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Life positions scale language equivalence, reliability and validity analysis

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Abstract

Life positions scale developed by Boholst in 2002 consists of four sub-dimensions and 24 items. The language adaptation of the scale was done by Ahmet R. Özpolat. The correlations between turkish and english forms used for language adaptation were found significant at the level of p<.05, that is .79 for the whole scale, .77 for the I am Ok sub scale. For the sub scale I am not Ok, the result is .69, .76 for the You are OK subscale, and .70 for the You are not OK subscale.During the reliability studies, the scale was applied to 370 university students at Erzurum Atatürk University. To determine the adequacy of the samples, the Kasier-Mayer-Olkin (KMO) value was observed and the result was .89. The coefficient of the internal consistency of the items was (a) .84. Principal components factor analysis was also used for the construct validity and the data were subjected to varimax axis convert.Results showed that the scale displayed similar distribution to the original scale. The confirmatory factor analysis findings showed the following results (960.94) sd (195) (χ^2/sd= 4.92) , RMSEA (.07) RMR (.08) SRMR (.07) GFI (.97) AGFI (.96) CFI (97). These findings verifies the correspondance of the original scale's structure. Therefore, it can be said that this scale can be appropriately used in the studies in Turkey to measure life positions.
Keywords: Life Positions, Transactional Analysis, Ego, Life Style

1. Introduction

Transactional Analysis (TA) Approach, developed by Eric Berne (1910-1970), has been used in psychology, communications, development, psychopathology, counseling and consultancy, and therapy for more than forty years (Novey 2002). TA, which has been used in advertising (Dalton et al. 2006), military associations (Karcıoğlu, Arun 2004), communication with patients (Booth, Mening 2005; Shrai 2006) in recent years, is a relational and integrative psychology approach based on six different elements, namely Ego States, Transactions, Contacts, Life Script, Time Structuring and Life Positions (Berne 1988; Solomon 2003).

Ego state is the main concept of Transactional Analysis and it is an important tool for understanding personality. Berne (1988) defines the ego state as a consistent pattern of feeling and thinking in relation with a behavior model. Ego states develop in accordance with natal and pre-natal subjective experiences, and all ego states together constitute personality (Akkoyun, 2001). In this sense, it can be said that ego states represent a real being living here-and-now and all of their earlier experiences.

Having a philosophy and systematic of its own and trying to understand interpersonal relationships, TA is very rich in terms of concepts. As it focuses on the role of needs in order to understand relationship systems, TA states that the need for contact is fundamental for everyone. All interactions of the individual with their environment during their everyday life activities are regarded as contact (Solomon, 2003). According to TA, from very early ages

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on the individual begins to evaluate and interpret things happening around. The individual develops opinion about themselves as a result of the contacts with the environment, and reacts to the environment according to this opinion. In this respect, the individual creates a life script which includes their self-opinions (Berne, 1992). When they grow up, people continue to behave according to these scripts in social spaces. TA claims that the individuals structure time by these life scripts which they have been developing since early ages. Each individual can structure time/life in six different ways as withdrawal, ritual, pastimes, activity, psychological games and intimacy (Akkoyun, 2001).

In TA, the main state on which individuals base their perceptions of themselves and of others is called "life position". The concept of life positions is not only limited to the opinions of the individual about themselves or others but also essentially expresses a psychological state and includes the feeling, thinking and behavior of the individual regarding themselves and others (Kayalar 2003, Hine 1995, Berne 1962, Dökmen 2004). TA states that people conduct their lives according to one of four main life positions.

1. I am OK, You are OK: Those in this life position accept the importance of people and think that the life is worth living (Akkoyun 2001). They are self-confident, reassuring, friendly, compassionate, positive, objective, open, productive and creative (Wiesner 2004). If they behave realistically, they can solve the problems about themselves or others constructively and achieve their expectations.

2. I am OK, You are not OK: This is a life position with outwards projection. Those in this life position try to undermine or deceive others as they feel themselves being undermined or deceived (Akkoyun 2001). They show such characteristics as constantly preaching, criticizing others, being intolerant to others' mistakes, or being oppressive (Wiesner 2004). They hold others responsible to what happen to themselves. The feeling "Your life does not have much worth to me" is dominant (Corey, 2005).

3. I am not OK, You are OK: This is a life position with inwards projection. These people feel weak when they compare themselves with others (Alisinaoğlu 1995). They show such characteristics as distancing from society, or having depression. In general the feeling "My life does not have much worth" is dominant (Altıntaş and Gültekin 2003).

4. I am not OK, You are not OK: Those who occupy this life position, which is regarded as unhealthy, have such characteristics as irresponsibility, rebelliousness, neglect, over-eating, alcohol abuse, being a stander-by, carelessness, sadness, paranoia, etc. (Wiesner 2004).

Everyone who has reached adulthood shapes their lives according to one of these positions. In this sense life position is the fundamental understanding about the self and the others used by someone to justify their behavior. Those who are in the period between five and seven of age live these four life positions emotionally. As the adult ego develops, the position "I am OK, You are OK" can be chosen consciously (Jacobs 1997). This study aims to examine the linguistic equivalence, validity and reliability of the 20-item 5-point Likert type Life Positions Scale, which was developed by Boholst (2002) and is theoretically based on the above-mentioned life positions.

2. Method

2.1. Study Group

This research has been conducted on 370 undergraduate students which study on the fields of linguistics and social sciences in Faculty of Education at Atatürk University. 178 of those who participated in the research are females whereas 192 of them are males; most (94%) of the sample group is between the ages of 19 and 23, and the average of age is 21 years old.

2.2. Data Gathering Tool

Life Positions Scale is a 20-item 5-point Likert type scale developed by Boholst (2002) with inspiration from Transactional Analysis approach. The scale aims to define the life positions of the individual based on the main concepts of TA. The sum total of points gained from the scale which consists of four sub-dimensions shows the life position adopted by the individual.

2.3. Procedure

The English form of Life Positions Scale has been translated to Turkish by the researchers with the help of two instructors from the department of English. In order to evaluate the translation and to develop the tryout form of the scales, the methods of "Back-Translation" and "One-Way Translation" were used. The translated scale items and their English equivalents were assessed by two proficient assistant professors working at the department of Guidance and Psychological Counseling. Then the Turkish form was again translated to English by two instructors from the department of English Education. The tryout form was given to 53 students from Faculty of Education at Atatürk University and they were asked to state whether the items were comprehensible and to write alternative items for incomprehensible ones. The final Turkish form was translated back to English again, and Boholst, the owner of the scale, was asked to assess the compatibility of this culturally-adapted scale with his own. Upon Boholst's positive feedback to the new form of the scale, first the English then the Turkish form of the scale were applied with one-week interval to 61 students from the faculty of English Education in order to determine the linguistic equivalence of the scale. The correlation between these two applications (.79 $p<.05$) has been taken as the criteria of linguistic equivalence.

For the item distinctiveness of the Life Positions Scale, item test correlations and 27% extreme group comparisons have been made. The calculation of item test correlation has been determined according to the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient; while for the 27% extreme group comparison the *t* test has been used. For the reliability of the scale, internal consistency and test-retest reliability studies have been conducted with 140 students from various departments of Faculty of Education at Atatürk University. The Turkish form was applied to these students twice with a 15-day interval, and the correlation between the data gathered from two applications (.81 $p<.05$) has been taken as the test-retest reliability coefficient.

For the validity studies of the scale, construct and concurrent validity have been examined. For the construct validity, exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses have been made. The scale to determine the concurrent validity has been compared with the data from the original developed by Boholst. The variance ratios and eigenvalues the data from the original scale explores have been covered together with those the Turkish scale explores. The result has been taken as concurrent validity. For the estimation of the reliability and validity of the inventory, the softwares SPSS 15.0 and Lisrel 8.51 have been used.

2.3.1. Linguistic Equivalence

In order to determine the linguistic equivalence of the inventory the correlations between the English and Turkish form points have been calculated. At the level of $p<.05$, the correlations seem to have .79 significance for the whole scale, .77 for I am OK subscale, .69 for I am not OK subscale, .76 for You are OK subscale and .70 for You are not OK subscale.

2.3.2. Reliability

For the whole of the 20-item Life Positions Scale inventory (total internal consistency reliability coefficient) cronbach alfa is .84, for I am OK subscale .97, for I am not OK subscale .96, for You are OK subscale .94, for You are not OK subscale .94. The test-retest reliability coefficients of the scale are .81 for the whole scale, .75 for I am OK subscale, .73 for I am not OK subscale, .80 for You are OK subscale, and .72 for You are not OK subscale.

2.3.3. Construct Validity

In order to examine the construct validity of the Life Positions Scale, exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses have been made. First, Barlett Sphericity Tests have been done to ensure sample suitability. For the suitability of the data to factor analysis, KMO should be above .60 and Barlett Sphericity Test should result meaningful (Büyüköztürk 2004). In this study the KMO sample suitability coefficient is .89, while X^2 value of Barlett Sphericity Test has been found to be 9227,65 ($p<.001$). These results show that the items given to scale answers can be factored.

As the original of the Life Positions Scale consists of four sub-dimensions, the varimax axis convert is limited with four factors by principal components factor analysis. After this process, a four-factor structure that explain 86%

of the total variance has been derived, and the item distributions in the original form have been observed to be compatible with those in the adapted form. The factor results are given along with the factor loads in Table 1.

Table. 1 Life Positions Scale Exploratory Factor Analysis Results

Sub-scale	Item no	Factor Load	Factor Load	Factor Load	Factor Load	Factor Load
Ben OK	1	.945				
	2	.938				
	9	.937				
	10	.934				
	17	.931				
Ben OK(-)	5		.925			
	6		.916			
	13		.914			
	14		.914			
	19		.853			
Sen OK	3			.900		
	4			.895		
	11			.889		
	12			.852		
	18			.841		
Sen OK (-)	7				.903	
	8				.901	
	15				.891	
	16				.877	
	20				.856	

The items gathered under the first factor “I am OK subscale” include the Life Position in which the individual is more at peace with themselves. The factor loads of five items in this subscale congregate between .93 and .94, and this factor explains 34.42% of total variance. As an example of items belonging to this factor *“I Like Myself”* can be reviewed. The high score gained from 5-item subscale under I am not OK factor shows that the individual is more depressive and pessimistic in life position. This factor with a varying factor load between .85 and .92 explains 26.75% of total variance. *“I wish I had not been born in this world”* can be shown as an example of items belonging to this factor. Those who adopt the life position under the third factor You are OK are people who are sensitive to others in life. This factor with a varying factor load between .84 and .90 explains 13.37% of total variance and consists of 5 items. As an example of items belonging to this factor *“I am very enthusiastic about meeting other people”* can be shown. The scores gained from the fourth factor You are not OK subscale reflect the individual’s perception of other people. These individuals are distrustful and negative towards other people in their Life Positions. This factor with a varying factor load between .85 and .90 explains 12.24% of total variance and again consists of 5 items. As an example of items belonging to this factor “*Other people make me angry”* can be put forward. In the construct validity study, inter-subscale correlations have been examined along with the factor structure. The correlation coefficients between factors are given in Table 2.

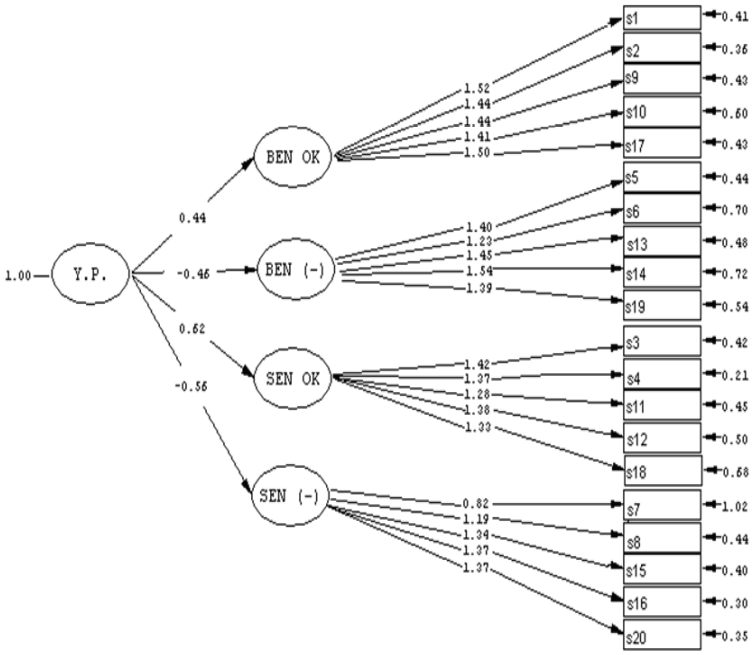
Table 2 Life Positions Scale Inter-Factors Correlation Coefficients

	Ben OK	Ben OK(-)	Sen OK	Sen OK(-)	Total L.P.
Ben OK	-				
Ben OK (-)	-.33(**)	-			
Sen OK	.38(**)	-.27(**)	-		
Sen OK (-)	-.29(**)	.39(**)	-.31(**)	-	
Total L.P.	.64(**)	.58(**)	.44(**)	.49(**)	-

(**)p<.01

The data gained to verify this factor structure of Life Positions Scale has been re-analyzed in Lisrel 8.51 software. In the confirmatory factor analysis, certain concurrent statistics regarding the confirmation of the scale and Chi-Squared test have frequently been used; for confirmation, the ratio of Chi-Squared to the degrees of freedom shows perfect concurrence if it is two or below, acceptable concurrence if it is between two and five. Other statistics are GFI (Goodness of fit index), AGFI (Adjusted Goodness of fit index), CFI (Comparative fit index), RMSEA (Root mean square error of approximation), RMR (Root mean square residual) and SRMR (Standardized root mean square residual). It is a sign of acceptable concurrence when GFI, AGFI and CFI are bigger than .90. If they are bigger than .95, it reflects a good concurrence. RMSEA, RMR, SRMR values show good concurrence when below .05, and acceptable concurrence below .08 (Şimşek 2007).

Tablo 3 Life Positions Scale confirmatory factor analysis



As a result of confirmatory factor analysis of Life Positions scale, χ^2 has been found to be (960.94) sd (195) (χ^2/sd= 4.92), and RMSEA (.07) RMR (.08) SRMR (.07) GFI (.97) AGFI (.96) CFI (97) have been discovered. As a result of DFA and according to the concurrent statistics the scale has produced, the factor structure of the scale has been confirmed and found to have an acceptable concurrent statistic. The path diagram resulting from the analysis is given in Table 3.

3.2.4. Concurrent Validity

Life Positions scale concurrent validity study has been examined along with the original scale values developed by Boholst. A structure in which the scale items under I am OK and You are OK headings in the original scale explain 37.7% of total variance, with an eigenvalue of 4,79% for I OK sub-dimension and 3,65% for You OK sub-dimension, has emerged. The items related to "I OK (-)" and "You OK (-)" are accepted as reverse items in this study and moved under "I OK" and "You OK" headings with reverse scores. The study was conducted with 95 participants. However the suggestion of the scale writer and of the theoretical ground is that the scale items be gathered under four headings [I OK, I OK(-), You OK, You OK(-)]. Thus, taking into consideration the advice of the scale writer during the adaptation to Turkish, the scale and the items have been handled in four sub-dimensions and a 4-factor structure which explains 86% of total variance has been derived. This structure has been verified by confirmatory factor analysis. The Turkish adaptation of the scale has produced better data compared to the original of the scale and this situation has been attributed to the size of the sample to which the scale has been applied.

3.2.5. Item Analysis

Item total test correlation explains the relationship between the scores gained from test items and the total score of the test. According to this, item total test correlation is expected to be positive and high (Baykul 2000). In the interpretation of the item test correlations, the items which are .30 and higher are accepted to discriminate the individuals well with respect to the characteristic that has been calculated (Büyüköztürk 2004).

The corrected item-total score correlations of the Life Positions scale range between .34 and .64; t (sd=327) values regarding the item score differences of the 27% extreme groups, determined according to the total scores, range between 4.55 (p<.05) and 16.01 (p<.05). The findings are shown in Table 4.

Table. 4 Life Positions Scale Corrected Item Test Correlations and t values regarding the 27% Extreme Group Differences

Faktör	Md No	r_{jx}	T	Faktör	Md No	r_{jx}	T
I OK.	1	64(**)	14.04	YOU OK.	3	50(**)	10.13
	2	56(**)	11.13		4	37(**)	5.65
	9	62(**)	13.43		11	34(**)	4.55
	10	63(**)	13.45		12	52(**)	11.34
	17	60(**)	12.11		18	41(**)	9.55
I OK.(-)	5	49(**)	10.09	YOU OK.(-)	7	61(**)	16.01
	6	46(**)	9.78		8	34(**)	6.75
	13	54(**)	11.14		15	37(**)	7.87
	14	64(**)	16.55		16	44(**)	9.46
	19	55(**)	12.45		20	45(**)	10.54

(**)p<.01

3.2.6. Evaluation of the Inventory Scores

The item number of the Turkish form of Life Positions scale is 20. The scale prepared as 5-point Likert type has 5 items in each of the subscales. The highest possible score in each subscale is 25 whereas the lowest is 5. According to the scores gained from each subscale the Life Position of the individual is determined. The application duration of the scale is approximately 15-20 minutes. It can be applied individually or by groups.

4. Discussion

The aim of this study is to adapt the Life Positions Scale developed by Boholst (2002) to Turkish and to conduct the validity and reliability studies of this inventory. As the result of the linguistic equivalence study, the correlation coefficient between the original and adapted forms scores of the scale has been found to be .79, and this situation has been interpreted as proof to the fact that the Turkish translation of the items are similar to the English originals and that the Turkish form is equivalent to the English form. The test-retest reliability coefficient of the Turkish form of the scale is .81. The construct and concurrent validity of the Turkish form has first been subjected to exploratory factor analysis, and the scale has been found to have 4 factors as in the original form while the items in the sub factors have been found to correspond to the items in the original scale. In the light of these data, the inventory has been subjected to confirmatory factor analysis. DFA has shown that χ^2 is 960.94) sd (195) (χ^2/sd= 4.92), and the results RMSEA (.07) RMR (.08) SRMR (.07) GFI (.97) AGFI (.96) CFI (97) have been gained. These findings, too, confirm that the structure of the scale corresponds to the original.

As the result of the item analysis, it is accepted that the items which show .30 and above in the interpretation of item test correlation discriminate the individuals well with respect to the characteristic that has been calculated. The corrected item-total score correlations of the Life Positions Scale range between .34 and .64, and with consideration of the t test results regarding the item score differences of the 27% extreme groups the discrimination ability of the items has been found sufficient.

Life Positions scale is a scale prepared with inspiration from the concepts of Transactional Analysis. In this sense, the scale tries to determine the individual's life position based on the main concepts of Transactional Analysis. The sum total of the scores gained from the subscales shows the life position the individual has adopted. In addition, the researcher can deduce the fallacies of the individual regarding the adopted life position from the scores of the answers given to the scale items.

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