

## **Adaptation of the Social Competence with Peers Questionnaire-Pupil in Bangladesh**

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### **Abstract**

Research suggests that the social competence of children and adolescents is related to the quality of their lifespan development. The present study was carried out to adapt the Social Competence with Peers Questionnaire-Pupil (SCPQ-PU) to use it in research on and training for Bangladeshi youth. Standard procedure for the cultural adaptation of scale was followed and the final version of Bangla SCPQ-PU was administered to 79 children. Data indicated that the Bangla version of the SCPQ-PU had good reliability (i.e. Cronbach's alpha, Guttman split-half coefficients) and validity (i.e. content and criterion validity) evidence. This short self-report measure is expected to be useful for researchers and practitioners who work with the children and adolescents of Bangladesh.

*Keywords:* Social competence with peers questionnaire-pupil, youth, adaptation, reliability, validity

### **Introduction**

Social competence in children and adolescents is necessary for adjustments in school, maintaining relationships with peers and teachers, academic achievement (Lemos & Meneses, 2002), preventing psychological problems (Pendry, Carr, Smith, & Roeter, 2014) and ensuring success in adulthood (Merrell, 1993b, 2002). Training and intervention programs for youth therefore have emphasized promoting child social competence (Greenberg, Domitrovic, & Bumbarger, 2000). Research found that adolescents with positive interpersonal skills were better socially adjusted (Allen, Weissberg, & Hawkins, 1989), and adolescents with conflict resolution skills had secure and deep relationships with their peers compared to those with poor conflict resolution strategies (Chung & Asher, 1996).

Social competence is a complex, multidimensional and interactive construct (Merrell, 2002). It includes social, attitudinal, cognitive and emotional aspects (Lemos & Meneses, 2002) and involves socially effective and appropriate actions to attain relevant goals (Ford, 1982). There are several

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independent, Big Five personality-like dimensions of social competence, such as extraversion, social openness, warmth, social appropriateness, social influence, social insight, and social maladjustment (Schneider, Ackerman, & Kanfer, 1996).

Because of the importance of social competence in youth (and also throughout the lifespan) and as no relevant measuring instrument has yet been adapted in Bangla, we adapted the Social Competence with Peers Questionnaire-Pupil (SCPQ-PU; Spence, 1995) so that it can be used with Bangladeshi youths. The adapted scale is expected to assist researchers and practitioners in Bangladesh to investigate and assess social competence and associated issues, such as social and emotional development of adolescents.

## Method

### Participants

In this study, 81 participants, aged 13 to 14 years were recruited from three different schools in Dhaka city following convenient sampling technique. Among them 54 were boys and 25 were girls. Two participants did not complete the scale and therefore the final sample consisted of 79 Participants.

### Measures

**Demographic information sheet.** This information sheet was used to collect data about age, sex, study grade, and academic achievements of the participants.

**Social Competence with Peers Questionnaire-Pupil (SCPQ-PU).** The SCPQ-PU, developed by Spence (1995), is a self-rated, 10-item scale measuring interpersonal relations with peers as experienced by children, for example, "I have at least one close friend", "I get on well with my classmates" etc. There are three response options for each item, *Not true* = 1, *Sometimes true* = 2, and *Mostly true* = 3. Total score ranges between 10 and 30 with higher scores indicating better social competence. The scale has good psychometric properties (Spence, 1995). This single factor scale (as factor analysis indicated) had Guttman split-half reliability coefficient of 0.77 and Chronbach's alpha of 0.75. Children's assessment of their social competence correlated significantly with the ratings of their parents ( $r = .54$ ) and teachers ( $r = .40$ ) indicating the convergent validity of the scale (Spence, 1995). Discriminant evidence comes from the findings that rejected children rated themselves lower on the scale (mean score = 12.24) compared to average (mean score = 15.34) and popular youngsters (mean score = 15.72; Spence, 1995).

**Adapting SCPQ-PU to Bangla.** The adaptation of SCPQ-PU was a multistage procedure involving the following steps.

**Step 1: Forward translation.** Two authors of this paper translated the scale into Bangla independently (i.e. without consulting each other). The translators were aware to keep the translation readily understandable in Bangla without altering the content of the original scale.

**Step 2: Comparing and synthesizing the translations.** The researchers of this project compared the two different translations and assessed their semantic, idiomatic, conceptual, linguistic and contextual differences. The better translation between the two for each item was selected and some items were further revised to prepare the Bangla version of the SCPQ-PU.

**Step 3: Consulting with experts.** The Bangla version of the SCPQ-PU was given to three subject matter experts who evaluated the structure, layout, instrument instructions, and both the scope and adequacy of expressions contained in the items. Following their suggestions, some items of the Bangla version of the scale were further revised.

**Step 4: Back translation.** The Bangla version of the SCPQ-PU was given to two faculty members of the Department of English, University of Dhaka to translate it into English. The back translation was compared with the original scale and it was found that the corresponding items of both the versions were similar in meaning. This suggested that the Bangla version of the SCPQ-PU was comparable to the original scale in meaning and was ready for further investigation.

**Step 5: Field testing.** To determine the psychometric properties of the Bangla version of the scale, it was administered to a sample of 81 participants as mentioned in the section on participants. With their consent, they were given both verbal and written instructions about answering the scale.

## Results

Social competence scores of the participants ( $N = 79$ ) ranged between 16 and 30 (mean = 22.53,  $SD = 4.74$ ). The reliability of the Bangla version of the SCPQ-PU was good, Cronbach's alpha and Guttman split-half coefficients were .89 and .91 respectively.

As mentioned in the stage of forward translation, the confirmation of the subject-matter experts about the relevance of the translated items to social competence and correspondence between the Bangla and English versions of the scale provided content validity evidence for the Bangla SCPQ-PU. In addition, it was found that participants' academic achievement in the previous year had a significant positive correlation with Bangla SCPQ-PU,  $r = .83$ ,  $p < .01$ . This indicates criterion validity of the scale as social competence significantly predicts the academic achievement of adolescents (Wentzel, 1991b). Studies suggest that

social competence facilitates students' positive interactions with their peers and teachers, which increases their achievement motivation and thus improves their academic performance (Wentzel, 1991a).

### Discussion

The present study was carried out to adapt the widely used SCPQ-PU to Bangla to use it to assess and research on the social competence of Bangladeshi youth. Standard procedures for scale adaptation were followed and findings indicated that Bangla SCPQ-PU had good reliability and validity evidence.

The strength of Bangla SCPQ-PU is that the relevance of its content to Bangladeshi culture was checked by academics and researchers who have been working in the relevant field for many years. Also, assistance was obtained from English language experts for back translation. This rigorousness in the translation phase was reflected in the high coefficients of reliability and validity suggesting that the adapted scale has sufficient psychometric properties for investigating the social competence of the youngsters of Bangladesh. Another advantage of Bangla SCPQ-PU is that it is a short scale containing only 10 items meaning that participants can give their responses in a few minutes and thus it is less likely to be affected by boredom that respondents sometimes feel when they are required to respond to many questions. Thus this scale can easily be incorporated in a large study where total time required to complete the tasks is of great concern.

Although the psychometric properties of Bangla SCPQ-PU were good, further studies are needed to strengthen its reliability and validity evidence. Test-retest reliability can be carried out to determine the stability of responses over time. With regard to validity, factorial, convergent, and discriminant validity coefficients can be determined. However, a challenge to determine construct validity (i.e. obtaining convergent and discriminant validity evidence) in Bangladesh is that relevant Bangla scales are not available which can be used for the purpose. A solution to this can be to adapt parent and teacher versions of SCPQ to Bangla and determine relationships between the three. The correlation coefficients of SCPQ-parent and SCPQ-teacher with SCPQ-PU would indicate the convergent validity of SCPQ-PU.

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