gain to increase family resilience (Walsh, 2012).

Aim, sample & methodology

Aim

The aim of the study was to examine metric characteristics of the Family Resilience Assessment Scale (FRAS, Sixbey, 2005) on Croatian sample.

Sample

Parents of first grade schools students from secondary schools Ivan Svear in Ivanic Grad and The First high school in Zagreb were included in research (N=219, 53.9% of mothers and 46.1% fathers).

Instrument

Family Resilience Assessment Scale (FRAS, Sixbey, 2005); 54 items

Methods

For data analysis SPSS package was used (version 18). In order to achieve the objective of the research descriptive statistics, Factor analysis and Spearman correlation coefficient were used.

Results

Factor analysis of shortened version of the instrument (54 variables) point to six-factor solution that explains 48.89% of the variance:

- Family communication and problem solving
- Making sense of adversity
- Neighbors support
- Family spirituality
- Family connection
- Security and support in the community

Obtained factor solution was similar to the original model (Sixbey, 2005).

Reliability of four scales is satisfactory (α from .65 to .92), while two scales have lower reliability (Making sense of adversity, $\alpha=.58$, Neighbors support, $\alpha=.60$).

Correlation between factors (Spearman's rank correlation coefficient)

	Family communication and problem solving (F1)	Making sense of adversity (F2)	Neighbors support (F3)	Family spirituality (F4)	Family connection (F5)	Security and support in the community (F6)
F1	1.000					
F2	.695**	1.000				
F3	.337**	.141*	1.000			
F4	.241**	.214**	.365**	1.000		
F5	.449**	.478**	.057	.066	1.000	
F6	.459**	.267**	.353**	.352**	.266**	1.000

Validation of FRAS in other research / countries

USA Sixbey (2005)	Turkey Kaya & Arici (2012)	Romania Bostan (2014)	Malta Dimenich (2014)	Croatia (2015)
Family Communication and Problem Solving	Family Communication and Problem Solving	Family Communication and Problem Solving	Family Problem Solving	Communication and Problem Solving
Utilizing Social and Economic Resources	Utilizing Social and Economic Resources	Utilizing Social and Economic Resources	Utilizing Social and Economic Resources	Utilizing Social and Economic Resources
Maintaining the Positive Outlook	Maintaining the Positive Outlook	Maintaining the Positive Outlook	Maintaining the Positive Outlook	Maintaining the Positive Outlook
Family Connectedness	Family Connectedness*	Family Connectedness	Family Connectedness	Family Connectedness
Family Spirituality	Family Spirituality*	Family Spirituality**		Family Spirituality
Ability to Make Meaning of Adversity	Ability to Make Meaning of Adversity	Ability to Make Meaning of Adversity	Ability to Make Meaning of Adversity	Ability to Make Meaning of Adversity
			Outreach	Safety and support in the community
			Community and Friendship Outlook	Neighbours support

* low individual item factor loading; authors propose exclusion of these items

** this factor had a low reliability

Conclusion

Research results indicate relatively good metric characteristics of an instrument FRAS but also the need of instrument improvement.

Proposed actions are:

- revise the translations of items, especially those that have loading on a number of factors
- consider the transformation of some of the items in the negative forms
- expand the scale from 4 to 5 degrees

Also, descriptive data indicate a negative asymmetry of results distribution on all factors, and high results values that may indicate low sensitivity of the instrument.

Challenge: a instrument revision would lead to difficulty of comparing research results from other countries.

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