

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 454 283

TM 033 027

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TITLE Resilience Revisited: Urban Children Assessment and Intervention. Construct Validity of a Resilience Profile for Students with Disabilities (Resilience Subdomains of Coping with Disability Scales--Parent Rating Scale).
PUB DATE 2000-08-17
NOTE 11p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association (108th, Washington, DC, August 4-8, 2000).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150) -- Tests/Questionnaires (160)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement; *Children; *Construct Validity; *Coping; *Disabilities; Elementary Secondary Education; Evaluation Methods; Parents; Rating Scales; *Resilience (Personality); Special Education; Urban Youth

ABSTRACT

The Coping with Disability Scales (CDS) (J. Perry and E. Bard, 1992) was developed to provide a social-emotional assessment specific to disabilities. This report provides a preliminary test of construct validity for a Resilience Profile from the Parent Rating Scale of the CDS through factor analysis, focusing on three subdomains: (1) Disability Problem Solving; (2) Social Skills; and (3) Competence Orientation Resiliency Factors. The sample was composed of 613 special education students with a variety of disabilities from a large urban public school district. Factor analysis results support the construct validity of the Resilience Profile from the CDS Parent Rating Scale. Revisions of the entire CDS will include the Resilience Profile. Some of the potential uses of the profile, which include the study of reasons for academic performance, are discussed. The Resilience Profile is attached. (SLD)

RESILIENCE REVISITED: URBAN CHILDREN
ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION

CONSTRUCT VALIDITY OF A RESILIENCE PROFILE FOR STUDENTS WITH
DISABILITIES
(RESILIENCE SUBDOMAINS OF COPING WITH DISABILITY SCALES -
PARENT RATING SCALE)

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A poster presented at the annual conference of the
American Psychological Association
Washington, D.C., August 17, 2000

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Construct Validity of a Resilience Profile for Students with Disabilities

Introduction

The Coping with Disability Scales (CDS) was developed by Perry and Bard (1992) to provide a social-emotional assessment specific to disabilities. It could be applied as a component of alternative methods for reevaluating students enrolled in special education. There have been field trials with all forms (i.e., self-reports, teacher ratings and parent ratings) and the CDS is presently being revised based on empirical analyses of psychometric properties.

The purpose of this report is to provide a preliminary test of construct validity for a Resilience Profile from the Parent Rating Scale (PRS) of the CDS through factor analysis. Previous factor analyses provided verification of the underlying constructs upon which the CDS was developed (Perry, Bard, & Sullivan, 1995). The factor structure of five (5) of the basic components measured by the scale will be addressed. These include the following: Disability Problem Solving, Social Skills, Social Problems, Competence Orientation, and Helplessness Orientation. The CDS is described in greater detail in the attached manual. Additional factor analyses were conducted to establish a Resilience Profile based on items of Disability Problem Solving, Social Skills, and Competence Orientation.

Theoretical foundations of the CDS are described by Figure 1. Components of the theory relevant to the present study are briefly summarized. The Problem-Solving component includes understanding the consequences of disability and the ability to recommend alternatives for improvement of performance. The Social Skills/Social Problems subtests assess both positive and negative interpersonal relations with peers and adults. The Competence and Helplessness Orientation component measures coping in terms of the student task-orientation for relating to academic and everyday functioning. By grouping the various items within the five (5) domains through the factor analysis procedure, specific factors were obtained to evaluate construct validity of the CDS.

The Resilience Profile was based on the selection of positive, acquired characteristics included in theoretical descriptions of resilience as reflected by items of the CDS (e.g., Brooks, 1999). These items were factor analyzed and resulted in three Disability Problem Solving factors and four Social Skills and Competence Orientation factors.

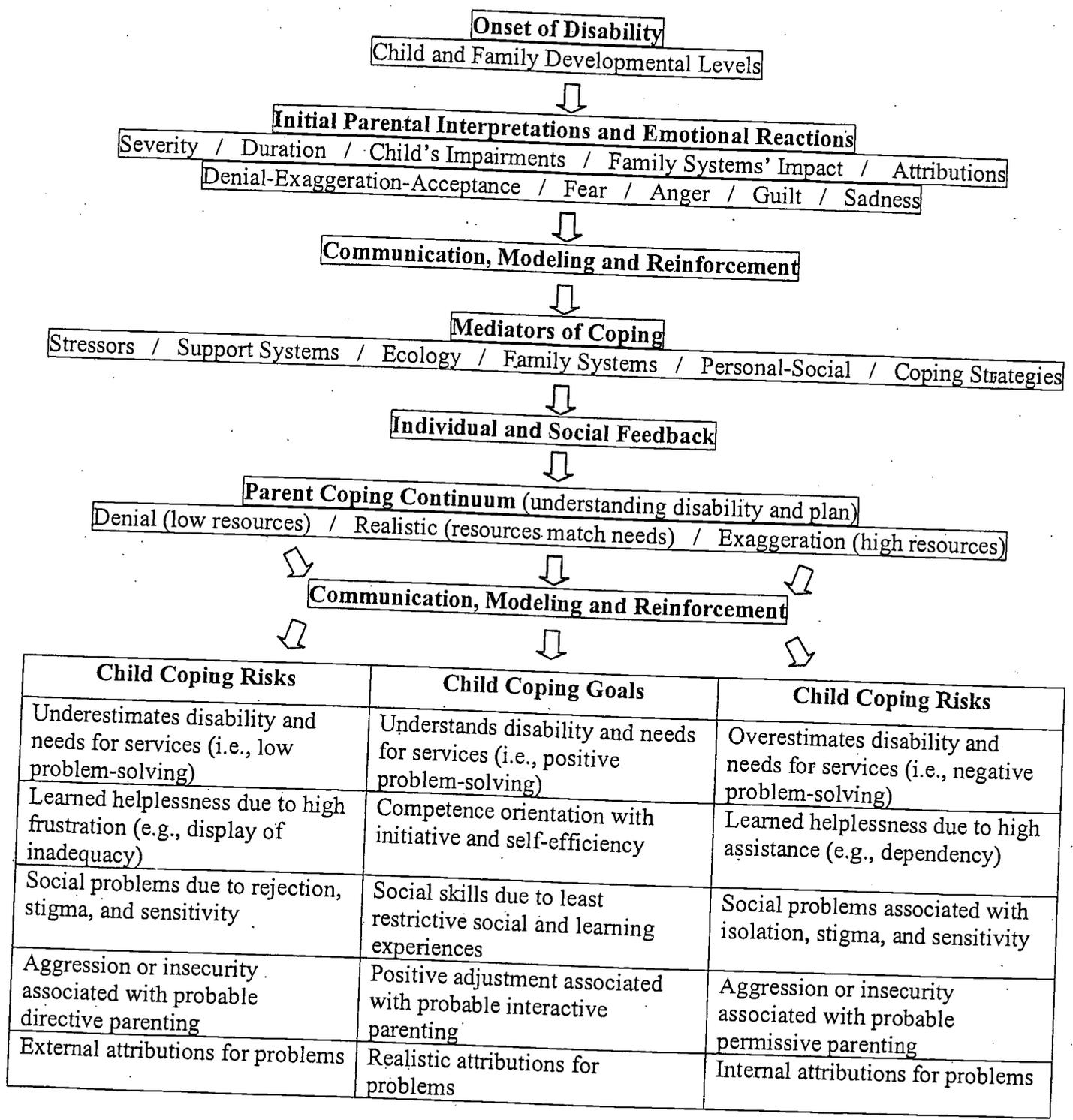
Method

Subjects

The total sample was composed of 613 special education students from a large urban public school district in Northeastern Ohio. Multiple types of disabilities were represented with a distribution similar to the total school district's special education population. This sample included the following distribution of disabilities according to Ohio definitions: 41% Developmental Handicapped (i.e., DH, Mental Retardation and Borderline in Ohio), 37% Specific Learning Disabled (SLD), 13% Severe Behavioral Handicapped (SBH in Ohio and SED nationally), and 9% low incidence (i.e., Autistic, Hearing, Orthopedic and Vision disabilities). The students were placed in these special education programs for an average of 4.48 years (s.d. =3.74 years). Similar to the district's total special education population, the subjects were 68% males and 32% were females. The mean Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Third Edition (WISC-III) Verbal IQ was 79 (s.d.=32), Performance IQ 83 (s.d.=17), and Full Scale IQ 78 (s.d.=16).

This sample was similar to general demographics of the total school district reflecting a high proportion of minorities from low socioeconomic (SES) backgrounds. For example the race distribution was 65% African American, 29% Caucasian, 5% Hispanic, and 1% other in comparison to the total district's distribution of 70%, 24%, 5%, and 1% respectively. Low SES indicators include 64% of the sample receiving free and reduced price school lunches while 70%

Integrative Model of Child and Family Coping with Disability



of the total district's population is below the poverty level. Other low SES indicators for the sample include 46% if the mothers and 48% of fathers not completing high school. Moreover, 70% of mothers and 40% of fathers were unemployed.

The sample was based on parent respondents to requests for participating in alternative reevaluations of special education students during the 1992-93 and 1993-94 school years. The 613 respondent's relationship to the child were comprised of 82% mothers, 15% guardians/relatives, and 3% fathers reflecting that about 70% of the total school district's population reside with mothers as single parents. The 613 students were the part of a total group of approximately 3,400 students due for reevaluation during the 1992-93 and 1993-94 years and a total school population of about 70,000 students. However, about 30% (1,020) of 3,400 parents could not be contacted through the mail since mailings were returned due to changes of addresses. The annual mobility rate annually for the district's school population is about 50%. Moreover, about 10% (340) of the students were "nonattendees" and could not be included. Hence, the return rate was estimated to be 30% or 613 of 2,040 students.

Several issues influenced the return rate. First, it is well established that low SES minority populations are less likely to participate in research. Second, many low SES parents have limited educational backgrounds and probably had difficulty comprehending the coping assessments. Third, due to financial restraints, the return envelopes were not stamped and it was necessary for parents to pay postage. Finally, the time requirements for conducting reevaluations limited follow-up for locating parents with changes of addresses. Despite the estimated 30% return rate, the sample of students was representative of the total school and special education population for major demographic variables as noted earlier.

Instrument

The Coping with Disability Scales (Perry, & Bard, 1992). This multimethod assessment includes a Student Interview Scale (CDS/SIS), Teacher Rating Scale (CDS/TRS), and Parent Rating Scale (CDS/PRS). Each form measures the same factors of : Disability Problem-Solving, Social Skills/Social Problems, Competence/Helplessness Orientation, Interpersonal Support Systems, and Stressors. Structured guidelines for the administration and interpretation of the scale are provided for the examiner. The student interview may be administered by a school psychologist in approximately 30 minutes. The rating scales for parents and teachers require about 30 minutes to complete. Profile forms are provided for configural analysis of the results.

The CDS was based on a synthesis of the literature concerning social skills and coping styles. A brief description of the factors measured is summarized below.

Functional Assessment of Students with Disabilities (FASD). This initial component provides a description of services and programs from teachers and parents. The FASD includes review of services, IEP goals, and interventions provided as well as outcomes for each of these areas. Ratings concerning the degree of impairment in multiple competencies are also provided. Individualized re-evaluations can be developed with emphasis on curriculum-based assessment methods to evaluate the academic and instructional needs of students by using the FASD.

Part I – Disability Problem-Solving. This factor of the CDS is composed of twenty questions on the interview form that measure the degree that students comprehend such concepts as disability severity and definition in addition to program content, barriers, stigma, and transition issues. Teacher and parent ratings of these items are also provided.

Part II – Social Skills/Social Problems. This component assesses both positive and negative interpersonal relations with peers and adults. The Social Skills items include such content as interaction ability, modeling, and prosocial behavior. The Social Problem items encompass poor interaction skills, withdrawal, negative modeling, aggression, and antisocial behavior

Scoring criteria and content related to disability are unique to the CDS. The parent and teacher forms include ratings of these same criteria.

Part III - Competence/Helplessness Orientation. This domain includes twenty items with a similar format as Factor II that measure coping in terms of the student's orientation for relating to academic and everyday living tasks. The content of Competence Orientation includes concepts of self-efficacy and achievement motivation. The criteria of the Helplessness scale include dependency, passivity, and low efficacy.

Part IV – Interpersonal Support Systems. The frequency and type of social support systems available to the student is measured by this factor. This includes family members, peers, and others. Identifying support systems provides an ecological perspective of the systems that promote or impair coping with disabilities.

Part V – Stressors. It is well established that students with disabilities experience more stresses than the typical student. Examples of stresses measured include: abuse, neglect, peer rejection and health problems. The frequency and duration of stresses are assessed. Moreover, the student's response to each stress is evaluated in regard to the perceived emotional reaction.

Resilience Profile

The attached Resilience Profile includes items derived from factor analysis for the positive characteristics reflected by items on the Disability Problem-Solving, Social Skills, and Competence Orientation domains of the CDS. The items were selected for their relevance to the theoretical descriptions of resilience for students with disabilities and youth in general (e.g., Brooks, 1999; Garmezy, 1983). The factors described by this profile reflect the acquired personal-social and task-oriented resilience characteristics most relevant to intervention in compared to "fixed" resilience characteristics (Garmezy, 1983). These included social interaction skills, self-efficacy, internal locus of control, achievement motivation, active involvement, understanding one's problems, and problem-solving skills.

Results

Tables 1 and 2 include abbreviated item descriptions for each factor found through varimax rotation with their loadings and descriptive titles for the domains of resilience. The eigen value of 1 or higher was used as the initial cut off for factors and the factor load of $>.35$ was used for including items in the factors. Items that loaded on more than one factor to nearly equal values and those that did not load on any factor were eliminated.

Results generally indicated that the pool of items selected did produce factors with face likeness to the resilience domains measured, confirming the general construct validity of this instrument. The descriptive titles used to describe the items for each factor are similar to selected domains described in the theoretical literature concerning resilience.

Table 1 indicates that three factors were found for the disability problem-solving domain, which were labeled Planning, Disability Knowledge, and Alternative Thinking. Each factor had five items with high loads. It was hypothesized that resilience of students with disabilities included ability to accurately recognize the nature and severity of their disability in addition to alternative thinking and planning to meet their needs. The items of each factor reflect this type of content.

Results in Table 2 illustrate that four factors were found among items reflecting acquired resilience characteristics on the CDS. These factors were labeled as two Social Skills subdomains (Positive Peer Relations and Positive Parent Relations) and two Competence Orientation subdomains (Self-Efficacy/Locus of Control and Modeling/Active). These factors include many of the characteristics of resilience described in the literature on this topic.

Discussion

The present study supports the construct validity of the Resilience Profile from the CDS Parent Rating Scale. This method will be replicated with results from field trials of the other CDS forms including the Self Report and Teacher Rating Scales. Revisions of the Experimental Edition of the CDS will be developed to include the attached Resilience Profile.

The results are especially applicable to children with disabilities from large urban settings. While this is a limitation, studies with this population are critically needed in view of the multiple mediators of school performance for youth in large cities. Future studies will also include subjects from other settings. Separate norms by type of disability will be provided.

There are multiple implications of having a valid measure available to evaluate children's resilience as a component of coping with disabilities. The CDS may be especially helpful for developing interventions that could promote the adjustment and school performance of youth with disabilities. Current alternative approaches to traditional psychometric evaluations emphasize the academic domain through intervention based methods. The CDS could enhance this approach by identifying resilience and the areas of coping that may explain school performance beyond academic skills measured by intervention based assessment. Support personnel such as school psychologists could also provide direct intervention to promote the adjustment of students as a related service. It is hoped that the CDS will promote an assessment and intervention that is relevant for students with disabilities.

This type of assessment could also be applied in conducting Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and developing Behavioral Intervention Plans (BIPs) as required recent IDEA revisions. The CDS could help identify positive alternatives to problem behaviors relevant to FBA and these could serve as targets for interventions as is typically recommended for BIPs. Intervention handouts are available on these topics.

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Note: A copy of the CDS could be gained by contacting the author at the address listed below.

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Table 1

Factor Analysis: Disability Problem Solving Factors
(Resilience Subdomains of Disability Problem Solving,
Parent Ratings)

<u>Factor I Items – Planning for Needs</u>	<u>Factor Loading</u>
12. Capable of recommending IEP change	.67
11. Aware of IEP content	.63
20. Understands job-seeking needs	.63
19. Understands realistic future job goal	.55
7. Understands severity of disability	.37
<u>Factor II Items – Disability Knowledge</u>	<u>Factor Loading</u>
3. Aware of regular/special education differences	.68
1. Aware of special education placement program name	.54
4. Discriminates regular vs. special education classes	.52
15. Sensitive to stigma from peers	.43
6. Knows how long placed in special education	.42
<u>Factor III Items – Alternative Thinking</u>	<u>Factor Loading</u>
17. Aware of barriers to better school performance	.63
14. Understands changes needed for improvement	.55
8. Understands strengths for learning	.48
10. Tries to complete difficult school work	.48
18. Recognizes needs for assistive devices	.44

Table 2

Factor Analysis: Acquired Resilience Factors
(Resilience Subdomains of Social Skills/Competence Orientation)

<u>Factor I Items - Positive Peer Relations</u>		<u>Factor Loading</u>
49.	Starts conversations with peers	.72
52.	Stands up to bullies	.65
53.	Shows others how to do things	.62
27.	Shows leadership with peers	.59
5.	Able to introduce people to one another	.57
35.	Attends social events such as parties	.56
14.	Popular with peers due to friendliness	.52
<u>Factor II Items - Self-Efficacy/Locus of Control</u>		<u>Factor Loading</u>
30	Completes homework independently	.70
51	Seeks help only when needed	.68
4	Shows enthusiasm about learning	.63
36	Attributes grades to ability	.59
50	Attempts new tasks without fear	.48
38	Self-reliant in carrying out tasks	.44
11	Self-confident about ability to learn	.39
<u>Factor III Items - Positive Parent Relations</u>		<u>Factor Loading</u>
20	Helps family with daily living tasks	.72
7	Volunteers to help parents	.69
45	Follows parents' rules	.61
32	Will attempt work such as running errands	.56
18	Responsible for personal belongings at home	.52
<u>Factor IV Items - Modeling Active</u>		<u>Factor Loading</u>
22	Acts as positive model of helpful behavior	.65
25	Attempts to compensate for learning problems	.59
34	Tries to stop arguments	.58
3	Models or imitates positive behavior of others	.50
54	Strives for perfection when completing tasks	.44
	Understands how others feel	.37

Resilience Profile of Students with Disabilities (experimental form)
(Subdomains of Coping with Disabilities Scales-Parent Ratings)

Student's Name: _____ Sex: Boy / Girl Birthdate: _____

Rater's Name: _____ Relationship to student: _____ Date: _____

Instruction: Transfer scores from CDS for each item listed below

Part I Disability Problem Solving (DPS)

Disability Knowledge (five items)

- ___ 1. Aware of special education placement program name.
- ___ 3. Aware of difference between regular and special education.
- ___ 4. Discriminates classes attending in regular versus special education.
- ___ 6. Knows how long placed in special education.
- ___ 15. Sensitive to reactions of peers to disability.

Total of Disability Knowledge

Planning for Needs (five items)

- ___ 7. Understands the severity of the disability.
- ___ 11. Aware of IEP content.
- ___ 12. Capable of recommending IEP changes.
- ___ 19. Understands realistic future job goals.
- ___ 20. Understands job-seeking needs.

Total of Planning for Needs

Alternative Thinking (five items)

- ___ 8. Understands strengths for learning.
- ___ 10. Tries to complete difficult school work.
- ___ 14. Understands changes needed for improvement.
- ___ 17. Aware of barriers to better school performance.
- ___ 18. Recognizes needs for assistance devices.

Total of Alternative Thinking

TOTAL DISABILITY PROBLEM SOLVING SCORE (DPS)

Part II Social Skills

Positive Relations with Peers (seven items)

- ___ 5. Able to introduce people to one another.
- ___ 14. Popular with peers due to friendliness.
- ___ 27. Shows leadership with peers.
- ___ 35. Attends social events such as parties.
- ___ 49. Able to start conversations with peers.
- ___ 52. Able to stand up to bullies.
- ___ 53. Willing to show others how to do things.

Total Positive Relations with Peers

Part II Social Skills (Cont.)

Positive Relations with Parents (five items)

- ___ 7. Volunteers to help parents.
___ 18. Responsible for personal belongings.
___ 20. Helps family with daily living tasks.
___ 32. Will attempt work such as running errands.
___ 45. Follows parents' rules.

Total Positive Relations with Parents

TOTAL SOCIAL SKILLS SCORE (SS)

Part III Competence Orientation Resiliency Factors

Modeling/Active (six items)

- ___ 3. Models or imitates positive behavior of others.
___ 12. Understands how others feel.
___ 22. Acts as positive model of helpful behavior.
___ 25. Attempts to compensate for learning problems.
___ 34. Tries to help stop arguments.
___ 54. Strives for perfection when completing tasks.

Total for Modeling/Outgoing

Self-Efficacy/Locus of Control (seven items)

- ___ 4. Shows enthusiasm about learning.
___ 11. Self-confident about ability to learn.
___ 30. Completes homework independently.
___ 36. Attributes good grades to own ability.
___ 38. Self-reliant in carrying out tasks.
___ 50. Attempts new tasks without fear of failure.
___ 51. Seeks help with homework only when needed.

Total for Self-Efficacy/Internal Locus of Control

TOTAL FOR COMPETENCE ORIENTATION (CO)

TOTAL RESILIENCE SCORE (DPS & SS & CO)

Sum of: DPS

Sum of: SS

Sum of: CO

= Resilience Score



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