

Adaptation of the Relationship Assessment Scale for Use in Bangladesh

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Abstract

The aim of the present research was to adapt the Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS), designed to measure one's relationship satisfaction in a romantic relation. Data were collected from conveniently selected 263 adult participants (age range 18 to 58 years) who were engaged in romantic relationships (married or dating). Participants responded to a questionnaire that included measures of relationship satisfaction and dispositional mindfulness. Results showed that the Bangla RAS poses sound reliability (Cronbach's Alpha 0.86, split-half reliability(0.82) temporal stability (test-retest reliability 0.88) and a moderate validity. These results demonstrated that this scale is a valid and reliable instrument for assessing quality of interpersonal relationship. Future research is needed for establishing sound validity involving diverse population.

Introduction

Getting involved in romantic relationship is humans' psychological and biological survival needs (Lykken & Tellegen, 1993). Accordingly, satisfaction in a romantic relationship is an indispensable component affecting in all spheres of our social life. Relationship satisfaction (RS) has been defined as an interpersonal evaluation of the positivity of feelings for one's partner and an attraction to the relationship which is associated with better mental and physical health (Guerrero, Andersen, & Afifi, 2013). It may be considered important that people have the satisfaction in establishing relationships with other individuals around them to survive in a healthy manner in both biological and psychological aspects (Funk & Rogge, 2007) . It comes from the understanding that humans are not interdependent, they need each other to survive. It depends on each individual's expectation, affection, and affectionate communication with the partner. Affection is a basic human need which is met through interpersonal interaction and in forming mutually supportive relationships(Guerrero et al., 2013). Affectionate communication is a behavior that portrays the feelings of fondness and positive regard to one-another (Floyd, 2006). RS is necessary to continue a happy, healthy life and is related to our mental and physical health (Funk & Rogge, 2007). It is the single most important ingredient for the development and maintenance of a happy, productive, and well-functioning relationship.

There are a number of factors that can influence whether two people come together and form a long-term romantic relationship. Some researchers say that individuals' selection

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of one mate over another happens largely by chance (Lykken & Tellegen, 1993). Others argue that attraction and relationship initiation are the results of biochemical reactions in the body (Glenn, 1990). In a romantic relationship, satisfaction plays a key role in promoting intimacy, forgiveness, and willingness to make sacrifices for each other. It involves a person's loftiest trust, hopes, and aspirations along with their deepest worries and fears. It is one of the most consequential properties of peoples' ongoing relationships with family members, romantic partners, friends, and colleagues and so psychological researchers are getting an increasing level of interest in this topic day by day.

People had been interested in the topic of RS for years, but the formal study of intimate romantic relationships is fairly a recent trend. The effective measure of RS, however, is a difficult process due to the lack of complete agreement on the definition of RS (Bradbury, Fincham, & Beach, 2000). The relationship assessment and satisfaction literature is not restricted to perform relationship assessment with married couples or individuals who are linked to romantic relationships (Sprecher & Hendrick, 2004). This research suggests that relationship between partners who are more committed to one another, or have been together for a longer period of time, have higher levels of satisfaction than those in relationships with less commitment and of shorter duration.

In social psychology and related fields, numerous tools have been used to find out the level of relationship satisfaction between two partners. The Relationship Assessment Scale (*RAS*) was first developed in 1988 by Susan Hendrick to measure individual's satisfaction when he or she was being involved in a romantic relationship (Hendrick, Dicke, & Hendrick, 1998). Hendrick used it for two categories of participants—married and unmarried where their age were 18 years and above. While a handful number of instruments are available for assessing relationship satisfaction, many are lengthy, time consuming, and some are only suitable for using with married couples. The *RAS*, on the other hand, is a brief measure of global relationship satisfaction. It consists of seven items, each rated on a five-point Likert scale. It is suitable for administering upon any individual who are in an intimate relationship, either marriage or committed engagement. The brevity of the scale increases its utility in clinical settings as well as online administration. Research has shown that *RAS* is correlated with other measures of love, sexual attitudes, self-disclosure, commitment, and investment in a relationship (Hendrick, 1988). The *RAS* has been adapted into seven different languages up to date due to its uniqueness, time preferences, and shortness as well as validity and reliability.

Now-a-days, an increasing number of couples are seeking help from different helping professionals like lawyers, psychologists, sociologists, psychiatrists, and marriage counselors due to various interpersonal issues with their partners. Consistencies of such problems in an intimate relationship lead to different psychological and social maladaptive behavior. Generally, professionals find that lack of satisfaction among these partners is one of the major causes of such problematic situation which hampers person's normal lifestyle. Unfortunately, in our country we do not have a reliable and valid scale to measure satisfaction in intimate relationship, though professionals use some measures

