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Assessing motivation to lose weight: the psychometric properties of the Sinhala version of University of Rhode Island Change Assessment (URICA) scale

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Introduction

Weight reduction through lifestyle modifications is an important component in the management of various chronic diseases. The degree of motivation to change has been shown to predict outcomes in weight reduction interventions. Thus, the availability of a validated self-report tool assessing the degree of motivation for weight management would be useful for both clinical and research purposes in Sri Lanka.

Objectives

To examine the structural validity and internal consistency of the URICA for weight management in a sample of Sri Lankan adults with chronic medical conditions.

Methods

Standard procedures for cross-cultural adaptation of a questionnaire were followed in translating the 32-item URICA into Sinhala. The Sinhala version was administered to 208 patients aged 18-60 years attending outpatient clinical services for non-disabling chronic medical diseases. Psychometric testing included confirmatory factor analysis and the assessment of internal consistency (Cronbach α).

Results

The commonly accepted four-factor structure of URICA reflecting Prochaska and Di Clemente's transtheoretical model (pre-contemplation, contemplation, action and maintenance) showed good model fit, after the removal of four items from the pre-contemplation subscale due to inadequate factor loadings (<0.4). In line with theory, factor correlations indicated that the pre-contemplation factor was inversely correlated with the other three factors, while the other three factors were positively correlated with one another. All four subscales showed good internal consistency (Cronbach α ranging from 0.73 to 0.89).

Conclusions

The Sinhala version of a modified 28-item URICA was found to have sound psychometric properties as a measure of motivation for weight management among Sinhala-speaking adult patient.

Key words: *weight loss, motivation to change, obesity, overweight, translation*