

Examination of Inter-Factor Structure of Gender on Family Empowerment Scale for Parents with Toddlers

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Background

In Japan, issues surrounding parents and children are becoming grave, such as isolation of child-rearing families and an increase in child abuse. Support for families during child-rearing years should include an empowerment perspective to identify families in a powerless state.

Aim of the study

This study aimed to identify gender equality in the structure among the five factors of the Family Empowerment Scale for Parents with Toddlers (FES-P) .

Methods

An internet-based survey was conducted among 825 parents (412 men and 413 women) with children aged 1 to 3. For the analysis, a model with equality constraints was constructed to examine the equality of the structure between the factors of the two populations, and the model was selected based on goodness-of-fit indices (CFI, RMSEA, and AIC).

Results

Family empowerment can be 67% explained for man and 66% for women by the five-factor structure model of “relationships within the family,” “sense of efficacy with regard to parenting,” “recognition and combined use of services,” “relationships with the community,” and “sense of achievement as a parent.” The goodness of fit of the model was obtained with CFI=0.946 and RMSEA=0.042. The goodness-of-fit indices of the models with equality constraints were compared, and since there was an improvement in the goodness-of-fit of the AIC in the model with constraints, the model with equal observables measuring each factor across populations was selected.

Conclusions and implications

FES-P was shown to be able to be assessed with the same questionnaire items for men and women.