

Everyday Stressors Index

Hall, L.
1983

Description of Measure

Purpose

To assess problems faced on a daily basis by low-income mothers with young children.

Conceptual Organization

The Everyday Stressors Index (ESI) includes 20 items covering five problem areas: role overload, financial concerns, parenting worries, employment problems, and interpersonal conflict.

Item Origin/Selection Process

The 20 items were selected from the 117-item Daily Hassles Scale developed by Kanner and colleagues (Hall, 1983; see also Kanner, Coyne, Schaeffer, & Lazarus, 1981).

Materials

See Hall, 1983.

Time Required

5-10 minutes

Administration Method

Interviewer-administered

Training

Minimal

Scoring

Score Types

Respondents are asked to rate how much each problem bothers them, on a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (not bothered at all) to 3 (bothered a great deal). A composite score of everyday stressors is derived by summing responses to all items. Possible scores range from 0-60.

Score Interpretation

A higher composite score indicates a higher level of daily stress.

Psychometric Support

Reliability

The author reports high internal consistency of the index, with a Cronbach's alpha of .83 (Hall, Williams, & Greenberg, 1985).

Validity

Construct validity of the ESI was supported by discrimination of everyday stressors from measures of maternal depression and psychosomatic symptoms using factor analytic procedures (Hall, 1983). Also, Hall and Farel (1988) reported that scores on the ESI were positively and significantly associated with depressive symptoms (as measured by the CES-D) and psychosomatic symptoms (as measured by the Health Opinion Survey), among a sample of unmarried mothers.

LONGSCAN Use

Data Points

Age 6

Respondent

Primary maternal caregiver

Mnemonic and Version

ESIA

Rationale

While life events and daily stressors have both been shown to predict aspects of child, parent, and family well-being, an index of daily stressors appears to be the more powerful measure of stress (Crnic & Greenberg, 1990; Hall & Farel, 1988). Use of the Everyday Stressors Index at Age 6 allowed LONGSCAN investigators to examine parental stress as a predictor of child maltreatment. The SO site used this measure in their sample prior to joining the LONGSCAN consortium.

Administration and Scoring Notes

LONGSCAN changed the scale for the response categories to values of 1 (not at all bothered) to 4 (extremely bothered) from Hall's original values of 0 (not at all bothered) to 3 (extremely bothered), so that possible total scores range from 20 to 80.

Results

Descriptive Statistics and Reliability

Table 1 lists ESI mean scores and Cronbach's alpha coefficients by race and study site based on responses at the Age 6 interview. As measured by Cronbach's alpha, the ESI was highly reliable for the LONGSCAN sample as a whole, as well as by race and study site. The total mean score of 35 (which translates to a score of 15 using Hall's scoring protocol) for LONGSCAN caregivers was low compared to the mean score of 23 for Hall's sample of low-income mothers (Hall, 1983).

There was only minimal variation by race and by study site. Comparisons by race revealed that Black caregivers had the highest mean composite score. The SW site had the lowest mean composite score, probably reflecting the large number of substitute caregivers with higher overall functioning in that particular sample.

Table 1 about here

Validity

Validity was examined by assessing the relationship between the caregivers' report of everyday stressors and her self-reported depression score from the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D; Radloff, 1977). Others have reported that while daily

stressors can be differentiated from depression (Hall, 1983), the two tend to be significantly correlated (Gelfand, Teti, & Fox, 1992; Hall & Farel, 1988). We also examined the relationship between everyday stressors and a self-report of family cohesion and family conflict (Self-Report Family Inventory;

Beavers, Hampson, and Hulgus, 1985) hypothesizing that daily stressors--some of which relate to interpersonal problems within the family--would be significantly associated with negative perceptions of family cohesion and increased family conflict. Table 2 displays the correlation coefficients by race and by site. All correlations are statistically significant.

Table 2 about here

References and Bibliography

Crnic, K. A., & Greenberg, M. T. (1990). Minor parenting stresses with young children. Child Development, *61* 1628-1637.

Gelfand, D. M., Teti, D. M., & Fox, C. R. (1992). Sources of parenting stress for depressed and nondepressed mothers of infants. Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, *21* 262-272.

Hall, L. (1983). Social supports, everyday stressors, and maternal mental health. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Hall, L., Williams, C. A., & Greenberg, R. S. (1985). Supports, stressors, and depressive symptoms in mothers of young children. American Journal of Public Health, *75* 518-521.

Hall, L. A., & Farel, A. M. (1988). Maternal stresses and depressive symptoms: Correlates of behavior problems in young children. Nursing Research, *37* 156-161.

Kanner, A. D., Coyne, J. C., Schaefer, C., & Lazarus, R. S. (1981). Comparison of two modes of stress measurement: Daily hassles and uplifts versus major life events. Journal of Behavioral Medicine, *4*(1), 1-25.

Radloff, L. S. (1977). The CES-D Scale: A self-report depression scale for research in the general population. Applied Psychological Measurement, 1 385-401.

Table 1. Everyday Stressors Inventory (ESI) Mean Total Scores, Standard Deviations, and Cronbach's Alphas by Race and Study Site. Age 6 Interview

	N	<u>M</u> (SD)	α
Total	1166	35.48 (10.48)	.85
Race			
White	394	34.75 (9.36)	.84
Black	662	36.47 (11.09)	.86
Hispanic	91	33.67 (9.57)	.85
Multiracial	34	34.35 (11.01)	.90
Other	30	31.48 (10.38)	.87
Site			
EA	252	35.80 (10.37)	.85
MW	216	36.88 (11.24)	.86
SO	220	36.00 (11.43)	.87
SW	295	33.37 (9.75)	.86
NW	234	35.94 (9.51)	.83

Source. Based on data received at the LONGSCAN Coordinating Center through 8/24/01.

Table 2. Correlations between ESI and Measures of Depression (CES-D), Family Health and Family Conflict by Race and Study Site. Age 6 Interview

	N	CES-D α	Family Cohesion α	Family Conflict α
Total	1155	.57	.45	.38
Race				
White	379	.63	.53	.41
Black	628	.54	.41	.35
Hispanic	84	.45	.43	.44
Multiracial	34	.65	.56	.51
Other	27	.67	.61	.60
Site				
EA	243	.54	.39	.36
MW	216	.58	.42	.45
SO	220	.57	.43	.31
SW	295	.53	.50	.36
NW	234	.65	.49	.42

Source. Based on data received at the LONGSCAN Coordinating Center through 8/24/01.