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ABSTRACT

As society becomes increasingly diverse, the issue about language used for assessments becomes critical. Research suggests that completing measures in a language other than one's native language may result in inaccurate scores. The Children's Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1997), a scale assessing dispositional hope in children ages 8 to 16, was translated into Spanish for this present study. A sample of bilingual children (N=36) completed both the English and Spanish versions of the scale at 1-month intervals. A significant correlation between these two versions suggests that the Spanish version may be a useful and appropriate tool for measuring hope in Spanish-speaking children. Findings such as these can help expand the understanding of positive psychological constructs as they relate to diverse populations and can improve assessment of multicultural populations. (Contains 11 references.) (JDM)

Preliminary Validation of a Spanish Language Translation
of the Children's Hope Scale

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ABSTRACT

As society becomes increasingly diverse, issues of language in assessment become critical. Research suggests that completing measures in a language other than one's native language may result in inaccurate scores. In the present study, the Children's Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1997), a scale assessing dispositional hope in children ages 8 to 16, was translated into Spanish. A sample of bilingual children ($N = 36$) were asked to complete the English and Spanish versions of the Children's Hope Scale, one month apart. A significant correlation between these two versions ($r = .390$) suggests that the Spanish version may be a useful and appropriate scale for the measurement of hope in Spanish-speaking children.

Preliminary Validation of a Spanish Language Translation
of the Children's Hope Scale

As society becomes increasingly diverse, issues of language become critical in assessment and practice. Indeed, language barriers may hinder adequate assessment and understanding of clients. Over the past five years, researchers have collected a substantial amount of data on hope in children from a variety of ethnic groups and socioeconomic classes (Callahan, 1999; McDermott et al. 1997; McDermott, Gariglietti, & Hastings, 1998; McDermott, Lopez, & Gariglietti, 1999). Data have demonstrated that African-American and Caucasian children self-report the highest hope scores, with Hispanic-American and Native-American children self-reporting significantly lower hope using the Children's Hope Scale (CHS, McDermott et al., 1997). In a recent investigation of hope in Hispanic-American children who spoke Spanish as their first language, scores on these scales were found to be higher than those obtained in previous research (Gariglietti, 1999).

These initial findings raise an interesting question about the measurement of hope and language. Are children more likely to report higher hope when taking a test in their own language, rather than one administered in a language that is not typically spoken in their home? Observations in schools have suggested that children whose first language is Spanish often do not score as high on achievement tests that are administered in English (e.g. Iowa Basic Skills), as their classroom grades and their teachers assessments would have predicted.

Hope Theory

While hope has been discussed by countless philosophers and writers, it has only recently been operationalized in the psychological literature. According to Snyder (1994), hope is considered a cognitive set directed towards goal attainment that is based on a sense of successful

agency and pathways . Snyder's conceptualization of hope suggests a model comprised of three cognitive components: goals, agency, and pathways. Goals are considered the targets or endpoints of mental action sequences, and as such form the anchor of hope theory (Snyder, Ilardi, Michael, & Cheavens, 2000). Pathways, which are the routes towards desired goals, are necessary to attain goals and navigate around obstacles. Finally, agency is considered the determination and energy necessary to begin and sustain movement towards goals. Pathways and agency are positively related, but describe separate components, each of which is not sufficient alone to define hope.

Several positive correlates have been associated with hope scores in children and adults, including optimism, control perceptions, problem-solving, positive affect, self-actualization, and higher self-esteem (Sumerlin, 1997; Snyder et al., 1991). Children with high hope tend to have lower levels of depression and higher self-perceptions of athletic ability, physical appearance, social acceptance, and scholastic competence (Snyder et al., 1997). Hope appears to be related to health outcomes, with studies demonstrating that higher hope is associated with lower risk for depression and a more adaptive coping style (Elliott, Witty, Herrick, & Hoffman, 1991).

While hope appears to be a valuable asset for children and adults, the majority of research with this construct has been conducted with samples of Caucasian, English-speaking individuals. In order to increase accurate hope measurement for members of ethnically diverse groups, issues of language must be considered. Translations of hope scales and subsequent research assessing the reliability and validity of these translations can begin to address these issues. The purpose of the current study is to explore the linguistic equivalence of a Spanish language version of the Children's Hope Scale.

METHOD

Participants

Thirty-six students from an elementary school in a large mid-western city participated in the study. Approximately 80% of the children spoke both English and Spanish, and more than 50% reported Spanish as the primary language spoken in their homes. A small percentage of students spoke no English. The school was located in an area with predominantly working class families, and the majority of the students qualified for the subsidized lunch program.

Measures

Children's Hope Scale

The Children's Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1997) is a six item measure designed for children ages 8 to 16. Based on Snyder's model of hope, the CHS is a dispositional measure of hope. Three items on the hope scale measure agency, while the other three measure pathways. Estimates of internal reliability for the Children's Hope Scale range from .72 to .86, with a median alpha of .77. The test-retest correlation over a 1-month period was positive and significant at .71.

In the process of construct validation of the Children's Hope Scale, studies (Snyder et al., 1997) suggest convergent validity with observer's ratings of hope, competence/control-related perceptions, and self-worth. Discriminant validity of the scale was demonstrated with constructs such as intelligence. Finally, data also demonstrated predictive and incremental validity of the Children's Hope Scale.

Demographic Questionnaire

A brief demographic questionnaire was used to determine language spoken in the home, number of family members living in the home, age, gender, grade, and ethnicity of the student.

Procedure

Translation of the Children's Hope Scale

An initial translation of the Children's Hope Scale was conducted by a native Spanish speaker of Mexican descent. A subsequent evaluation of that translation was conducted by a native Spanish speaker of South American descent who attempted to review and modify items. A back translation was conducted by a Spanish language educator. The final Spanish version of the Children's Hope Scale was accepted as the most grammatically correct and most representative of neutral Spanish.

Administration of the Children's Hope Scale

Students in grades four through six were administered the Children's Hope Scale in both Spanish and English. The Spanish and English versions of the hope scales were administered one month apart. Because there were children in each classroom who spoke no Spanish, the procedure was slightly different for each administration. For administration of the Spanish scales, children who spoke only English were moved to a separate room and given the English version of the scale. During that administration the demographics and scales were read in English. Spanish-speaking children were administered the scales in their classrooms where a researcher read the instructions for both the scale and the demographic sheet and answered questions in Spanish.

When the English version of the scales was administered, both groups of children remained together in their classrooms where the instructions and scales were read in English.

RESULTS

Mean scores for the Spanish and English versions of the Children's Hope Scale were calculated. The mean hope score of the Spanish version was 24.39 ($sd = 4.59$), and the mean score of the English version was 24.99 ($sd = 5.41$).

Internal reliabilities were also calculated for the English and Spanish versions of the Children's Hope Scale with this population (see Table 1). These estimates suggest that the English version of the scale had adequate internal consistency, while the Spanish version had less than adequate internal reliability.

Table 1 Internal Reliabilities of the Children's Hope Scale

(N=36)

English Version	Spanish Version
.756	.538

In order to look at the relationship between the English and Spanish versions of the CHS, a Pearson Product Moment Correlation was calculated ($r = .390$). This correlation was significant at the .05 level, suggesting a moderate correlation between the English and Spanish versions of the Children's Hope Scale.

DISCUSSION

These preliminary findings suggest a positive, significant relationship between the Spanish and English versions of the Children's Hope Scale (CHS), lending support for the equivalency of the Spanish version of this scale.

Due to the limited sample size of the present study, these preliminary findings should be replicated with larger sample sizes before taken as evidence for adequate validation. Further, the low internal reliability of the Spanish language version of the CHS should be acknowledged and considered when making conclusions about its usefulness as a measure. In addition, researchers should attempt to establish concurrent validity with other measures of related positive constructs in order to further validate the Spanish language version of the CHS. Norms for Spanish-speaking children should be developed from additional administrations of the Spanish version of the CHS.

A Spanish version of the Children's Hope Scale seems to be a promising and useful measure for both social scientists and educators alike. Expanding the understanding of positive psychology constructs as they relate to diverse populations may have implications for prevention and intervention and will likely improve assessment of multicultural populations.

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