Psychometric properties of the Questionnaire of Executive Self-Awareness (QESA) for Children

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Objective: People with accurate representations of their own cognitive functioning (i.e., cognitive self-awareness) tend to use appropriate strategies to regulate their behavior. Due to the lack of appropriate instruments, few studies have examined the development of this ability among children.

Method: This study tested the measurement properties of the self-rating and other-rating forms of the Questionnaire of Executive Self-Awareness (QESA), designed to tap children’s knowledge of their executive functioning. Participants were 317 children aged 7 to 14 years old.

Results: Confirmatory factor analyses carried out on the QESA confirmed the eight-factor structure of both versions. There were significant correlations between the QESA and the parent versions of the BRIEF, DEX-C, and CHEXI. Both forms of the QESA were able to distinguish between children who had sustained a traumatic brain injury (TBI) and control participants. A self-other discrepancy score was computed to assess children’s executive self-awareness. A statistical difference was observed between the TBI and control groups on this score, suggesting that TBI may trigger self-awareness impairments in children.

Conclusion: The good psychometric properties of the two forms of the QESA were established. Furthermore, results of the analyses carried on the different discrepancy scores seem to indicate that the QESA could help clinicians to detect patients with self-awareness deficits.