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Construction of the Mandalay Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents

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Abstract

The objective of this study was to construct the psychometric properties of the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A) in Myanmar. The participants were 200 high school students (74 boys and 126 girls), with an average age of 15 years approximately, attending at No (7) High school. The 18 items English version of the questionnaire was translated into Myanmar version. To produce the final version of the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A), the data were analyzed using item analysis program. For each test item, the Chi-square was used to differentiate between high group and low group. According to the results, all of the items were significant at either .01 or .001 level and organized as a single test named " The Myanmar Version of the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A)'. The internal consistency reliability coefficients were found to be .71 for FNE subscale, .69 for SAD-New subscale, .41 for SAD-General subscale and .78 for the whole SAS-A, according to the result of reliability analysis. The results indicated that the 18-items Myanmar Version of the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescent (SAS-A) is a reliable test and an appropriate measure for the Myanmar cultural setting. This study indicates that the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A) is a reliable instrument for measuring the Social Anxiety Scale of adolescents.

Key words; social anxiety, internal consistency

Introduction

This purpose of the present study was to construct the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A). Behavioral scientists have offered a variety of theoretical approaches for understanding social anxiety and its clinical manifestation, social phobia. Although several conceptualizations of social anxiety exist, most of them emphasize one of three sets of antecedents; biological mechanisms involving temperamental, psychophysiological, evolutionary factors; cognitive patterns in how people think about themselves and their social world; and interpersonal processes that occur in the context of social interaction.

The self-presentational theory of social anxiety proposed that people experiences social anxiety when they are motivated to make a desired impression on other people but doubt that they will successfully do so. Because the impressions that people make on others have important implications for how they are evaluated in everyday life, people are understandable motive to convey certain impressions of themselves and to avoid making certain other impressions.

The theory predicts that the likelihood and intensity of social anxiety increases as people become more motivated to make a particular desired impression and less certain that they will successfully do so. One virtue of the self-presentation theory was that it accounted for both the kinds of interpersonal situations that evoke anxiety as well as individual differences in the tendency to feel socially anxious. Presumably, any situational factor or dispositional trait that is associated with either high motivation to conveyed desired impressions to other or low confidence in one's ability to make the desired impression should increase social anxiety.

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One of the main theories about social anxiety asserts that social anxiety is related to overestimating the negative aspects of social interactions, and understanding the positive aspects. Individual with social anxiety tend to overestimate the threat of social interactions, the likelihood of negative outcomes, and the consequents of negative outcomes. Individuals with social anxiety also tend to underestimate their ability to handle social interactions.

Social anxiety is the fear of social situations and the interaction with other people that can automatically bring on feelings of self-consciousness, judgment, evaluation, and scrutiny. Put another way, social anxiety is the fear and anxiety of being judged and evaluated negatively by other people. If a person usually becomes anxious in social situations, but seems fine when they are alone, then "social phobia" may be the problem. Social phobia is much more common problem than past estimates have led us to think. Millions of people all over the world suffer from this devastating and traumatic problem every day, either from a specific social phobia or from a more generalized social phobia.

A specific social phobia would be the fear of speaking in front of groups, whereas generalized social phobia indicates that the person is anxious, nervous, and uncomfortable in almost all social situations, The physiological manifestations that accompany social anxiety may include intense fear, racing, heart, turning red or blushing, excessive sweating, dry throat and mouth, trembling, swallowing with difficulty, and muscle twitches. Constant, intense anxiety that does-not go away is the most common feature.

Social phobia has been the focus of increased research attention in recent year: such research has concentrated primarily on adult populations. Yet, social phobia is believed to affect significant number of children and adolescents. Social phobia in adolescence is likely to interfere with normal development of social and personal relationships and result in school avoidance or refusal (Stress & Francis, 1989). Although certain fears and anxieties may be both normative and transient in particular developmental periods, the level of fear or anxiety in some adolescent exceeds developmental expectations, significantly undermining functioning at home, at school, and with peers. Socially phobia adolescents also report experiencing significant degree of depression and suicide ideation and are at risk for substance abuse problems.

One reason for this apparent slow start, in comparison with research with adults, was the absence of a psychometrically sound measure for assessing social anxiety in children and adolescents (La Greca, 1998). In 1988, however, La Greca, Dandes, Wick, Shaw, and Stone developed the first paper-and-pencil measure of social anxiety for children: the Social Anxiety Scale for Children (SASC).

But, different studies have shown that social phobia usually begins in adolescence and that its course is persistent and increases the possibility of negative consequences among adolescents. However, in spite of these effects on the adolescent population, to date there are only two instruments designed to assess the social anxiety responses in adolescence: the Social Phobia and Anxiety Inventory (SASI) (Turner, Beidel, Dancu, and Syanlay, 1998).

So, to be useful for adolescent, the items on the SASC-R were modified somewhat to form the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescent (SAS-A; La Greca & Lopez, 1998).

The objectives of the present study were the following; (a) to construct the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A) and (b) to determine the internal consistency of this test. In our culture, there is no standardized self-report Social Anxiety Scale in adolescence.

Thus, this study attempted to develop the Myanmar version of the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A) based on a translation of the La Greca et al. (1998).

Scale Development

The purpose of the present study is to construct of the Myanmar version of the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A), examination of the psychometric properties of translated instrument in terms of item analysis and internal consistency reliability were conducted.

Writing the items and planning the test

First, the original test, the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A) developed by La Greca and Lopez (1998) was taken and translated the test items into Myanmar. It consists of three subscales: Fear of Negative Evaluation (FNE:8 items), Social Avoidance and Distress specific to new situations or unfamiliar peers (SAD-New:6items), and Social avoidance and distress that is experienced more generally in the company of peers (SAD-General:4items). The SAS-A contains 22 items: 18 content items and 4 filler items. Each item is rated on a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 (not at all) to (all the time). The scores were obtained from the sum of the items which make up each one of the sub-scales. After writing the items and planning the test, an item analysis and reliability was conducted. After carrying out the item analysis for the 3 sub-scales, the next step of procedure is to determine the test reliability for it. Reliability, it is applied to test, has two distinct meaning: stability over time and inter consistency. In this study, internal consistency procedure was used for establishing the reliability of the test.

Item Analysis

In general, it is expected that each item will be answered more correctly by high-scoring individuals than by low-scoring individuals. When this does not occur it alerts us to the possibility that something may be wrong with the item. To check the relation of item response to total score, the performance of a group of high-scoring respondents can be compared with that of a group of low-scoring respondents can be chosen on the basic of total test score. In a normal distribution sample, it has been shown that optimum groups for the purpose consist of the upper 27 percent and the lower 27 percent of the case. The present study followed the above method to carry out an item analysis.

Method

Participants

The participants consisted 200 (74 males and 126 females) students in grades 10th and 11th from (No 7) High School in Mandalay. There ages ranged from 14 to 17 years and the average age of the participants was 15 years.

Procedure

To perform item analysis for the present study, completion of the scale was anonymous and confidentially was strictly guaranteed. The scale was administered to the200 students in groups in the classroom. Before the scale was administered to the participants they were told about the

classrooms and to read test instructions. The responses of the participants were scored and the total score for the test was obtained. The total score of 200 participants were arranged in descending order. Of these scores, the upper 27% (54 responses) was given as high group and lower 27% (54responses) as low group. Next, the significant level of items was computed by using Chi-square method. The Chi-square formula is as follow:

$$x^2 = \sum + \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

Results and Discussion

According to the results of item analysis, 8 items of the FNE was significant at .001 levels, 6 items of the SAD-New was significant at .001 levels, 4 items of the SAD-General was significant at .001 levels, and the whole of the SAS-A was significant at .001 levels and No 17 was at .01 level. Results of the FNE, SAD-New, SAD-General and SAS-A were shown in Table 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively.

Table 1 Showing the value of Chi Square the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A)

Item No.	Item Statement	Chi-Square Value	Significant Level
1	I worry about what others say about me.	26.70	.001
2	I worry that others don't like me.	22.59	.001
3	I worry about what others think of me.	37.60	.001
4	I 'm afraid that others will not like me.	33.26	.001
5	I worry about being teased.	57.27	.001
6	If I get into an argument, I worry that the other person will not like me.	25.58	.001
7	I feel that others make fun of me.	37.86	.001
8	I feel that my peers talk about me behind my back.	28.35	.001
9	I get nervous when I talk to peers I don't know very well.	45.72	.001
10	I feel shy around people I don't know.	41.57	.001
11	I get nervous when I meet new people.	76.08	.001
12	I feel nervous when I'm around certain people.	38.47	.001
13	I worry about doing something new in front of others.	53.12	.001
14	I only talk to people I know really well.	36.43	.001
15	I'm afraid to invite others to do things with me because they might say no.	53.12	.001
16	It's hard for me to ask others to do things with me.	24.72	.001
17	I'm quiet when I'm with a group of people.	14.91	.01
18	I feel shy even with peers I know well.	33.20	.001

Table 2 Showing the value of Chi Square the Fear of Negative Evaluation (FNE)

Item No.	Item Statement	Chi-Square Value	Significant Level
1	I worry about what others say about me.	50.04	.001
2	I worry that others don't like me.	50.52	.001
3	I worry about what others think of me.	64.28.	.001
4	I 'm afraid that others will not like me.	52.99	.001
5	I worry about being teased.	86.26	.001
6	If I get into an argument, I worry that the other person will not like me.	38.87	.001
7	I feel that others make fun of me.	32.94	.001
8	I feel that my peers talk about me behind my back.	36.29	.001

Table 3 Showing the value of Chi Square for the Social Avoidance Distress (SAD-New)

Item No.	Item Statement	Chi-Square Value	Significant Level
9	I get nervous when I talk to peers I don't know very well.	74.44	.001
10	I feel shy around people I don't know.	58.78	.001
11	I get nervous when I meet new people.	83.79	.001
12	I feel nervous when I'm around certain people.	43.36	.001
13	I worry about doing something new in front of others.	54.50	.001
14	I only talk to people I know really well.	51.12	.001

Table 4 Showing the value of Chi Square for the Social Avoidance and Distress (SAD-General)

Item No.	Item Statement	Chi-Square Value	Significant Level
15	I'm afraid to invite others to do things with me because they might say no.	47.22	.001
16	It's hard for me to ask others to do things with me.	58.19	.001
17	I'm quiet when I'm with a group of people.	60.55	.001
18	I feel shy even with peers I know well.	50.13	.001

Reliability Evaluation

Reliability, as it is applied to tests, has two distinct meanings. One refers to stability over time, the second to internal consistency. In this study, internal consistency reliability was employed.

Internal Consistency Reliability

Most psychometric test constructors aim to make their psychological tests as internal consistency since if one part of a test is measuring one variable then the other parts, if internal consistency is low, cannot be measuring that variable. Thus, if a test is to be valid, i.e. measure what it is intended to measure, then internal consistency must be high. This is the argument used by the vast majority of test constructors who write that high internal consistency is a prerequisite of high validity. test constructors use increasing internal consistency as a criterion for retaining items in a test. In this study, internal consistency reliability was employed. Nunnally and Cronbach both consider that coefficient alpha is the best index of internal consistency reliability.

Method

Participant

The participants were consisted 200 students in grades 10th and 11th from (No 7) High School. There ages ranged from 14 to 17 years and the average age of the participants was 15 years.

Procedure

In order to examine internal consistency reliability of the Myanmar version of the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A), the data were entered onto a database in the Statistical package for the Social Science (SPSS, 11.5 version). Then, coefficient alpha available in SPSS was used to calculate the internal consistency reliability of the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A). This procedure was taken separately for each scale.

Results and Discussion

As a result of internal consistency reliability analysis on the 18-item Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A), the alpha coefficients were found to be .71 for FNE subscale, .69 for SAD-New subscale, .41 for SAD-General subscale and .78 for the whole SAS-A. As shown in Table 5, the results indicate that the Myanmar version of the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A) is a reliable test. The items made up each subscale of it are related with each other.

Table 5 Internal consistency reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) for the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A)

No.	Tests	Alpha
1	Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A)	.78
2	F ear of Negative Evaluation Subscale	.71
3	Social Avoidance and Distress specific to new situations or unfamiliar peers Subscale	.69
4	Social Avoidance and Distress that is experienced more generally in the company of peers Subscale	.41

Summary and Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to develop the Myanmar version of the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A), based on a translation of original instrument of La Greca et al., (1998). La Greca et al., (1998) developed the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A) to assess the social anxiety of adolescent. However, it is an English expression and may not be appropriate for Myanmar cultural context. Therefore, the 18 items English version of the questionnaire was translated into Myanmar version. To produce the final version of the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A), the data were analyzed using item analysis program. For each test item, the Chi-square was used to differentiate between high group and low group.

According to the results, all of the items were significant at either .01 or .001 level and organized as a single test named " The Myanmar version of the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A)".

The internal consistency reliability coefficients were found to be .71 for FNE subscale, .69 for SAD-New subscale, .41 for SAD-General subscale and .78 for the whole SAS-A, according to the results of reliability analysis.

In conclusion, the results indicated that the 18-items Myanmar version of the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescent (SAS-A) is a reliable test and an appropriate measure for the Myanmar cultural setting. This study indicates that the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A) is a reliable instrument for measuring the Social Anxiety Scale of adolescents.

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