

EARLY CHILDHOOD
TEACHER STYLE AND DIMENSIONS OF EDUCATION
RATING SCALES

1. Early Childhood Teacher Style Rating Scale
2. Early Childhood Dimensions of Education Rating Scale
3. Teacher Style and Dimensions of Education Validity Check

As mentioned earlier, it has been found in the literature that various measures of teacher style and ways of teaching are highly correlated with behavioral outcome measures of developmentally appropriate child care (Fowler, 1980; Prescott et al., 1972; Traub et al., 1972; Verma & Peters, 1975), and thus these subject group variables may be potentially pre-existing sample biases that can affect the dependent measures.

A number of scales have been developed and reported in the literature for measuring teacher styles and ways of teaching in preschool settings including the Dimensions of Schooling Questionnaire, Teacher Practices Observation Form, Teacher Belief Rating Scale, Environmental Standards Profiles, and other such scales (cf. Fowler, 1980; Prescott et al., 1972; Traub et al., 1972; and Verma & Peters, 1975).

Some of the existing scales are cumbersome and time-consuming to administer (e.g., the Traub et al. [1972] Dimensions of Schooling Questionnaire contains 28 items each with five alternatives that must be ranked without ties and requires an elaborate scoring procedure), while others are very informal and are not susceptible to quantitative analysis (e.g., the interview procedures used by Prescott et al. [1972]). To measure initial group differences in teacher style and dimensions of preschool education adopted by those teachers, a compromise set of three scales were developed based on the literature and that incorporates portions of the Prescott et al. and Traub et al. work.

Teacher Style. In a study by Prescott et al. (1967) a factor analysis of 52 variables about patterns of preschool teacher behavior indicated four bipolar dimensions of teacher style:

- encouragement versus restriction
- conformity versus nonconformity to routine
- group versus individual teaching
- foster independence versus restraint

A five-point Likert-type sub-scale was developed for each of these dimensions by using the variables from the Prescott et al. work that had the greatest positive and negative factor loadings on each of these dimensions (selected from Tables 1 to 4 of Prescott et al., 1967, pp. 18 and 59), and transform each variable into a Likert-type item. Thus, for example, the sub-scale for "encouragement-restriction" was based on Likert-type statements about encouraging children to pursue their own interests (factor loading +.89), insuring that children know the correct rules of social living (-.31), rewarding creativity an experimentation in the classroom (+.52), and helping children to be controlled in the classroom (-.68). The completed scale, consisting of 16 five-point items, is called the Early Childhood Teacher Style Rating Scale, initially published in 1982.

Dimensions of Education. The scale dealing with *dimensions of practical approaches to education* was more directly deduced from the Traub et al. (1972) Dimensions of Schooling (DISC) Questionnaire. Their questions measured the openness versus closedness of educational programs (not the physical space) of schools and preschools. It had ten sub-dimensions of openness-closedness, with a total of 28 items. To simplify the administration and scoring of this instrument, two items were selected from each of the ten sub-dimension and, rather than having subjects rank order five alternative responses, these items were transformed into five-point Likert-type items. For example, the sub-dimension of "student control" with items about rule-making and rule-enforcing was transformed into two items about children being free to talk and move about as they please (+ loading on openness) and about the room being set for the convenience of the teachers (- loading on openness). The completed scale, composed of 20 five-point items, is called the Early Childhood Development Dimensions of Education Rating Scale.

Validation. To validate both scales, a Teacher Style and Dimensions of Education Validity Check was developed for use by the directors and teachers of 16 child care centers in the greater Milwaukee area (Moore, 1982). Each director rated her staff, and all the teachers rated themselves on the six dimensions that comprised these two scales. Comparisons were made between the director's and the teacher's ratings. As each score was taken on the same subject (a self-rating and a director's rating), a paired samples *t*-test was employed. The results indicated no significant differences between self- and director's ratings on five of the six dimensions (*t*'s ranging from 0.25 to 1.43, *df*=15, all *p*'s > .10). That is, teachers and directors agreed on five of the dimensions of teacher styles used by the teachers in the classroom. The only difference was that the directors thought their staff to be more open philosophically than the teachers felt themselves to be, though they did agree on their actual performance in the classroom. Though the *t* values were moderately low, this analysis suggests that for *research purposes only* the scales are relatively valid indicators of teachers' styles of early childhood education.

Both of the Early Childhood Teacher Style Rating Scale and the Early Childhood Dimensions of Education Rating Scale have been used in the work of others, e.g., by Clifford, Harms, and their colleagues in the construction and validation of their own infant, toddler, and preschooler scales (see Clifford et al., 1989).

EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER STYLE RATING SCALE*

Please think for a moment about your practical beliefs about what you actually do while working with children. Please respond to the following statements by indicating the extent of your agreement or disagreement with each statement. It will be difficult to decide on some, but please do your best. There are no right or wrong answers, only your own style of teaching. To allow us to correlate the information on this and other forms, would you also indicate the last four digits of your social security number. All responses will be kept strictly anonymous and confidential.

Name of Early Childhood Development Center: _____

Name of your Room or Area: _____

Social Security Last Four Digits: _____

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNDECIDED	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. Generally I encourage children to pursue their own interests.	—	—	—	—	—
2. I try to insure that children know the correct rules of social living.	—	—	—	—	—
3. I reward creativity and experimentation in the classroom.	—	—	—	—	—
4. I try to help the children be very controlled in the classroom most of the time.	—	—	—	—	—
5. I try to help children to adapt to new situations.	—	—	—	—	—
6. I believe children should conform to academic expectations in the classroom.	—	—	—	—	—
7. Whenever possible I try to anticipate situations before they arise.	—	—	—	—	—
8. With very few exceptions I try to follow the leads of how other teachers do things.	—	—	—	—	—
9. I believe a major function of child care is the care of the individual needs of different children.	—	—	—	—	—
10. Most of the time I try to teach to groups of children.	—	—	—	—	—
11. I try to give approval for individual accomplishments.	—	—	—	—	—
12. I direct most of my time to helping children conform to the expectations of the group.	—	—	—	—	—

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	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNDECIDED	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
13. I encourage children to solve their own problems.	—	—	—	—	—
14. I direct most of my time to formal academic lessons.	—	—	—	—	—
15. I accept what children say they are feeling.	—	—	—	—	—
16. I believe in the importance of correct responses.	—	—	—	—	—
Thank you for your time and assistance.					

* This scale was developed by and copyright 1982 by Gary T. Moore based on the work of Prescott, Jones, and Kritchevsky (1967, 1972). For more information, contact the Environment-Behavior Research Institute, School of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI 53201.

EARLY CHILDHOOD DIMENSIONS OF EDUCATION RATING SCALE*

Please consider your early childhood program and how you personally work with the children. Please respond to the following statements by indicating the extent of your general agreement or disagreement with each statement. It will be difficult to decide on some, but please do your best. There are no right or wrong answers, only your own way of teaching. To allow us to correlate the information on this and other forms, would you also indicate the last four digits of your social security number. All responses will be kept strictly anonymous and confidential.

Name of Early Childhood Development Center: _____

Name of your Room or Area: _____

Social Security Last Four Digits: _____

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNDECIDED	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. Children are encouraged to develop at their own rate and in their own way.	—	—	—	—	—
2. The needs and interests of staff and parents determine educational objectives in the classroom.	—	—	—	—	—
3. Almost all the time children are free to select and use whatever materials they wish.	—	—	—	—	—
4. Most activities can only be done by children when the staff give permission.	—	—	—	—	—
5. We make considerable use of the center outside our room and of the community beyond the center.	—	—	—	—	—
6. I try to restrict most activities to the areas designated for them.	—	—	—	—	—
7. Children are permitted to move about from one group to another or from one activity to another without asking.	—	—	—	—	—
8. Preschool-age children are not capable of making significant decisions about their preschooling.	—	—	—	—	—
9. Fixed timetables and cues for the changing of activities get in the way of child development.	—	—	—	—	—
10. The amount of structured time during which I set tasks for the children exceeds the amount of unstructured free time.	—	—	—	—	—
11. Children are free to work at their own pace and to learn in a way that they find personally satisfying.	—	—	—	—	—
12. I find that most children of the same age learn in much the same way.	—	—	—	—	—

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	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNDECIDED	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
13. Within my area and the center as a whole I encourage children to group themselves without regard to age.	—	—	—	—	—
14. Within the center children are assigned to graded groups on the basis of age or physical ability.	—	—	—	—	—
15. As a teacher, I see my role mainly as a resource person not a leader.	—	—	—	—	—
16. I often make formal presentations to groups of children.	—	—	—	—	—
17. I believe that the primary importance of assessments of the children is to help each child decide what to focus on.	—	—	—	—	—
18. Formal tests would be valuable in determining the growth and achievement of children.	—	—	—	—	—
19. In my room, children are free to talk and move about whenever and however they please.	—	—	—	—	—
20. The rules of the room are set for the most part to make it easier for the staff to teach the children.	—	—	—	—	—

Thank you for your time and assistance.

* This scale was developed by and copyright 1982 by Gary T. Moore based on the work of Traub, Weiss, Fisher, and Musella's more elaborate Dimensions of Schooling (DISC) questionnaire. For more information, contact the Environment-Behavior Research Institute, School of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee WI 53201.

TEACHER STYLE AND DIMENSIONS OF EDUCATION VALIDITY CHECK*

Your professional staff members have been asked to fill out two brief questionnaires about their style of teaching and about the educational climate of their classes. In order to validate these measurement instruments, we would appreciate if you (as Director, or your senior Program Coordinators) would fill out the below scales for each of the professional staff members. So that we can correlate findings, we will need you to indicate the last four digits of their social security number and room--we do not, however, want names. We will not divulge any of this information to the staff or anyone else; in all ways it will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous. Please use one of the attached sheets for each staff member, and respond to the below statements for each by indicating the degree of your agreement or disagreement with how well each statement characterizes the staff member.

Name of Early Childhood Development Center: _____

1. Degree to which the teacher encourages the children to follow their own interests versus to follow directions from the staff.
2. Degree to which the teacher believes in strict conformity versus non-conformity to rules and regulations.
3. Degree to which the teacher believes in group versus individual teaching.
4. Degree to which the teacher believes in the independence of children versus their need for dependency and role models.
5. Degree to which the teacher believes in "open" versus "traditional or closed" modes of education.
6. Degree to which the teacher actually practices open versus closed modes of education.

* This validation scale was developed by and copyright 1982 by Gary T. Moore for use with the Teacher Style Rating Scale and the Dimensions of Education Rating Scale. For more information, contact the Environment-Behavior Research Institute, School of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI 53201.

TEACHER STYLE AND DIMENSIONS OF EDUCATION VALIDITY CHECK
EXTRA PAGES

Please use one sheet for each professional staff member in your Center. Either fill it in yourself, or fill it in for your senior Program Coordinators and then ask them to fill it in for their teachers. Please remember to include the last four digits of the person's social security identification number, and please remember this is strictly confidential.

Room or Area in the Center: _____

Teacher Social Security Number: _____

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|--|------------------|---|---|
| 1. | <u>strongly</u>
encourages
own interests | <u>slightly</u>
encourages
own interests | <u>undecided</u> | <u>slightly</u>
encourages
directions | <u>strongly</u>
encourages
directions |
| 2. | <u>strongly</u>
in
conformity | <u>slightly</u>
in
conformity | <u>undecided</u> | <u>slightly</u>
in
non-conformity | <u>strongly</u>
in
non-conformity |
| 3. | <u>mostly</u>
group | <u>some</u>
group | <u>undecided</u> | <u>some</u>
individual | <u>mostly</u>
individual |
| 4. | <u>strongly</u>
in
independence | <u>slightly</u>
in
independence | <u>undecided</u> | <u>slightly</u>
in
dependence | <u>strongly</u>
in
dependence |
| 5. | <u>strongly</u>
in
open | <u>slightly</u>
in
open | <u>undecided</u> | <u>slightly</u>
in
closed | <u>strongly</u>
in
closed |
| 6. | <u>strongly</u>
open | <u>slightly</u>
open | <u>undecided</u> | <u>slightly</u>
closed | <u>strongly</u>
closed |

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation.