

# THE ADMINISTRATION OF PECOBE

Brief instructions

Kaj Björkqvist & Karin Österman, 1995

The inventory is intended to measure behavior in conflict situations. It can be applied only in school classes or similar groups in which children communicate with each other on a daily basis. The PECOBE inventory is a streamlined and further developed version of the previous Direct and Indirect Aggression Scales (DIAS; Björkqvist, Lagerspetz, Österman, 1992). PECOBE is easier to administer and score, and also faster to fill in.

## Peer-, self-, and teacher estimations

The primary purpose of the inventory is to provide peer-estimated data, but simultaneously, it generates self-estimated data, since each child estimates not only the behavior of his/her peers but of him/herself as well. Same-sex ratings (boys' estimations of boys, and girls' estimations of girls) and ratings of the opposite sex (boys' ratings of girls, and girls' ratings of boys) may be calculated. It is also common to ask the teacher who knows the class the best to fill in a copy of the inventory. Five types of estimations can be useful: Peer estimations by all pupils, same-sex and opposite-sex estimations, self estimations, and teacher estimations.

## Same-sex ratings

Conflicts are most frequent between opponents of the same sex. If one wishes to save time and some energy, it is perfectly possible to rely on same-sex ratings only, i.e. that every girl rates all the girls in the class including herself but not the boys, while boys do vice versa. Same-sex ratings usually have at least as high, or even a slightly higher, reliability than estimations by all pupils.

## Administrative procedure

Before the administration of the inventory in a specific class, a list of pupils in the class should be made. It is important to have the names of girls and boys clearly separated from each other, for instance by having the names of all girls first in the list. It makes coding and scoring much easier and faster.

The order of names should be identical in all individual questionnaires. This aspect is important. As a consequence, the names should not be written by the children themselves, but by the administrator or a research assistant, and beforehand. The administrator should be personally present in class when the inventories are filled in, and be prepared to explain the procedure and to answer questions. It is not sufficient to leave this matter to a teacher. The inventory cannot be administered to more than one class at a time. The filling-in does not usually require more than 45-60 minutes.

## Administration to children below 10-years of age

If the participating children are 10-years old or younger, we suggest that the inventory is filled in in the form of an individual interview, in which the administrator use the inventory in the form of a closed-ended interview, and fills in the inventory on behalf of each child.

## Present and absent children

Please note how many and which boys and girls are absent. Their behavior should be estimated as well by their peers present, although they themselves cannot generate estimations. When peer-estimated data are calculated, the sum should be divided by the number of estimators, for instance the number of present children of the same sex, minus one (the child him/herself, the data of whom are used as self-estimations).