

Strategy-Based Assessment Using SCORE Model in Adaptive Behavior Evaluation

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Abstract

Adaptive behavior reflects an individual's ability, especially students with intellectual disabilities, to adjust personal skills to current conditions and modify behaviors to meet specific demands in any given situation. Behavior assessment serves as a benchmark for interventions such as determining the level of disability, family support, treatment, and examining discrepancies in the information provided. Discussions on adaptive behavior assessment using the SCORE model are limited compared to other strategic planning tools. Therefore, this concept paper aims to describe a strategy-based assessment in adaptive behavior evaluation in Malaysia using the SCORE Model. The SCORE Model is measured through five elements: Strengths (S), Challenges (C), Options (O), Responses (R), and Effectiveness (E). The findings show that the SCORE model has great potential in adaptive behavior assessment, not only in education but also for commercialization purposes. Adaptive behavior assessment can be commercialized by integrating all stakeholders in developing guidelines for intervention purposes. The limitations of this paper can be addressed by using other models to obtain multiple perspectives, such as SWOT, TOWS, NOISE, and SOAR. This finding has significant implications for the development of Bandura's Cognitive Theory, especially in the strength element, which can be used to identify and reinforce positive behavior models that children can imitate. In the context of education or therapy, the desired behaviors modeled by teachers or peers are recorded as strengths and used for teaching through examples. Additionally, the response element can integrate feedback from these positive behavior models into educational and therapy programs, enabling children with intellectual disabilities to learn through observation and imitation. Further studies can conduct long-term research to evaluate the effectiveness of adaptive behavior.

Keywords: Evaluation, Adaptive Behavior, Strategy-based Assessment, SCORE Model

Introduction

Adaptive behavior is defined as the conceptual, social, and practical skills necessary for individuals to function effectively in their environment for daily living (Schalock et al., 2021). It reflects the ability of a person to align personal skills with situational demands and adjust behavior to meet the challenges in various contexts (Jamaluddin et al., 2022). Adaptive behavior also refers to the effectiveness with which individuals meet societal expectations for independence and social responsibility based on their cultural group (Grossman, 1973). It encompasses the ability to adapt personal skills to circumstances and modify behavior to meet specific situational demands (Rusimah et al., 2019).

The study of adaptive behavior is critical as it plays a key role in the assessment and development of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Early concepts of adaptive behavior, such as Doll's (1936), definition of "social competence," highlight the complexity of human behavior beyond traditional intelligence measures. Doll's (1953) broader definition emphasized personal independence and social responsibility, showing how these skills contribute to overall social adjustment, growth, and achievement. This concept remains essential in modern educational and psychological assessments, where adaptive behavior is a key criterion for determining the level of disability and the necessary interventions.

The importance of studying adaptive behavior lies in its direct impact on the assessment and development of effective interventions for individuals who struggle with intellectual and developmental challenges. Tajuddin et al (2022), explain that adaptive behavior assessments serve as crucial tools for setting benchmarks, evaluating interventions, and identifying discrepancies in treatment and educational needs. These assessments can measure a child's level and profile, providing critical data for the administration of personalized education and support services.

In Malaysia, however, the potential of adaptive behavior assessments remains underexplored, largely due to limited implementation beyond classroom settings. There is a significant need to extend the application of adaptive behavior assessments to support broader strategic planning, particularly in educational and developmental interventions for individuals with disabilities. Given the action-oriented and positive nature of the SCORE model, this paper proposes its use as a framework for adaptive behavior assessment in Malaysia. Unlike traditional models such as SWOT, the SCORE model emphasizes proactive strategies that could significantly enhance decision-making processes and educational planning.

Thus, the significance of this study is to address the gap in adaptive behavior assessments in Malaysia by introducing a strategy-based framework that can improve decision-making and the effectiveness of interventions. The findings from this research will benefit educators, clinicians, policymakers, and families by providing a structured approach to assessing and supporting individuals with adaptive behavior challenges. This study aims to highlight the utility and effectiveness of adaptive behavior assessments as a key tool for fostering independence and improving the quality of life for individuals with disabilities in Malaysia.

Score Model

The SCORE model is a framework used in management and coaching to identify and resolve problems or issues within an organization or individual. This model is frequently employed in coaching and professional development sessions to thoroughly analyze situations and create effective strategies for improvement or correction. The SCORE model is highly versatile and can be adapted to various contexts, making it a valuable tool for those involved in strategic planning, problem-solving, or complex decision-making. Its use across multiple sectors demonstrates its flexibility in helping individuals and organizations achieve their goals more effectively. The SCORE model is applied at both the individual and organizational levels for strategy development. It is also useful for academic management analysis or research to develop theoretical frameworks. The SCORE analysis serves as a viable alternative to SWOT and provides positive insights for organizations seeking to make informed and precise decisions. Its effectiveness stems from its comprehensive and systematic approach, enabling decision-makers to leverage strengths and opportunities while addressing barriers (Neal, 2023)

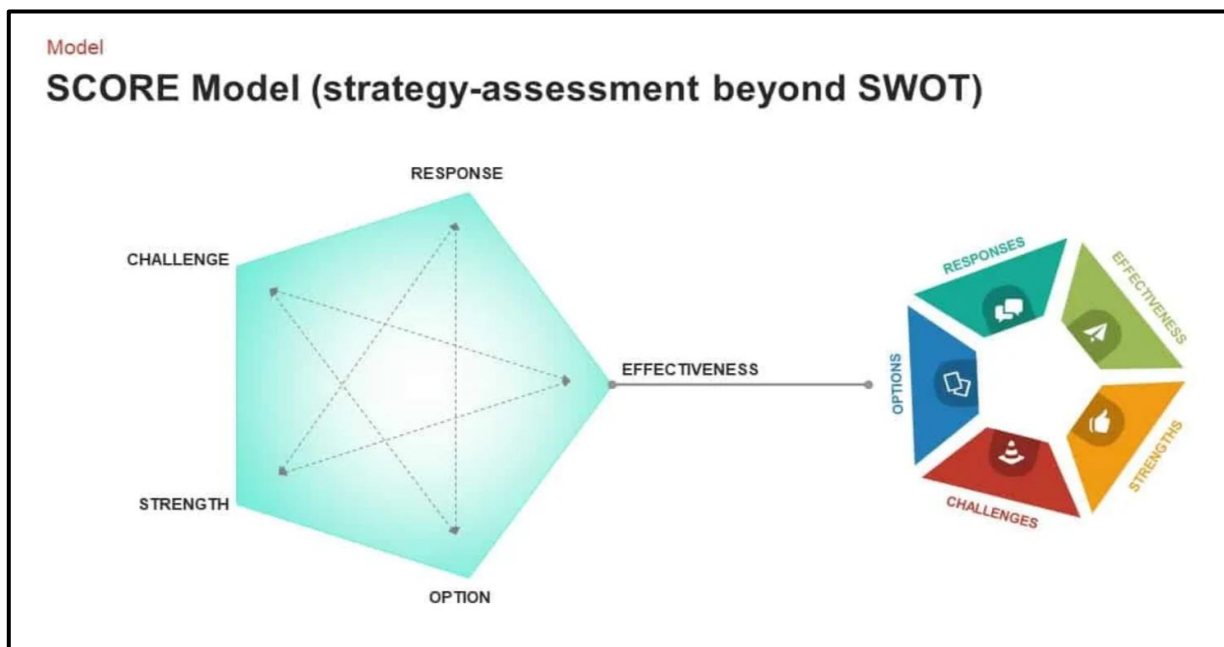


Figure 1 : SCORE Model and Strategy Assessment Beyond SWOT (Neal, 2023)

Figure 1 refers to the SCORE Model as a strategic assessment tool that goes beyond the SWOT Model. The SCORE Model encompasses five elements: Strengths (S), Challenges (C), Options (O), Responses (R), and Effectiveness (E) (Neal, 2023). Strengths represent what is done well (or has the potential to be done well); Challenges represent situations where additional resources or capabilities are needed for success; Options represent the opportunities and risks that need to be addressed; Responses represent stakeholder feedback and expected returns or rewards; and Effectiveness represents how initiatives are intended to be carried out efficiently and reliably.

The SCORE Model proves useful when promoting an organizational culture that prioritizes individuals, encouraging teams to evaluate strengths, challenges, opportunities, partnerships, and institutional activities. It shares similarities with SWOT analysis but also demonstrates

how interactions between colleagues and stakeholders evolve, along with the efforts made by employees. The SCORE Model is typically used in corporate and business contexts. In education, however, the SCORE Model has strong potential for weighing strengths and weaknesses in management and improving the capability and quality of teaching and learning.

SCORE analysis is clearly an essential tool for any firm or institution. By combining a complete and systematic approach to educational evaluation, it aids policymakers in making informed and accurate decisions. The emphasis on both internal and external elements provides a comprehensive understanding of an organization's current situation and the opportunities and challenges ahead. As a result, SCORE analysis enables institutions to maximize their strengths, address difficulties, seize opportunities, and develop suitable actions to fulfill the organization's mission.

Strengths

Adaptive Behavior Assessment

Adaptive behavior refers to what Henry Leland once called the skills that make someone "invisible" in society. The more adaptive skills that can be learned and performed, the less someone stands out. Thus, teaching and evaluating adaptive behavior, particularly for children with intellectual disabilities, will better equip them to respond to community demands and societal expectations. Adaptive behavior is considered an essential measure in diagnostic systems determining intellectual disability, development, and learning (Schalock et al., 2010). Empirical validation of adaptive behavior factor structures represents one of the major advancements supporting the need for equal consideration of intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior in diagnosing individuals with intellectual disabilities (Tassé et al., 2012).

Theory

Biological factors form the basis of intellectual disability; however, other factors such as cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences can also play a role. These cognitive and behavioral factors are further supported by the social cognitive theory pioneered by Bandura (1977). Social cognitive theory views individual behavior as an interactive process that involves reciprocal interactions between human behavior, the environment, and personal factors (internal processes such as cognition and perception). This means that individuals can control their desires and actions, while the environment can influence and direct behavior. Hence, adaptive behavior assessment can gauge an individual's abilities with the support of both data and theory.

Capabilities and Services

The Ministry of Education Malaysia, through the Special Education Division, provides special education programs designed to meet the needs of children with special educational needs. Adaptive behavior assessments are used to evaluate students' needs and to plan appropriate educational programs. Various early intervention centers in Malaysia offer assessments, therapies, and interventions for children with special needs. These centers use adaptive behavior assessments to determine the social, communication, and daily life skills of children, subsequently planning suitable interventions. Hospitals and health clinics in Malaysia also offer psychological and diagnostic assessments, including adaptive behavior evaluations. These assessments are conducted by experienced clinical psychologists or psychiatrists.

Malaysian universities, through their psychology, special education, or health science faculties, often conduct research and evaluations related to adaptive behavior. These institutions also train students who are preparing to become professionals in utilizing such assessment tools. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that focus on supporting individuals with disabilities also employ adaptive behavior assessments in their programs to enhance the quality of life for their members.

Challenges

Non-Descriptive Assessments

In Malaysia, the management and handling of children's health often begins during the mother's pregnancy. Children's health assessments are conducted by clinical professionals in hospitals to identify their strengths and weaknesses (Kannamah, 2019). However, 25% of cases referred to clinical professionals receive detailed evaluations and records, while the remainder are merely labeled with their disabilities, such as slow learners (Kannamah, 2019). Certainly, non-descriptive and incomplete records do not provide a full picture of an individual's actual capabilities. Health department assessments tend to focus solely on health aspects, placing less emphasis on academic and learning dimensions (Norfishah, 2022). If the assessment and labeling of children's disabilities are inaccurate, it becomes difficult to meet their needs, particularly in their learning development (Norfishah, 2022).

Psychometric Characteristics

For screening, assessment, and evaluation purposes, various instruments measure adaptive behavior scales worldwide, such as the Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales 3rd Edition (VABS) 2016, Adaptive Behavior Assessment System (ABAS-3) 2015, Adaptive Behavior Evaluation Scale (ABES-R2), and Scales of Independent Behavior-Revised (SIB-R). However, the adaptation of foreign instruments raises psychometric issues, particularly because the existing instruments are based on foreign populations and sociocultural contexts (Schalock et al., 2010). Most adaptive behavior instruments were developed in Europe and the United States. Schalock et al. (2010) suggest that adaptive behavior should be recorded within an individual's community and cultural environment. Nevertheless, there remains a shortage of adaptive behavior scales developed and adapted in non-Western countries, particularly updated versions of these scales. This lack represents a significant obstacle to research and practices related to adaptive behavior in these countries (Abessa et al., 2016; Poon, 2011).

Alternative Instruments

Special education teachers play a role in conducting diagnostic assessments, including evaluating students' behavior and attitudes (Mohd Zuri, 2014). As individuals closest to and spending the most time with students, teachers have a better opportunity to observe adaptive behavior, particularly in the conceptual and social domains (Emam et al., 2020). However, teachers face limitations in accessing adaptive behavior assessment tools for use in schools. Available assessment instruments require specialized training, and professionals responsible for adaptive behavior assessment must have formal training in individual assessment, interview techniques, and the procedures and ethics involved in individual evaluations, as well as report writing (Tassé & Balboni, 2020). Additionally, using existing instruments incurs costs since users are charged each time they are used.

Options

Opportunities for Intervention and Individual Development

Adaptive behavior assessment provides various opportunities in the contexts of intervention, education, and social development, particularly for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Adaptive behavior assessments allow educators, therapists, and parents to better understand an individual's abilities and weaknesses. This understanding assists in planning more accurate and personalized educational programs and interventions aimed at improving the quality of life and independence of the individual. Through detailed assessments, professionals can design interventions targeting specific areas of adaptive behavior that need improvement, such as communication skills, socialization, or self-management. This approach enhances intervention efficiency and accelerates individual development. Additionally, adaptive behavior assessments offer opportunities for collaboration between fields such as psychology, education, health sciences, and social sciences. Such collaboration enhances understanding and innovation in efforts to support individuals with special needs.

Risks

Although adaptive behavior assessments are valuable in many contexts, they also carry certain risks that must be carefully identified and addressed. Behavioral assessments are often difficult to interpret accurately. Misinterpretation of assessment results can lead to incorrect diagnoses or inappropriate interventions for the individual being evaluated. This challenge depends on the assessor's expertise and whether they have sufficient knowledge and training.

Alternative Strategies

To seize the opportunities mentioned while mitigating associated risks, an alternative strategy that should be implemented involves ensuring that the assessment tools used undergo rigorous validation processes to ensure their validity and reliability. This includes cross-cultural validation to confirm that the tools are suitable for use in various social and cultural contexts. Professional training and development can provide effective and ongoing training for professionals conducting assessments to enhance their skills in administering unbiased and culturally sensitive assessments. A deep understanding of the social, cultural, and individual context is crucial for accurately and ethically interpreting assessment results.

Responses

Special Education Teachers

In the context of adaptive behavior assessment, the expected responses from stakeholders can vary based on their roles, interests, and influence on the process. Key stakeholders in adaptive behavior assessment usually include teachers, psychologists, therapists, parents, education managers, the community, NGOs, and students with intellectual disabilities themselves. Special education teachers will respond positively to these assessment instruments as they help and facilitate their tasks in identifying students' capabilities in adaptive behavior. The results of these assessments assist special education teachers in performing various classroom duties, such as providing information and guidance on students' strengths and weaknesses in adaptive behavior, which can be adapted to a suitable curriculum. Furthermore, these results help in preparing Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).

Parents and Guardians

Parents and guardians will also benefit from the results of adaptive behavior assessments as an indicator of their children's learning outcomes. The necessary support services can be provided by parents based on the assessments conducted. The results help parents gain a clear understanding of their children's current abilities and allow them to plan for their future in terms of community involvement and independence.

Institutions

Schools, District Education Offices (PPD), State Education Departments (JPN), and the Ministry of Education Malaysia (KPM) can utilize the data and information obtained from the implementation of these assessment instruments. The tools are standardized and suitable for use with students with intellectual disabilities nationwide. The collected data provides insights into adaptive behavior, which stakeholders can use to forecast staffing needs, equipment supplies, and appropriate allocations for each school. Accurate projections will enhance educational effectiveness, ultimately benefiting students.

Effectiveness

Efficiency of Assessment Tools

Adaptive behavior assessments can be conducted efficiently and effectively when properly executed, based on the accuracy of the assessment tools, the competence of the implementers, sensitivity to cultural contexts, and active engagement from all stakeholders. Efficiency also increases with the use of appropriate tools in planning interventions, supported by adequate monitoring and observation. Therefore, assessments should be conducted by trained professionals who consider individual uniqueness, with results integrated into comprehensive educational or intervention approaches to support the development of the individual being assessed.

Suitability of Assessment Tools

Adaptive behavior assessment is highly suitable for supporting the development of students with intellectual disabilities. Teachers can identify and target students' strengths and weaknesses in communication, social, and life skills. This process aids significantly in planning appropriate educational programs, implementing early interventions, preparing a suitable curriculum, evaluating the effectiveness of ongoing programs, and adjusting learning strategies. The assessments also provide valuable information to parents and guardians, helping them understand situations that require additional support and guiding the development of students' skills, ultimately supporting both academic, social, and emotional growth.

Integration of Assessment Results

Adaptive behavior assessment results can be effectively integrated to support the development of students with intellectual disabilities through curriculum adjustments and teaching methods tailored to each individual's needs. The assessment results assist in preparing specific Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), supporting the implementation of targeted interventions to develop social skills, self-management, and daily life competencies. This integration also fosters closer collaboration between teachers, psychologists, therapists, and parents, ensuring a coordinated and consistent approach. Furthermore, regular

monitoring and evaluation of student progress allow for precise adjustments to educational strategies, while intensive professional training for teachers and implementers enhances their ability to support student learning efficiently.

Figure 2 illustrates the SCORE Model in adaptive behavior, highlighting the aspects that need to be strengthened through actions derived from a holistic approach. What can be learned from this framework is that the SCORE Model will help monitor the development of adaptive behavior assessments in the future, especially in the educational context.

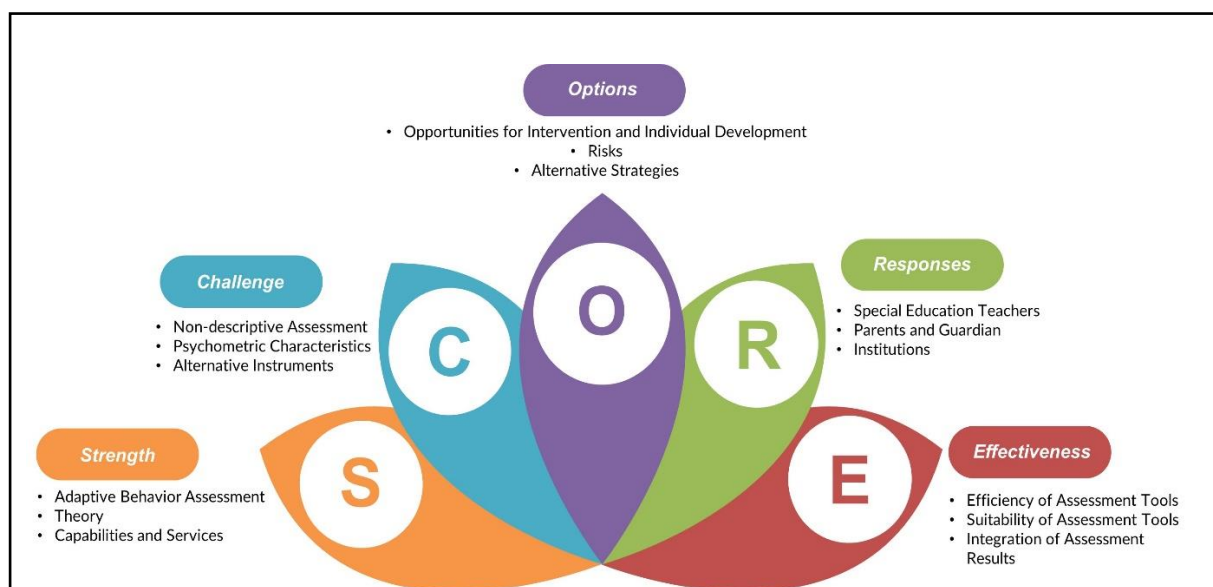


Figure 2: SCORE Model Framework in Adaptive Behavior Evaluation

Conclusion

In summary, the findings of this study indicate that adaptive behavior assessment has significant potential, not only in the educational context but also for commercialization purposes. Adaptive behavior assessments can be commercialized by integrating all stakeholders in developing guidelines for intervention purposes. Due to practical constraints, this concept paper could not provide a comprehensive review of the SCORE model. This study only discusses positive actions using the SCORE model. Improvements can be made by utilizing other models to obtain diverse perspectives, such as SWOT, TOWS, NOISE, and SOAR. The findings have important implications for the development of Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, particularly in the element of strength, which can be used to identify and strengthen positive behavior models that children can imitate. For example, in the educational or therapeutic context, the desired behaviors modeled by teachers or peers are recorded as strengths and used for teaching through examples. Additionally, the responses element can integrate feedback from these positive behavior models into educational and therapeutic programs, allowing children with intellectual disabilities to learn through observation and imitation. Further research can be conducted to undertake long-term studies to evaluate the effectiveness of adaptive behavior interventions designed using the SCORE model. Such studies could investigate how the strengths, challenges, options, responses, and effectiveness of interventions evolve or change over time.

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