

General Mattering Scale

Proprietà psicometriche della versione italiana in lavoratori

Annamaria Di Fabio¹

Sommario

Lo scopo del presente lavoro è quello di esaminare le proprietà psicometriche della versione italiana della General Mattering Scale (GMS) in 246 lavoratori italiani. Sono state analizzate dimensionalità, attendibilità e validità concorrente della scala. L'Analisi Fattoriale Confermativa ha mostrato una struttura unidimensionale. La scala mostra anche una buona attendibilità e validità concorrente. I risultati evidenziano che la versione italiana della (GMS) è uno strumento valido e attendibile per rilevare il mattering anche nel contesto italiano con lavoratori.

Parole chiave

Mattering, Proprietà psicometriche, General Mattering Scale (GMS), Contesto Italiano, Lavoratori.

¹ Director of the International Research and Intervention Laboratory «Work and Organizational Psychology for Vocational Guidance, Career Counseling, Talents and Healthy Organizations» and of the International Research and Intervention Laboratory «Cross-Cultural Positive Psychology, Prevention, and Sustainability», Department of Education, Languages, Intercultures, Literatures and Psychology (Psychology Session), University of Florence, <https://www.forlilpsi.unifi.it/vp-30-laboratori.html>.

General Mattering Scale

Psychometric Properties of the Italian version in Workers

Annamaria Di Fabio¹

Abstract

The present study aims to examine the psychometric properties of the Italian version of the General Mattering Scale (GMS) in 246 Italian workers. Dimensionality, reliability and concurrent validity of the scale were analysed. Confirmatory factor analysis showed a unidimensional solution. The scale also showed good reliability and concurrent validity. The results highlighted that the Italian version of the GMS is a valid and reliable instrument to detect mattering also in the Italian context with workers.

Keywords

Mattering, Psychometric properties, General Mattering Scale (GMS), Italian context, Workers.

¹ Director of the International Research and Intervention Laboratory «Work and Organizational Psychology for Vocational Guidance, Career Counseling, Talents and Healthy Organizations» and of the International Research and Intervention Laboratory «Cross-Cultural Positive Psychology, Prevention, and Sustainability», Department of Education, Languages, Intercultures, Literatures and Psychology (Psychology Session), University of Florence, <https://www.forlilpsi.unifi.it/vp-30-laboratori.html>.

The construct of mattering was introduced by Rosenberg and McCullough (1981) as an addition to the influential work on self-esteem by Rosenberg (1965). Mattering is conceived as the perception of being significant and of being connected with others in a meaningful manner (Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981). The construct of mattering included three components (Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981): (1) the perception that others depend on us; (2) the perception that others consider us as important; (3) the perception that others are paying attention to us. The fundamental aspect of mattering suggested by the authors is being a focus of attention. In 1985, the conceptualization of mattering was extended by Rosenberg, including the aspect that others would miss us if we went away. Another element of mattering is ego extension, in terms of the belief that individuals have that they matter because analogous emotions emerge among close people (Rosenberg, 1985; Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981). A further aspect of mattering is feeling appreciated by someone (Schlossberg, 1989). More in general, the other side of the meaning of mattering is the perception of being marginalized and not valued, underlining the importance of mattering in sensing being part of an inclusive community (Schlossberg, 1989). The reciprocal nature of mattering is also underlined, emphasizing that the mattering process includes both a giver and a beneficiary of mattering and thus seeing mattering in a transactional perspective (Pearlin & LeBlanc, 2001).

In literature, mattering is positively connected to well-being (Taylor, 2020) and was considered a worthy resource during the period of the Covid-19 pandemic (Flett & Haisel, 2021; Flett & Zangeneh, 2020; Mcleod, 2022). Regarding mattering within the work context, it was found to be positively associated with job satisfaction and inversely related to job stress (Jung, 2015). Furthermore, the construct of mattering finds a place as a promising variable within the relational theory of working (Blustein, 2011), since mattering at work implies the importance of relational aspects of work (Jung, 2015). Mattering has also been studied as a resource for two specific groups (older workers and retirees) in favouring retiring adjustment (Froidevaux et al., 2016).

Regarding the detection of mattering, there are various instruments in literature to evaluate it. Considering the construct of general mattering, the first traditional instrument, widely used, is the General Mattering Scale (GMS; Marcus & Rosenberg, 1987). This scale is composed of five items and considers mattering as a personal sense of feeling significant and valued by other people. In literature, the original version of the GMS emerged as an instrument with good reliability and validity (Flett, 2018) with a unidimensional structure (Connolly & Myers, 2003; Taylor & Turner, 2001).

In the Italian context, the psychometric properties of GMS were verified with university students of the University of Florence, confirming the unidimensional structure with a good reliability (Giangrasso et al., 2022). Despite this initial

evaluation of the GMS in the Italian context, it could be useful to extend the examination of its psychometric properties also in other targets, such as workers, in order to extend research on the mattering construct. The aim of the present study is thus to analyse the psychometric properties of the GMS in the Italian context with workers.

Method

Participants

Two hundred and forty-six workers from Central and Southern Italy were involved in the study. There were 46.75% males and 53.75% females; mean age 48.10 ($DS = 10.21$).

Measures

General Mattering Scale (GMS). The Italian version (by Di Fabio) of the GMS (Marcus & Rosenberg, 1987) includes five items with answers from 1 = *not at all* to 4 = *a lot*. Examples of items are: «How important are you to others?» and «How much would you be missed if you went away?». The items of the original version of the GMS were obtained through the back translation method. The psychometric properties of the Italian version of the GMS with workers will be examined in the present study.

Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS). The Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS, Watson et al., 1988; Italian version Terracciano, McCrae, & Costa, 2003) comprises twenty adjectives (ten for Positive Affect PA: examples determined, enthusiastic; ten for Negative Affect NA: examples upset, afraid). The answer scale goes from 1 = *very slightly or not at all* to 5 = *extremely*. For the Italian version Cronbach's alpha coefficients were: .72 for Positive Affect and .83 for Negative Affect.

Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS). The Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS, Diener et al., 1985; Italian version by Di Fabio and Gori, 2020) includes five items (answers from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*). Examples of items are: «In most ways my life is close to my ideal», «I am satisfied with my life». The Italian version of the SWLS has good internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = .88).

Flourishing Scale. The Flourishing Scale (Diener et al., 2010; Italian version by Di Fabio, 2016) includes 8 items (answers from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*). Examples of items: «I am engaged and interested in my daily activities», «I actively contribute to the happiness and well-being of others». The Italian version of the FS has good reliability (Cronbach's alpha = .88).

Procedure

The questionnaires were administered in groups by specialized personnel in accordance with privacy laws and informed consent (Law Decree DL196/2003; EU General Data Protection Regulation EU 2016/679). The order of administration of the questionnaires was balanced to control the effects of the order of presentation.

Data Analysis

To verify the unidimensional structure of the GMS, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using AMOS was carried out. The following fit indices were taken into consideration: the χ^2/df (values between 1 and 3 as indicators of a good fit); the Comparative Fit Index, CFI, Bentler, 1990; the Non-Normed Fit Index, NNFI, Tucker & Lewis, 1973 (values above .90 as indicators of a good fit); the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation, RMSEA; and the Standardized Root Mean Squared Residual, SRMR, Browne & Cudeck, 1993 (values below .08 as indicators of a good fit). To examine the reliability of the scale, Cronbach's alpha and the correct item-total correlations were calculated. To analyse the concurrent validity of the scale, r Pearson correlations of the GMS with PANAS, SWLS and FS were calculated. The following ranges were considered: <0.30 weak correlations; 0.30–0.50 moderate correlations; >0.50 strong correlations (Cohen, 1992).

Results

The results of the CFA confirmed the unidimensional structure of the GMS. In Table 1 the fit indices are reported.

Table 1

Goodness of Fit Indices (N = 246)

General Mattering Scale (GMS)	χ^2/df	TLI	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR
	2.98	.91	.96	.07	.06

Cronbach's alpha was .80. The correct item-total correlations, all positive and significant, ranged from .69 to .46.

The correlations of the GMS with PANAS, SWLS and FS are reported in Table 2.

Table 2

Correlations of the GMS with PANAS, SWLS, and FS

	GMS
PANAS PA	.33**
PANAS NA	-.30**
SWLS	.34**
FS	.41**

Note. N = 246. ** p < .01.

Discussion

The present study aimed to analyse the psychometric properties of the Italian version by Di Fabio of the GMS (Marcus & Rosenberg, 1987), in order to have a traditional measure of mattering to be used with workers in the Italian context.

The unidimensional structure of the GMS was confirmed through CFA in line with the original scale (Connolly & Myers, 2003; Taylor & Turner, 2001). The reliability of the GMS proved good both in terms of Cronbach's alpha and correct item-total correlations. The concurrent validity of the GMS is also good as shown by the positive correlations with positive affect, life satisfaction, flourishing, and of an inverse correlation with negative affect. These results confirmed the literature, underlining the association between mattering and well-being (Jung, 2015).

The present study highlighted that the GMS is a valid and reliable scale to detect mattering also in the Italian context with workers. However, this study showed a limitation relative to the fact that the participants are not representative of all Italian realities. Future studies should also consider workers of other areas in Italy. In future studies, it could also be interesting to consider the GMS in relation to a measure of well-being at work, like, for example, job satisfaction (Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998; Italian version Di Fabio, 2018a) or meaning at work (Steger, Dik & Duffy, 2012; Italian version Di Fabio, 2018b). Despite these limitations, the GMS showed good psychometric properties in detecting general mattering in the Italian context with workers. This could open promising future perspectives on research and intervention in strength-based prevention perspectives (Di Fabio & Saklofske, 2021) and also in primary prevention (Di Fabio & Kenny, 2016; Hage et al., 2007), considering the possibility of promoting the well-being of workers (Robertson & Cooper, 2010; Johnson et al., 2018) and promoting healthy organizations (Di Fabio, 2017a, 2017b, Di Fabio et al., 2020; Peiró et al., 2020).

References

- Bentler, P. M. (1990). Comparative fit indexes in structural models. *Psychological Bulletin*, 107(2), 238-246. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.107.2.238>
- Blustein, D. L. (2011). A relational theory of working. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 79(1), 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2010.10.004>
- Browne, M. W., & Cudeck, R. (1993). Alternative ways of assessing model fit. In K. A. Bollen & J. S. Long (Eds.), *Testing structural equation models* (pp. 136-162). Newsbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Cohen, J. (1992). A power primer. *Psychological Bulletin*, 112(1), 155-159. <https://doi.org/10.1037//0033-2909.112.1.155>
- Connolly, K. M., & Myers, J. E. (2003). Wellness and mattering: The role of holistic factors in job satisfaction. *Journal of Employment Counseling*, 40(4), 152-160. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-1920.2003.tb00866.x>
- Diener, E. D., Emmons, R. A., Larsen, R. J., & Griffin, S. (1985). The satisfaction with life scale. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 49(1), 71-75. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327752jpa4901_13
- Diener, E., Wirtz, D., Tov, W., Kim-Prieto, C., Choi, D. W., Oishi, S., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2010). New well-being measures: Short scales to assess flourishing and positive and negative feelings. *Social Indicators Research*, 97(2), 143-156. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-009-9493-y>
- Di Fabio, A. (2016). *Flourishing Scale*: Primo contributo alla validazione della versione italiana [*Flourishing Scale*: First contribution to the validation of the Italian version] *Counseling. Giornale Italiano di Ricerca e Applicazioni*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.14605/CS911606>
- Di Fabio, A. (2017a). Positive Healthy Organizations: Promoting well-being, meaningfulness, and sustainability in organizations. *Frontiers in Psychology. Organizational Psychology*, 8, 1938. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.01938>
- Di Fabio, A. (2017b). The psychology of sustainability and sustainable development for well-being in organizations. *Frontiers in Psychology. Organizational Psychology*, 8, 1534. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.01534>
- Di Fabio, A. (2018a). Job Satisfaction Scale: Primo contributo alla validazione della versione italiana. *Counseling [Job Satisfaction Scale: First contribution to the validation of the Italian version]. Giornale Italiano di Ricerca e Applicazioni*, 11(2). <https://doi.org/10.14605/CS1121807>
- Di Fabio, A. (2018b). The work and meaning inventory (WAMI): Primo contributo alla validazione della versione italiana. [The work and meaning inventory (WAMI): First contribution to the validation of the Italian version]. *Counseling. Giornale Italiano di Ricerca e Applicazioni*, 11(1). <https://doi.org/10.1010.14605/CS1111808>
- Di Fabio, A., Cheung, F., & Peiró, J.-M. (2020). Editorial Special Issue Personality and individual differences and healthy organizations. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 166. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2020.110196>
- Di Fabio, A., & Kenny, M. E. (2016). From decent work to decent lives: Positive Self and Relational Management (PS&RM) in the twenty-first century. *Frontiers in Psychology. Section Organizational Psychology*, 7, 361. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00361>
- Di Fabio, A., & Gori, A. (2020). Satisfaction with Life Scale among Italian workers: Reliability, factor structure and validity through a big sample study. *Sustainability MDPI*, 12(14), 5860. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12145860>
- Di Fabio, A., & Saklofske, D. H. (2021). The relationship of compassion and self-compassion with personality and emotional intelligence. PAID 40th anniversary special issue. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 157. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2020.110109>
- Flett, G. L. (2018). *The psychology of mattering: Understanding the human need to be significant*. Academic Press/Elsevier.
- Flett, G. L., & Zangeneh, M. (2020). Mattering as a vital support for people during the COVID-19 pandemic: the benefits of feeling and knowing that someone cares during times of crisis.

- Journal of Concurrent Disorders*, 2(1), 106-123. <https://doi.org/10.54127/ALMC5515>
- Froidevaux, A., Hirschi, A., & Wang, M. (2016). The role of mattering as an overlooked key challenge in retirement planning and adjustment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 94, 57-69. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2016.02.016>
- Giangrasso, B., Casale, S., Fioravanti, G., Flett, G. L., & Nepon, T. (2022). Mattering and anti-mattering in emotion regulation and life satisfaction: A mediational analysis of stress and distress during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*, 40(1), 125-141. <https://doi.org/10.1177/07342829211056>
- Hage, S. M., Romano, J. L., Conyne, R. K., Kenny, M., Matthews, C., Schwartz, J. P., & Waldo, M. (2007). Best practice guidelines on prevention practice, research, training, and social advocacy for psychologists. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 35, 493-566. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011000006291411>
- Johnson, S., Robertson, I., & Cooper, C.L. (2018). *Wellbeing: Productivity and Happiness at Work*. (2nd ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Judge, T. A., Locke, E. A., Durham, C. C., & Kluger, A. N. (1998). Dispositional effects on job and life satisfaction: The role of core evaluations. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 83, 17-34. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.83.1.17>
- Jung, A. K. (2015). Interpersonal and societal mattering in work: A review and critique. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 63(3), 194-208. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cdq.12013>
- Marcus, F. M., & Rosenberg, M. (1987, March). *Mattering: Its measurement and significance in everyday life*. Paper presented at the 57th annual Eastern Sociological Society Meeting.
- Pearlin, L. I., & LeBlanc, A. J. (2001). Bereavement and the loss of mattering. In T. J. Owens, S. Stryker, & N. Goodman (Eds.), *Extending self-esteem theory and research: Sociological and psychological currents* (pp. 285-300). Cambridge University Press.
- Peiroó, J. M., Bayonab, J. A., Caballer, A., & Di Fabio, A. (2020). Importance of work characteristics affects job performance: The mediating role of individual dispositions on the work design-performance relationships. *PAID 40th Anniversary Special Issue. Personality and Individual Differences*, 157. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2019.109808>
- Robertson, I., & Cooper, C.L. (2010). *Wellbeing: Productivity and Happiness at Work*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Rosenberg, M. (1965). *Society and the adolescent self-image*. Princeton University Press.
- Rosenberg, M., & McCullough, B. C. (1981). Mattering: Inferred significance and mental health among adolescents. *Research in Community and Mental Health*, 2, 163-182.
- Schlossberg, N. K. (1989). Marginality and mattering: Key issues in building community. *New Directions for Student Services*, 1989(48), 5-15. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ss.37119894803>
- Steger, M. F., Dik, B. J., & Duffy, R. D. (2012). Measuring meaningful work: The Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI). *Journal of Career Assessment*, 20, 322-337. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1069072711436160>
- Taylor, J. R. (2000). *Mattering and psychological well-being*. University of Miami.
- Terraciano, A., McCrae, R. R., & Costa, P. T., Jr. (2003). Factorial and construct validity of the Italian Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS). *European Journal of Psychological Assessment*, 19(2), 131-141. <https://doi.org/10.1027/1015-5759.19.2.131>
- Taylor, J., & Turner, R. J. (2001). A longitudinal study of the role and significance of mattering to others for depressive symptoms. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 42(3), 310-325. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3090217>
- Tucker, L. R., & Lewis, C. (1973). A reliability coefficient for maximum likelihood factor analysis. *Psychometrika*, 38 (1), 1-10.
- Watson, D., Clark, L. A., & Tellegen, A. (1988). Development and validation of brief measures of positive and negative affect: The PANAS scales. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 54(6), 1063-1070. <https://doi.org/10.1037//0022-3514.54.6.1063>