

The Resilience, Adaptation and Well-Being Project



Family Distress Index

FDI

FDI:

Family Distress Index

Overview

In an effort to develop a broadly defined measure of family maladaptation the Family Distress Index (FDI) was developed by Hamilton McCubbin, Anne Thompson, and Kelly Elver (1993a) to obtain family self report observations as to the occurrence of family hardships (e.g., drug abuse, divorce, emotional problems) and challenges which reflect family disharmony and family intolerance. The severity of the distress is recorded by the family members completing the questionnaire. This measure was one index of family outcomes in the Resiliency Model of Family Stress, Adjustment and Adaptation.

Development of FDI

The FDI was developed as one index of family maladaptation; the degree to which families exhibit certain behaviors or patterns of functioning which reflect the family's continuous condition of disharmony and imbalance. Items were selected which reflect family conflict, reduced problem solving, tension, and disorientation in a member and/or the family unit.

Conceptual Organization

FDI is an 8-item instrument which uses a 4-point Likert scale ranging from Not a Problem to Large Problem, to record the degree to which the family is faced with hardships which may be symptomatic of family distress.

Reliability

The internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha) of the FDI measure is .87.

Validity

In a recent study of Native Hawaiian families, the FDI was found to be strongly related to intense family pressures, having an incendiary pattern of communication, and a lack of social support (E.A. Thompson, H.I. McCubbin, A.I. Thompson, & Elver, 1995).

Test-Retest Reliability

There is no test-retest reliability available at this time.

Additional Validity Checks

No additional validity information is available at this time.

Scoring Procedures

The total score for FDI is obtained by simply summing the number circled by the respondent (i.e., 1=Not a Problem, 2=Small Problem, 3=Medium Problem, 4=Large Problem) for all 8 items.

Norms and/or Comparative Data

Comparative data are available for Native Hawaiian families and for farm families and are presented as percentiles and standard scores, means and standard deviations in Tables 27.1 through 27.2.

Instrument Utilization for Research

The FDI instrument is currently being tested within the Family Stress, Coping and Health Project and by other investigators. The few studies that have included this instrument have already been cited in the validity section of this chapter and are included in the references. Therefore, a summary table of related publications is not available at this time.

Notes

1. The availability of additional psychometrics and bibliographies of other users is limited at the date of publication due to the recent development of the instrument. Upon publication of this material, wider usage is expected, and as subsequent publications become available they will be added to our database. If you would like to inquire about more recent studies, please write to us at the Center for Excellence in Family Studies, Family Stress, Coping and Health Project, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1300 Linden Drive, Madison, WI 53706 or send email to manual@macc.wisc.edu. There will be a charge for these additional materials.
2. When referencing this instrument, the proper citation is: McCubbin, H.I., Thompson, A.I., & Elver, K.M. (1993). Family Distress Index (FDI). In H.I. McCubbin, A.I. Thompson, & M.A. McCubbin (1996). Family assessment: Resiliency, coping and adaptation-Inventories for research and practice. (pp. 783788). Madison: University of Wisconsin System.

Table 27.1
Families of Native Hawaiian Ancestry Family Distress Index (N=191)

Raw Scores	Standard Scores	Cumulative Percentiles
0	-1.7	8.9
1	-1.3	16.8
2	-0.9	29.3
3	-0.5	43.5
4	-0.1	52.4
5	+0.3	66.5
6	+0.7	78.0
7	+1.2	89.5
8-24	+1.6	100.0

Mean = 4.152

SD = 2.469

Range = 8

Kurtosis = -1.120

Skewness = -.058

Mode = 3.0

Table 27.2
Midwest Farm Families Family Distress Index (N=524)

Raw Scores	Standard Scores	Cumulative Percentiles
0	-1.0	23.7
1	-0.7	37.0
2	-0.4	48.5
3	-0.2	67.6
4	+0.1	67.2
5	+0.3	74.4
6	+0.6	79.6
7	+0.8	84.5
8	+1.1	88.6
9	+1.4	90.6
10	+1.6	93.3
11	+1.9	94.3
12	+2.1	96.0
13	+2.4	97.3
14	+2.6	98.5
15-16	+3.2	99.0
17	+3.4	99.2
18	+3.7	99.6
19	+3.9	99.8
20-24	+4.5	100.0

Mean = 3.731

SD = 3.878

Range = 21

Kurtosis = 1.855

Skewness = 1.362

Mode = 0.0

FDI

FAMILY DISTRESS INDEX

English Version



FDI
FAMILY DISTRESS INDEX ©
Hamilton I. McCubbin Anne I. Thompson Kelly M. Elver

Directions:

Please circle 0, 1, 2 or 3 to record the degree to which each of the family pressures listed have been a problem in your family during the past 12 months.

<i>Family Pressures:</i>	Not a Problem	Small Problem	Medium Problem	Large Problem
1. A member appears to have emotional problems	0	1	2	3
2. A member appears to depend on alcohol or drugs	0	1	2	3
3. Increase in arguments between parent(s) and child(ren)	0	1	2	3
4. Increase in conflict among children in the family	0	1	2	3
5. Increased disagreement about a member's friends or activities	0	1	2	3
6. Increase in the number of problems or issues which don't get resolved	0	1	2	3
7. Increase in the number of tasks or chores which don't get done	0	1	2	3
8. Increased conflict with in-laws or relatives	0	1	2	3