

Translation, cross-cultural adaptation, and validation of the Autism Family Experience Questionnaire into the Sinhala language

Thilakarathna, M.K.D.N.,^{1*} and Danthanarayana, N.D.¹

¹*Department of Disability Studies, Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka*

* dinuninawanjana@gmail.com

Objectives: The general objective of the study is to translate and cross-culturally adapt the Autism Family Experience Questionnaire into the Sinhala language. The specific objectives of the study consists of cross – culturally adapting and translating the Autism Family Experience Questionnaire into the Sinhala language, to pre – test the translational tool with parents of children with autism spectrum disorder, to evaluate the content validity of the Sinhala version of the Autism Family Experience Questionnaire, and to examine the association between total scores of the Autism Family Experience Questionnaire and age of the children, gender of the children, parental education, and duration of accessing intervention.

Methods: The study design was translation, cross-cultural adaptation, and validation of the Autism Family Experience Questionnaire into the Sinhala language using the Delphi technique. The study setting was government and private clinical settings in Sri Lanka. The instrument was validated with a sample of 60 parents of children with autism, with the children aged between 3 to 10 years in Sri Lanka. This study indicated that the translated and adapted Autism Family Experience Questionnaire has acceptable content validity and moderate reliability. According to the pre-test, all six parents’ opinion was that the questions were clear and that the questions were well understood. According to the final objective, an association between scores of the AFEQ with children diagnosed with ASD and their background variables (age, gender, duration of accessing intervention and parental education) was also considered.

Results: There was no statistically significant difference between the age of children with ASD, gender of the children with ASD, or parental education. The Autism Family Experience Questionnaire form was adapted to Sri Lankan context. Internal consistency Cronbach’s alpha was 0.559, which indicated a moderate reliability. However, the translated and adapted Sinhala version of the AFEQ indicates an excellent content validity. The mean age of the children with ASD who participated was 6.22 years (SD=2.08) and 21.6% of the children were at the age of 5 years. The AFEQ mean score was 123.30 (SD=12.12). The AFEQ scores ranged from 83 to 163. There were no statistically significant differences between AFEQ scores and the background variables of participants.

Conclusion: The main objective of this study was to translate, cross-culturally adapt, and validate the Autism Family Experience Questionnaire (AFEQ) into the Sinhala language. This study indicated that the translated and adapted AFEQ has acceptable content validity and moderate reliability. Therefore, it can be used as a tool to understand the family experience of parents of children with ASD in different domains.

Key words: *Autism Family Experience Questionnaire form, Delphi committee, Translation, Reliability, Validity*