

The Adaptation and Validation of Stroke and Aphasia Quality of Life (SAQOL-39) Scale for the Sinhala Language in the Sri Lankan Context

K.M.M.G.S.L. Karunathilake¹, S. Rathnayake², U.K. Ranawaka³

Stroke and aphasia rehabilitation aims to improve the quality of life of the individuals affected. Aphasia is a disturbance of the language. Most of scales for measuring health-related quality of life in stroke exclude people with aphasia due to inability to communicate during the questionnaires. However, it is vital to identify the effect on quality of life among individuals with aphasia to provide proper rehabilitation. No reliable measure was developed in Sri Lankan context to analyze this, which became the research question of the present study. The Stroke and Aphasia Quality of Life Scale-39 which is the commonest, valid and reliable measures was used in assessing quality of life among aphasia and it was analyzed applying to the Sri Lankan context.

The following were the aims of the study, translate and adapt the (SAQOL-39) Scale for the Sinhala Language in the Sri Lankan context, identify its reliability and validity, identify the relationship between the severity level of communication and the quality of life level and analyze the most affected domain among aphasia population.

The original (English) version of the SAQOL-39 has been adapted and translated using Delphi method. The sociocultural and linguistically adapted Sinhala version was administered on a group of 35 patients with aphasia to examine the test-retest reliability, inter rater reliability internal consistency reliability as well as the concurrent validity of the instrument. The inclusion criteria of the study population were as following, Aphasia resulting from a stroke at least after 6 months from the onset and not with the evidence of psychiatric illnesses and cognitive difficulty. 10 patients were used for the test retest assessment. And for the inter rater reliability assessment 2 raters were used.

The Sinhala version of SAQOL-39 exhibited high test-retest reliability (ICC =0.83) as well as the inter rater reliability (ICC=0.99). This instrument exhibited high internal consistency (Chronbach's α =0.845) and also the concurrent validity was examined with the WHOQOL BREF and found a significant correlation between SAQOL-39 and WHOQOL-BREF ($r=0.75$, $p=0.000$). The most affected domain of the aphasia patients as the communication domain was identified through this study and it was also identified that there is a significant positive correlation ($r=0.685$, $p=0.000$) between the severity level of aphasia and quality of life. Despite the small sample size, the Sinhala version of the SAQOL-39 showed good internal consistency, inter rater reliability, test-retest reliability and concurrent validity. The importance of communication ability in perceiving the quality of life in patients with aphasia has also been highlighted.

Keywords: Aphasia, Stroke, Sinhala, Quality of Life, SAQOL-39

¹ Department of Disability Studies, Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka; shiharikarunathilake@gmail.com

² Department of Disability Studies, Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

³ Department of Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka