Introduction

BACKGROUND

With the increased emphasis on data-based decision making in schools, it is important to understand factors that may influence adoption of a particular assessment methodology. The purpose of this study was to examine teacher perceptions of three common behavioral screeners in order to better understand how teachers perceive the relative merits of these assessments. Given the burgeoning of new school-based behavior rating assessments purported to be efficient for use, this information is needed to direct further research related to this new generation of assessments.

OBJECTIVE

This study aimed to investigate teachers’ perceptions of three school-based behavior assessments and to better understand the myriad factors that influence teachers adoption of school-based assessments in their classrooms. We used an adapted version of the Usage Rating Profile-Intervention, a self-report instrument developed to understand the factors believed to influence intervention usage, and in the case of the present investigation to understand assessment usage. The URP-I contains subscales that address factors including: acceptability, understanding, feasibility, home-school collaboration, systems climate, and systems support (Briesch, Chafouleas, Neugebauer, & Riley-Tillman, 2011). We examined the following research questions: 1) Do teachers perceive three behavioral screening assessments as having different usability qualities? 2) Is this adaption of the URP-I a reliable measure when used in the contexts of assessment usage?

Method

PARTICIPANTS AND SETTING

Participants were employed by 20 different schools, including rural, suburban, and urban districts. Public school settings were geographically located in Connecticut, New York, and Missouri.

MEASURES

• Usage Rating Profile-Assessment (URP-A; Chafouleas, Briesch, Neugebauer, & Riley-Tillman, 2011).
  - The URP-A is a self-report measure for collecting information about the factors influencing use of an assessment methodology. The measure is composed of 29 items, response options include a 6-point Likert scale (1–strongly disagree to 6–strongly agree).
  - Direct Behavior Rating – Single Item Scale (DBR-SIS; www.directbehaviorratings.org)
  - DBR-SIS ratings reflect teacher’s perceptions of the proportion of time a student is observed to be engaged in a target behavior (academic, engagement, respectful, disruptive) from 0 (never) to 10 (always). Students were rated twice daily for five days.
  - Behavioral and Emotional Screening System (BEllSS; Kamphaus & Reynolds, 2007)
  - The BESS is a brief rating scale that can be useful in screening for behavioral and emotional strengths and weaknesses in children and adolescents.

PROCEDURES

• Participants completed the URP-A following a three-week data collection period in the Fall of 2011 in which the three behavior assessments were completed on a random sample of 10 students in their classroom.

RESULTS

Table 3: Average URP-A Ratings by Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>DBR-SIS</th>
<th>BESS</th>
<th>SSiS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acceptability</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>4.94</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home-School</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feasibility</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Climate</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Support</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary and Conclusions

When adapted to an assessment context, the URP-A ratings evidenced adequate internal consistency within this sample of 133 teachers.

Overall, teachers rated the three behavioral assessments positively, with perceived greater understanding of DBR-SIS than other measures.

Because DBR-SIS ratings reflect the percentage of time a student engaged in a target behavior, it is possible that this scale may be more easily interpreted than traditional rating scale formats such as found in the BESS and SSiS.

Differences in subscale ratings suggest that teachers perceive these assessments as having different usability qualities. Understanding teacher perceptions of behavioral rating scales is important; such assessments can be used to identify barriers to implementation for the purpose of either removing those barriers or for selecting an alternative option with greater likelihood of success.