The Resilience, Adaptation and Well-Being Project

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Family Index of Regenerativity and Adaptation - General

FIRA - G

FIRA-G:
Family Index of Regenerativity and Adaptation-General

Overview
The Family Index of Regenerativity and Adaptation-General (FIRA-G) was developed by Hamilton McCubbin (1987a) to provide a brief set of measures which have reliability and validity and can be used to test the major dimensions of the Resiliency Model of Family Stress, Adjustment and Adaptation.

The use of self-report family systems assessment measures in research, education, and clinical counseling work, and particularly family health research is based on the premise that family processes interact with individual family members' psychological and physiological processes in discernible and predictable ways. Clearly, the family system is but one of a host of interrelated environmental influences which can and does have a profound impact upon individual family members, but the research to substantiate this relationship 1s in an embryonic stage of development. The jury remains in session deliberating the merits of current research.

Until such research has been accumulated to guide family life education programs and family oriented clinical and health focused interventions, the training of family educators, nurses, social workers and physicians will continue to be guided by faith, experience, clinical insights and unconfirmed assumptions. To advance research to address these educational and clinical issues about the family system, family assessment measures have been developed and tested.

Development of FIRA-G
To facilitate research in the study of family systems, their transitions, adjustment and adaptation, as well as their impact on family members, we have made an effort to develop a cluster of family measures designed and selected to assess the critical dimensions and components of this family stress model. This series of research instruments has been called the FIRA Series, the Family Indices of Regenerativity and Adaptation. In this publication we will introduce FIRA-G (Family Index of Regenerativity and Adaptation-General).

Conceptual Organization
FIRA-G is designed to obtain 7 indices of family functioning (Table 29.1). Specifically, FIRA-G, which is patterned after the Resiliency Model of Family Stress, Adjustment and Adaptation, is designed to obtain reliable and valid indices of Family Stressors (A/AA Factor), Family Strains (A/AA Factor), Relative and Friend Support (PSC Factor), Social Support (BBB Factor), Family Confidence (BIBB Factor), Family Coherence (T Factor), Family Hardiness (T Factor), and two indices of family adaptation-Family Discord (X/XX Factor) and Family Distress (X/XX Factor).

Table 29.1
Overview of FIRA-G, Family Index of Regenerativity and Adaptation-General

Resiliency Family Dimensions	Primary Instrument	Number of Items	Concepts
Family Stressors (A/AA)	FILE	10	Pile-up
Family Strains (A/AA)	FILE	10	Pile-up
Relative and Friend Support (PSC)	FCOPES	8	Family Support
Social Support	SSI	17	Community Support
Family Coherence (T)	FCOPES	4	Family Resources
Family Hardiness (T)	FHI	20	Regenerative Type
Family Distress (X/XX)	FILE	5	Adaptation

The Family Stressors Index (H.I. McCubbin, & Patterson, 1981b) consists of 10 items selected to record those life events and changes which can render a family vulnerable to the impact of a subsequent stressor or change. The index includes the addition of a member, changes in the work situation, deaths and illness. The psychometric properties of the Family Stressors index include a validity coefficient (correlation with the original FILE) of .60.

The Family Strains Index (H.I. McCubbin & Patterson, 1982f) consists of 10 items selected to record those life events and changes which can render a family vulnerable to the impact of a subsequent stressor or change. The index' includes conflict between husband and wife, conflict among and with children, financial hardships and the strains of caring for an ill member. The psychometric properties of the Family Strains Index include a Cronbach's alpha of .69 and a validity coefficient (correlation with original FILE) of .87.

The Relative and Friend Support Index (H.I. McCubbin, Larsen, & Olson, 1982b) consists of 8 items selected to record the degree to which families call upon relative and friend support as one of the strategies the family unit uses to manage its stressors and strains. The psychometric properties of the Relative and Friend Support Index include a Cronbach's alpha of .82 and validity coefficient (correlation with the original FCOPES) of .99.

The Social Support Index (H.I. McCubbin, Patterson, & Glynn, 1982) consists of 17 items selected to record the degree to which families are integrated into the community, view the community as a source of support and feel that the community can provide emotional, esteem, and network support. The psychometric properties of the Social Support Index include a Cronbach's alpha of .82 and a validity coefficient (correlation with the criterion of family well-being) of .80.

Family Coping Coherence (H.I. McCubbin, Larsen, & Olson, 1982a) consists of 4 items selected to record the degree to which families call upon their appraisal skills to manage stressful life events, strains, and changes. This index includes the acceptance of stressful events, accepting difficulties, a positive appraisal of a problem and having faith in God. The psychometric properties of Family Coping-Coherence include a Cronbach's alpha of .71 and a validity coefficient (correlation with the original F -COPES) of .80.

The Family Hardiness Index (M.A. McCubbin, H.I. McCubbin, & A.I. Thompson, 1986) was developed to measure the characteristic of hardiness as a stress resistance and adaptation resource in families, which would function as a buffer or mediating factor in mitigating the effects of stressor and demands, and a facilitation of family adjustment and adaptation over time. Family hardiness specifically refers to the internal strengths and durability of the family unit and is characterized by a sense of control over the outcomes of life events and hardships, a view of change as beneficial and growth producing, and an active rather than passive orientation in adjusting to and managing stressful situations. The Family Hardiness Index is a 20-item in-

strument consisting of four subscales (Co-oriented Commitment, Confidence, Challenge, and Control) which calls for the respondent to assess the degree to which (False, Mostly False, Mostly True, True) each statement describes their current family situation. The Co-oriented Commitment subscale measures the family's sense of internal strengths, dependability and ability to work together. The Confidence subscale measures the family's sense of being able to plan ahead, being appreciated for efforts, their ability to endure hardships and experience life with interest and meaningfulness. The Challenge subscale measures the family's efforts to be innovative, active and to experience new things and to learn. The Control subscale measures the family sense of being in control of family life rather than being shaped by outside events and circumstances. The psychometric properties of the Family Hardiness Index include a Cronbach's alpha of .82 and validity coefficients ranging from .15 to .23 (see Chapter 7).

The Family Distress Index (H.I. McCubbin & Patterson, 1981a) consists of five items selected to record those major difficulties families may experience which reflect a deterioration in a family's stability. The index includes family members with emotional problems, the abuse of alcohol or drugs, physical or psychological violence, separation or divorce and deterioration in the marital relationship. The psychometric properties of the Family Distress Index are limited with a validity coefficient (correlation with original FILE instrument) of .50.

Reliability
The reliabilities of each of the FIRA-G measures are presented in Table 29.2.

Table 29.2
FIRA-G Measures

Resiliency Measures	Reliability	Validity
Family Stressors (A/AA)	*	.60
Family Strains (A/AA)	.69	.87
Relative and Friend Support (PSC)	.82	.99
Social Support	.82	.80
Family Coherence (T)	.71	.80
Family Hardiness (T)	.82	.15-.23
Family Distress (X/XX)	*	.50

*Adapted from FILE instrument

Validity
To get a complete picture of validity please refer back to the original measures (where available) in this publication. These measures were reported in the conceptual organization section, at the end of each paragraph.

Test-Retest Reliability
The test-retest reliabilities can best be gleaned from the original measures presented in this book.

Additional Validity Checks
No additional validity information is available at this time.

Scoring Procedures
The scoring for FIRA-G may be viewed as relatively routine, with a few exceptions to be noted. The list below describes the procedure used for scoring each individual instrument. For items in Family Stressors, Family Strains and Family Distress scales, items answered Yes are given the weighted score for that item

in the Yes column, (i.e., item 1 from Family Stressors would equal 50 for a Yes response, 0 for a No). For the other 4 instruments in FIRA-G, each item is assigned a score of the response circled (i.e., l=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree). Reversals (i.e., 1=5, 2=4, 3=3, 4=2, and 5=1) are needed for some of the items in the Family Hardiness and Social Support Indexes in order to ensure that all items are weighted in a positive direction for analysis and interpretation. These are noted in the right hand column of the list below and are marked with an asterisk.

There is a 25-item version of the Social Support Index available which includes a social desirability scale not used in analysis. Items to be reversed in the 25-item version include: 9, 11, 12, 15, 17, 22, and 24.

Family Stressors Index	Sum weighted items then divide by 10 for total Family Stressors score	Items 1 through 10
Family Strains Index	Sum weighted items then divide by 10 for total Family Strains score	Items 1 through 10
Relative & Friend Support	Sum items for total Relative & Friend Support score	Items 1 through 8
Social Support Index	Sum items for total Social Support score	Items 1 through 17
		Reverse items 7*, 9*, 10*, 13*, 14*, 17*
Family Coping Coherence Index	Sum items for total Family Coping Coherence score	Items 1 through 4
Family Hardiness Index	Sum items for total Family Hardiness score	Items 1 through 20
		Reverse items 1*, 2*, 3*, 8*, 10*, 14*, 16*, 19*, 20*
Family Distress Index	Sum weighted items then divide by 10 for total Family Distress score	Items 1 through 5

Norms and/or Comparative Data
Comparative data are available on families involved in three major surveys of family strengths. The comparative data are presented in terms of means and standard deviations presented on the basis of family life cycle stages (Table 29.3).

Instrument Utilization for Research
The FIRA-G 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 conceptual organization 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 earlier writings on this instrument included a comprehensive description of the instrument's development. For the sake of brevity we limited the chapter to the basic information that users have requested and needed. If you desire a copy and are unable to find our earlier publications, either the 1987 or the 1991 edition, 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. (1987). Family Index of Regenerativity and Adaptation-General (FIRA-G). In H.I. McCubbin, AI. Thompson, & M.A McCubbin (1996). *Family assessment: Resiliency, coping and adaptation-Inventories for research and practice.* (pp. xx-xx). Madison: University of Wisconsin System. If using any of the subscales separately, still reference the subscale as follows: For example, McCubbin, H.I. & Patterson, J. (1981). Family Stressors. In McCubbin, H.I. (1987). Family Index of Regenerativity and Adaptation-General (FIRA-G). In H.I. McCubbin, AI. Thompson, & M.A McCubbin (1996). *Family assessment: Resiliency, coping and adaptation-Inventories for research and practice.* (pp. 823-841). Madison: University of Wisconsin System.

Table 29.3
FIRA-G Dimensions Distributed across 4 Stages of the Family Cycle:
Means and Standard Deviation

FIRA-G Dimensions	Couple Stage		Preschool School Age Stage		Adolescent Launching Stage		Empty Nest Retirement Stage	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Family Stressors (A/AA)↑	11.0	8.0	11.0	8.0	11.0	9.0	10.0	8.0
Family Strains (A/AA)↑	7.0	7.0	11.0	8.0	10.0	9.0	4.0	3.0
Relative and Friend Support (PSC)↑	25.0	4.0	25.0	6.0	24.0	5.0	25.0	6.0
Social Support*	45.4	8.0	45.3	7.5	47.9	7.7	N/A	N/A
Family Coherence (T)↑	16.0	2.0	16.0	2.0	16.0	2.0	16.0	2.0
Family Hardiness (T) ±	48.6	5.6	47.5	4.9	46.6	6.8	47.5	7.0
Family Distress (X/XX)↑	2.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	3.0	3.0	2.0	1.0

*N = 1036 Military Families
↑N = 1000 Families (Non-Military)
±N = 304 Families (Non-Military)

RFS

RELATIVE AND FRIEND SUPPORT

Africaans Version

FIRA-G

FAMILY INDEX OF REGENERATIVITY AND ADAPTATION-GENERAL©
Hamilton I. McCubbin

Relative and Friend Support

Relative and Friend Support Index (RFS)

INSTRUKSIES: Besluit vir u gesin of u: BESLIS VERSKIL;   VERSKIL;   NEUTRAAL is;   SAAM STEM; of BESLIS SAAM STEM met die stellings hieronder.   **Maak 'n merkie in die toepaslike blokkie**.

* In hierdie vraelys verwys famlielede na famlie buite die huisgesin

Ons hanteer gesinsprobleme deurdat ons:	Beslis verskil	Verskil	Neutraal	Saam stem	Beslis saam stem	Kantoor gebruik
1. Ons probleme met familielede deel						
2. Advies by familielede soek						
3. Dinge saam met familielede doen (bymekaar uitkom)						
4. Aanmoediging en ondersteuning by vriende soek						
5. Inligting en advies by mense met dieselfde of soortgelyke probleme soek						
6. Bekommernisse met goeie vriende deel						
7. Probleme met bure deel						
8. Familielede uitvra oor hoe hulle voel oor die probleme wat ons ervaar						