Title: Construct validity of a work environment impact scale

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Major Finding: The work environment impact scale (WEIS) has acceptable construct validity and internal consistency, and can be used to assess worker's perception of the work environment.

Participants:
- 20 persons with acute psychiatric disabilities from two rehabilitation facilities
  - 85% major depression
  - 15% bipolar disorder
  - 15% secondary diagnosis of chemical dependency
- Gender: 12 males, 8 females; Age Range 21-52 years; Mean Age 36.5 years
- All engaged in productive employment within last 6 months

Method: Each subject participated in a 30-45 min semi-structured interview regarding the specific qualities of his or her workplace. The interviewer employed reflective listening to ensure accuracy of ratings on assessment items, and took notes.

Analysis: Rasch analysis.

Findings:
- All 17 items met criteria for fit to the Rasch model, indicating that the WEIS had construct validity.
- All 20 workers had acceptable fit statistics, indicating therapists’ ratings can be validly interpreted.
- The WEIS items spanned the entire range of worker ability, but the WEIS had limited ability to identify differences in perceived environmental support (person separation index = 1.63; item separation index = 1.57).

Conclusion: The WEIS provides a structured means for examining worker performance, satisfaction, and well-being as related to the specific qualities of the workplace. The items define a single construct, and can be used appropriately with workers with psychiatric disabilities.

Implications for future research: Administration should be conducted by multiple raters across a sample from different hospitals and with varying degrees of both psychiatric disability and work performance.

Evidence–based practice implications:
- The WEIS provides insight into how persons experience their work environments and fosters a self-reflective process in which the worker can become more knowledgeable, confident, and empowered to effect changes.
- Action plans for environmental modifications can be made based on WEIS ratings to enhance work success.
