

Regulatory Compliance Scale Trials and Tribulations (Enhanced Version)

Richard Fiene PhD

Research Institute for Key Indicators Data Lab/Penn State University

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The Regulatory Compliance Scale (RCS) was introduced several years ago and has been used in a couple of validation studies for differential monitoring and regulatory compliance's ceiling effect phenomenon. RCS buckets or thresholds were statistically generated based upon these studies, but it is time to validate those buckets and thresholds to determine if they are really the best model in creating a regulatory compliance scale. Since proposing the RCS, there has been a great deal of interest from jurisdictions in particular from Asian and African nations. Additional statistically based trials were conducted, and this brief report is the compilation of those trials over the past year.

The data used are from several jurisdictions that are part of the international database maintained at the Research Institute for Key Indicators Data Laboratory at Penn State University focusing on program quality scores and rule violation frequency data. These data from the respective databases were recoded into various thresholds to determine the best model. The jurisdictions were all licensing agencies in the US and Canada geographically dispersed where both regulatory compliance and program quality data was obtained from a sample of early care and education programs.

METHODOLOGY

The following methodology was used starting with the original RCS buckets/thresholds of Full, Substantial, Medium, and Low regulatory compliance:

Table 1: RCS Models used for analyses

RCS				Models			
		<i>Original</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
	<i>Full</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100
Scaling	<i>Substantial</i>	99-98	99-97	99-97	99-98	99-98	99-97
	<i>Medium</i>	97-90	96-90	96-93	97-95	97-85	96-85
	<i>Low</i>	89>	89>	92>	94>	84>	84>

Five alternate models were used to compare the results to the original RCS. The numbers indicate the number of violations subtract from a perfect score of 100. Full regulatory compliance indicates no violations and a score of 100 on the scale. The next bucket of 99-98 indicates that there were 1 or 2

regulatory compliance violations which resulted in a 99-98 score on the scale. This logic continues with each of the models.

The scale score was determined in the following manner: Full Regulatory Compliance = 7; Substantial Regulatory Compliance = 5; Medium Regulatory Compliance = 3; and Low Regulatory Compliance = 1. This rubric is how the original RCS scaling was done on a Likert type scale similar to other ECE program quality scales, such as the Environmental Rating Scales.

RESULTS

The following results are correlations amongst the respective RCS Models from Table 1 compared to the respective jurisdictions program quality tool (Quality1-3): ERS or CLASS Tools.

Table 2: RCS Model Results compared to Quality Scales

RCS results	Models	Quality1	Quality2	Quality3
Jurisdiction1	RCS0	.26*	.39*	.39*
	RCS3	.21	.32*	.33*
	RCS5	.20	.36*	.33*
Jurisdiction2	RCS0	.76**	.46**	---
	RCS3	.12	-.07	---
	RCS5	.18	-.02	---
	RCSF1	.55**	.29*	---
	RCSF2	.63**	.34	---
Jurisdiction3	RCS0	.19	.18	.16
	RCS3	.21	.21	.15
	RCS5	.18	.16	.07
	RCSF1	.17	.17	.10
	RCSF2	.18	.18	.19
Jurisdiction4	RCS0	.24*	---	---
	RCS3	.28*	---	---
	RCS5	.30*	---	---
	RCSF1	.21	---	---
	RCSF2	.29*	---	---
Jurisdiction5	RCS0	.06	-.02	.07
	RCS3	.06	-.01	.05
	RCS5	.08	.00	.09
	RCSF1	.00	-.03	.05
	RCSF2	.05	-.03	.05

*Statistically significant .05 level;

**Statistically significant .01 level.

In the above table starting under Jurisdiction2, two new models were introduced based upon the Fibonacci Sequence (Fibonacci1 = RCSF1; Fibonacci2 = RCSF2) and their model structure is in the

following Table 3. The reason for doing this is that the Fibonacci Sequence introduces additional variation into the scaling process.

Table 3: RCS Fibonacci Models

RCS Fibonacci			Models	
		<i>Original</i>	<i>Fibonacci1</i>	<i>Fibonacci2</i>
	<i>Full</i>	100	100	100
Scaling	<i>Substantial</i>	99-98	40	90
	<i>Medium</i>	97-90	20	20
	<i>Low</i>	89>	13	13

A second series of analyses were completed in comparing the RCS models with program quality (Quality1) by running ANOVAs with the RCS models as the independent variable and program quality as the dependent variable (Table 4). The reason for doing this was the nature of the data distribution in which there was a ceiling effect phenomenon identified which would have had an impact on the correlations in Table 2 above. All results are significant at $p < .05$ level with the exception of Jurisdiction2.

Table 4: ANOVAs Comparing the RCS Models with Program Quality

Jurisdictions	Model	Level 1	Level 3	Level 5	Level 7
Jurisdiction1	RCS0	2.85	3.34	4.05	3.40
	RCS3	3.24	3.23	4.05	3.40
	RCS5	2.73	3.32	3.77	3.40
Jurisdiction2	RCS0	4.81	4.31	4.80	4.10
	RCS3	4.59	4.25	4.80	4.10
	RCS5	---	4.26	4.64	4.10
Jurisdiction3	RCS0	4.59	4.68	4.86	4.87
	RCS3	4.38	4.67	4.83	4.87
	RCS5	4.38	4.83	4.83	4.87
Jurisdiction4	RCS0	37.81	37.01	44.28	41.96
	RCS3	36.57	38.60	44.28	41.96
	RCS5	33.46	36.53	43.10	41.96
Jurisdiction5	RCS0	3.93	4.17	4.28	4.07
	RCS3	4.02	4.24	4.28	4.07
	RCS5	3.75	4.13	4.26	4.07

DISCUSSION

Based upon the above results, it appears that the original RCS model proposed in 2021 is still the best model to be used, although the Fibonacci Sequence model is a close second in some of the jurisdictions. This model will need further exploration in determining its efficacy as a replacement or enhancement to the original RCS Model.

The bottom line is that the original RCS Model is as good as any and no other model is consistently better than all the rest. The RCS Model does have a slight edge over Regulatory Compliance Violation RCV frequency counts in some jurisdictions but not in others. It is much easier to interpret the relationship between quality and the RCS models than it is to interpret the results from the quality scores and the RCV data distribution. So, the recommendation would be for licensing agencies to think in terms of using this new scaling technique in one of its model formats in order to determine its efficacy. Pairing up RCS and RCV data side by side by licensing agencies would be important studies to determine which approach is the better approach.

The below graphic depicts the relationship between the RCS Models (0, 3, 5) when compared to the quality scores (1-6) clearly showing the ceiling effect and diminishing returns effect phenomenon so typical of regulatory compliance data when compared to program quality. These graphs are from the first three jurisdictions (1, 2, 3) from the above tables.

