

Cross-cultural validation of research instruments: Preliminary validation of the Parent Child Conflict Tactics Scale in Sri Lanka

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An often overlooked but an essential aspect of conducting comparative cross-cultural research involves that the concepts of interest and the instruments used to measure them are equivalent in the cultures concerned. When using western originated instruments in non-western countries, it is essential that these instruments be validated to the culture it is being used in. The Parent Child Conflict Tactics Scale (CTSPC) is an instrument that has been developed in the United States and used in many countries to assess 22 disciplinary strategies parents use on children. Content and consensual validation was conducted on the CTSPC in Sri Lanka. Firstly, the CTSPC was back translated to Sinhala. Interviews with 10 persons working with children suggested 2 more disciplinary strategies commonly used in Sri Lanka. These 2 were added to the original list of 22 items. Thus, 24 items of the CTSPC was presented for validation. To conduct the validation process, a panel of 6 professional judges conversant in child mental health and cross-cultural aspects were appointed. The judges, using the Delphi technique, rated each of the 24 items on two aspects of content validity and three aspects of consensual validity. Based on the Delphi technique recommendations, the results indicated that 23 of the 24 items have adequate content and consensual validity in Sri Lanka. The item - which was from the original CTSPC - which did not show content and consensual validity, was omitted from the Sinhala version. Based on the recommendation of the judges, 3 more disciplinary strategies representative of Sri Lanka was added to the Sinhala version of the CTSPC. Thus the validated Sinhala version of the CTSPC contain 26 items. Though there was adequate validity in this Sinhala version, in order to make it more user friendly, the wording was further simplified. This was done in consultation with a Sinhala scholar who is also proficient in English. Subsequent to this, the CTSPC was pre-tested twice with convenience samples of 12-year old Sinhala speaking school children in order to deduce any difficulties in its administration. The difficulties encountered were corrected in the finalized version of the CTSPC. Twenty one items in the original CTSPC and the added 5 items specific to the Sri Lankan context show adequate content and consensual validity in Sri Lanka. In order to validate it further, construct and criterion validation would be conducted in the future.