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ПРИВЕРЖЕННОСТЬ ВОПРОСАМ ПСИХИЧЕСКОГО ЗДОРОВЬЯ

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ГОТОВЫ К ПЕРЕМЕНАМ? ПСИХОМЕТРИЧЕСКИЕ СВОЙСТВА «ШКАЛЫ СТАДИИ ИЗМЕНЕНИЙ РАННЕГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ И УХОДА 2.0»¹

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Аннотация. В статье представлены выводы о психометрических свойствах *Стадия перемены шкалы для раннего образования и ухода 2.0*, предназначенной для профессионалов дошкольного образования в Сербии. Также обсуждается важность мониторинга готовности к изменениям во время программ профессионального развития или других инициатив по улучшению качества (как программы изменения поведения в отношении здоровья).

Ключевые слова: готовность к переменам, профессиональное развитие (ПР), воспитатели дошкольных учреждений, трансформационная модель преобразований

READY FOR CHANGE? PSYCHOMETRIC PROPERTIES OF THE STAGE OF CHANGE SCALE FOR EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE 2.0

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Abstract. The paper presents findings on the psychometric properties of *The Stage of Change Scale for Early Education and Care 2.0* adapted for ECEC

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The data from this study are obtained through monitoring of a project “Development and Implementation of the Capacity Building Programme in Support of the Implementation of the New Preschool Curriculum Framework in Serbia”, implemented jointly by the Ministry of Education Republic of Serbia, UNICEF, Institute for Pedagogy and Andragogy of the Faculty of Philosophy (IPA), University of Belgrade, Serbia, with the support of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (No 8693YF), 2019-2023. This project is part of the subcomponent 2.1. in the project “Inclusive Preschool Education” led by the Ministry of Education Republic of Serbia.

professionals in Serbia. In addition, it discusses the importance of monitoring readiness for change during professional development programs or other quality improvement initiatives (like health-behaviour change programmes).

Keywords: readiness for change, professional development (PD), ECEC teachers, Transtheoretical model of change (TTM)

A person's or an organization's readiness for change is defined as the *willingness* and *capacity* to adopt an innovative practice or perform an existing practice in a new manner at a given point in time [2]. Readiness for change is directly related to the person's levels of well-being and distress levels [6]. Thus, it represents one of the key pillars of the implementation of professional development programmes or other quality improvement initiatives (like health-behaviour change programmes). One of the most prominent theories/models describing different stages of change is the Transtheoretical model [1], despite its relative success in implementation in the field of health-behaviour change [5]. The Transtheoretical model suggests that change is a continuum, taking place over six stages: pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, maintenance and termination stage. It focuses on the individual's decision-making and is a model of intentional change. In addition to the field of health-behaviour change, the Transtheoretical model of change was implemented in the field of professional development in education [e.g., 2]. In the present paper, we contribute to the critical need for further development of methods to assess both individual and organizational readiness for change of educational practice across a variety of cultural contexts [2]. It describes the psychometric characteristics of *The Stage of Change Scale for Early Education and Care 2.0* (based on the Transtheoretical model), as adapted for the Serbian ECEC context.

Method. *The participants and the data collection process.* During the period 2020-2022, 1207 ECEC professionals (preschool teachers, preschool counsellors, principals) (98.1 % female, 96.3 % preschool teachers) from 19 preschool institutions

across Serbia completed an online questionnaire regarding their readiness for change and experiences during 5 days long training for implementation of the new ECEC curriculum “Years of Ascent”. **Instrument.** The Stage of Change Scale for Early Education and Care 2.0 is a 7-item measure of teachers’ readiness for change [4]. It is completed by checking the phrase that most accurately describes the teacher’s attitude toward each item on the scale: 1. *Intention* (intention to change); 2. *Awareness* (an awareness of the need to change); 3. *Seeking information* (interest in learning new information about his/her practices); 4. *Effect on children* (beliefs about the extent to which making a change would have an effect on children); 5. *Overcoming obstacles* (beliefs in own ability to overcome obstacles to change); 6. *Social support* (the extent to which the learner believes in social support); 7. *Professional identity* (the extent to which the learner sees himself/herself as a professional). A Likert-type scale consisted of 5 different responses for each item, representing different phases of change as defined in Transtheoretical model: from pre-contemplation about the change to the maintenance of the effects of the change (the termination stage was not included in the scale). The scale can be filled by teachers, coaches, mentors or school counsellors, to plan individually customized support. Classical test theory (CTT) analyses identified one factor and Cronbach alpha reliability was 0.93 [4]. The scale was translated into Serbian and back-translated into English. Some of the words were adapted to new Serbian ECEC curriculum. **Data analysis.** Confirmatory factor analysis with the unweighted least squares (ULS) method [3] and reliability analysis was conducted with JASP 0.17.2.1. free software.

Results and discussion. Descriptive statistics (Table 1) implies that ECEC professionals in Serbia are on average at the beginning of stage *Action*, meaning that they recently changed their behaviour (within the last 6 months) and intend to continue with that trend. The measure of sampling adequacy (KMO=0.864) and Bartlett’s test of sphericity (approximated $\chi^2=2480.427$,

df=21, p=0.001) showed that the data are adequate for a factor analysis procedure. The internal consistency was acceptable with Cronbach's $\alpha=0.777$. The obtained results on the psychometric validity of the adapted The Stage of Change Scale for Early Education and Care 2.0 for Serbian ECEC professionals support the original one-factor model of the scale, at an acceptable level [7]: $\chi^2=69.527$, df=14, p=0.001; Comparative fit index (CFI)=0.987; Tucker-Lewis index (TLI)=0.980; Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA, 90 % CI)=0.057 (0.044 –0.071). All standardized factor loadings ranged from 0.552 to 0.729.

Conclusions. A confirmed one-factor structure for the Stage of Change scale for Early Education and Care 2.0 allows for further implementation of integral version of the Scale not only for monitoring the PD programmes but also for monitoring practices and preschool-based professional learning in Serbia. In the context of the capacity-building programme for the implementation of the new Serbian ECEC curriculum, self-reported results on readiness for change provided information about how well this programme matched individual learners' stages of change. Future studies will examine how preschool counsellors can utilize this scale to choose intervention techniques and design professional development programmes tailored to the learner's stage of change and in line with his/her well-being.

Table 1

Descriptive statistics					
Item	Mean	SD	Skewness (SD)	Kurtosis (SD)	Shapiro-Wilk (p value)
Intention	3.650	0.720	-0.566 (0.070)	0.452 (0.141)	0.813 (<0.001)
Awareness	3.743	0.862	-0.219 (0.070)	-0.295 (0.141)	0.869 (<0.001)
Seeking info	3.432	0.877	0.578 (0.070)	-0.331 (0.141)	0.789 (<0.001)
Effect on children	3.449	1.131	-0.073 (0.070)	-0.958 (0.141)	0.892 (<0.001)
Overcoming obstacles	3.737	0.886	-0.177 (0.070)	-0.546 (0.141)	0.874 (<0.001)
Social support	4.345	0.872	-1.249(0.070)	1.042 (0.141)	0.739 (<0.001)
Professional identify	3.606	1.298	-0.567 (0.070)	-0.778 (0.141)	0.863 (<0.001)
Average	3.709	0.629	-0.496 (0.070)	0.301 (0.141)	0.980 (<0.001)

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