

BUROS

CENTER FOR TESTING

TEST REVIEWS

Personal Skills Map

Personal Skills Map

Purpose

"Offers a means for the self-assessment of personal skills."

Population

Ages 13-19.

Publication Date

1993.

Acronym

PSM.

Scores

14 scales: Self-Esteem, Growth Motivation, Change Orientation, Interpersonal Assertion, Interpersonal Aggression, Interpersonal Deference, Interpersonal Awareness, Empathy, Drive Strength, Decision Making, Time Management, Sales Orientation, Commitment Ethic, Stress Management.

Administration

Group or individual.

Forms, 3

The Personal Skills Map, The Personal Skills Survey, Teacher Observation Test.

Price Data, 1994

\$125 per 10 Personal Skills Map; \$62.50 per 25 Personal Skills Survey (specify grades 3-5 or 6-12); \$60 per 25 Teacher Observation Test.

Time

(30-40) minutes for Personal Skills Map; (20-25) minutes for Personal Skills Survey; (10-15) minutes for Teacher Observation Test.

Comments

Part of Becoming a Champion program; Personal Skills Survey and Teacher Observation Test are components derived from the Personal Skills Map.

Author

People Builders International, Inc.

Publisher

Chronicle Guidance Publications, Inc.

REVIEW 1 OF 1

Review of the Personal Skills Map by DELWYN L. HARNISCH, Director, Office of Educational Testing, Research & Service, and Associate Professor of Educational Psychology, University of Illinois at Urbana--Champaign, Champaign, IL:

The purpose of the Personal Skills Map (PSM) is to offer a means for the self-assessment of personal skills and self-awareness for students in grades 6-12. After having taken the Personal Skills Map, students are allowed to enroll in a program entitled, "Becoming A Champion," which is centered on the "concept that a person can change and develop creatively as he or she learns and practices new skills under the guidance of a skilled counselor or teacher" (p. 2). The authors emphasize the goals for a positive approach to self-assessment and recommend that each individual in the program "focuses on Skills to Develop/Change Areas in acquiring new information and effectiveness in building skills" (p. 2). Two components are derived from the Personal Skills Map, the Personal Skills Survey and the Teacher Observation Test.

ADMINISTRATION AND SCORING

The PSM includes two forms (PSM-E for elementary and PSM-A for adults) that may be administered to individuals and groups by psychologists, counselors, and teachers. Group administration of the PSM-E is not recommended below grade 3. The current version of the PSM was standardized in the English language with the manual published only in English. Student information from the PSM provides 14 scales in three major dimensions of personal effectiveness. This information highlights the extent to which the individual possesses 14 skills and interpersonal communication style and readiness for change.

Directions for each form request the respondent to circle the response that is most like them at work: "Most descriptive (M), sometimes descriptive (S), or least descriptive (L)" according to an "honest response of how you describe yourself." The respondent is then asked to transfer the number to the box to the right of each statement that corresponds to their response. Subtotals are created for each column and added to the remaining item scores to arrive at the total score. All total scores are then transferred to the personal map and plotted with lines connecting all score points to show one's personal assessment profile for each of the scales on the four major dimensions of personal skills: Intrapersonal skills are made up with scales of self-esteem (confidence) and growth motivation (future oriented); Interpersonal

skills are made up with scales of assertion, interpersonal awareness (appropriateness), and empathy: Career/Life skills are made up with scales of drive strength (goal setting), decision making, time management, sales orientation, commitment ethic, and stress management (self-care); and Communication styles are made up of scales for interpersonal assertion, interpersonal aggression, and interpersonal deference. Raw scores are then converted to standard scores (T-scale) and categorized as "in need of development" if below 40, "enhanced" if above 60, and as "a strength" if score is between 40 and 60. Administration time ranges from 30 to 50 minutes. Each item on the PSM requires an independent response that has no bearing on any other items.

TEST DESCRIPTION

The individual may enter a program oriented toward the acquisition of personal skills. The 14 areas include Self-Esteem, Growth Motivation, Change Orientation, Interpersonal Assertion, Interpersonal Aggression, Interpersonal Deference, Interpersonal Awareness, Empathy, Drive Strength, Decision Making, Time Management, Sales Orientation, Commitment Ethic, and Stress Management.

RELIABILITY

The manual contains information on reliability studies conducted for the original PSM. Test-retest reliability coefficients for a sample of 24 undergraduate students with one week separating the two administrations of the test ranged from .64 (Empathy scale) to .94 (Sales Orientation scale). The authors note that because many variables can impact personal skills, reliability may not remain stable or fixed over long periods of time. No mention is made of the number of items that make up each scale in the manual. No internal consistency measures of reliability are found in the manual.

No reliability data were available on the Teacher Observation Test (TOT), the Personal Skills Survey (PSS), and the Computerized Personal Skills Map System (CPSMS) rating scales.

VALIDITY

The manual points out that an important test of the validity of the PSM was to determine whether the instrument could effectively differentiate between normal, healthy students possessing personal skills and other individuals functioning with below-average personal skills. The authors chose to administer the test to three carefully selected research groups. The first group consisted of 100 skilled professional aides in the behavioral sciences. Most were doctoral and master's degree students. The second (n = 99) consisted of individuals randomly selected from a "normal" population. The third group (n = 122) was a voluntary group who had sought counseling and psychotherapy services. PSM scale means, mean differences, and t ratios were computed for comparisons among the groups. Tables are given in the

manual depicting the results. The results show that the PSM does differentiate among the three groups and suggested that the PSM may be useful in clinical settings.

Evidence for concurrent validity is provided by comparing the correlations among the derived PSM scales with measures from standardized personality inventories that include the Personal Orientation Inventory (Shostrom, 1962), Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (Edwards, 1953), Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (Cattell, 1956), and Minnesota Multiphasic Inventory by Hathaway and McKinley (1943). The small samples used for these concurrent validity studies ($n = 40, 28, 22,$ and 17) are only suggestive of what these relationships are likely to be. Additional research is needed to further evaluate the validity of the PSM scales.

No validity data were available for scores from the Teacher Observation Test (TOT), the Personal Skills Survey (PSS), and the Computerized Personal Skills Map System (CPSMS) with the Personal Skills Map scales or other external measures.

NORMS

The test administration manual provides data and tables about norms and standardization samples. The sample included 1,157 adolescents ages 13-19 enrolled in public and private secondary schools. A variety of students were sampled from large urban, suburban, and rural schools, as well as a group of juvenile offenders. The standardization sample included Africa-American, Hispanic, and white students. The authors recommend local norming of the PSM to increase the validity of scores within a specific setting. They suggest attending to grade level and gender distinctions. Based on the standardization sample, adolescent norms consisting of means and standard deviation on each of the scales are provided along with individual tables by sex and also for gender groups at the two levels of age (13-15 vs. 16-19-year-olds).

The manual provides normative data consisting of means and standard deviations for an adult sample of 1,400 on each of the PSM scales. No information is available in the manual to describe the normative sample. Correlations among the PSM scales are based on the research and standardization sample of 359. Limited demographic data are presented on the standardization samples and no normative data are provided on culturally diverse groups.

The authors state that the PSM is effective as a program development model for use with diverse cultural groups. Caution must be emphasized when applying an instrument without any normative data for culturally diverse groups. Further work is needed to document the reliability and validity of scores from the scales in multiple-language versions before blindly using it for cross-cultural research and program development.

SUMMARY

The PSM is a very interesting battery that provides potentially useful information about adolescents' personal skills, communication style, and motivation toward change. The items have been carefully researched and developed. The Personal Skills Map can serve as a tool for use by counseling programs or special needs programs. It has potential to be useful to administrators, counselors, teachers, parents, and students in making choices about the future, building personal development programs, structuring individual or group counseling, or selecting specific support services for young people. The validity data for the Personal Skills Map show the need for examining the performances relative to age and gender groups but the personal map profile of personal skills disregards factors such as age and sex. This is a serious omission and needs to be corrected in the next edition. The norm groups are not well described and appear to lack generalizability. The authors also provide little evidence to support the culture-free status of these inventories. Despite these problems, the authors should be commended for developing an instrument that focuses on providing a positive approach to formulating a change program for the individual or group.

Cite this review

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