



THE VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF TURKISH VERSION OF THE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT SCALE

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine validity and reliability of the Turkish version of the Civic Engagement Scale (Doolittle & Faul, 2013). The sample of this study consisted of 275 undergraduate students. The results of confirmatory factor analysis indicated that the 14 items and two-dimensional civic engagement model (Attitude and Behavior) was well fit ($\chi^2= 167.35$, $df= 71$, $RMSEA= .072$, $GFI= .92$, $CFI= .93$, $IFI= .93$, and $SRMR= .060$). The internal consistency reliability coefficients of the scale were .83 for attitude subscale and .85 for behavior subscale. The corrected item-total correlations ranged from .47 to .73. Overall findings demonstrated that this scale had high validity and reliability scores.

Key Words: Civic engagement, validity, reliability, confirmatory factor analysis.

INTRODUCTION

Civic engagement, volunteer participation to the community life in order to improve conditions for the other people or to shape the community's future (Adler & Goggin, 2005), is important for the individuals' psychological and psycho-social life. Some researchers have claimed that volunteerism is involved with physical and mental health outcomes and successful aging (Grimm, Spring, & Dietz, 2007; Hinterlong & Williamson, 2007). Civic engagement plays also an important role for the adolescent identity formation process (Erikson, 1985). It has been found to linked with a better psycho-social adjustment both in adolescence and adulthood (Schmidt, Shumow, & Kackar, 2007; Vieno, Nation, Perkins, & Santinello, 2007).

In the recent two decades researchers have interested to the concept of civic engagement and several definitions have been put forward by different authors and so there is a lack of consensus about this concept (Gibson, 2000). For example while Richard and Judy (2005) defined civic engagement as collective actions of individuals and affect the civil society by this way, Putnam (1996) described civic engagement as "people's connections with the life of their communities, not only with politics" (Putnam, 1996, p. 34). In addition researchers have considered different aspects of civic engagement such as participation voluntary activities in a community or action taken collectively for improving society. According to Diller (2001), "Civic engagement as an individual's duty to embrace the responsibilities of citizenship with the obligation to actively participate, alone or in concert with others, in volunteer service activities that strengthen the local community" (p. 21). On

the other hand Van Benschoten (2001) has been described civic engagement as the means by which an individual, through collective action, influences the larger civil society. The former definition has emphasized the volunteerism dimension of the civic engagement while the latter has taken into consideration the action taken collectively aspect of the concept.

There are a plenty of studies conducted on civic engagement which generally demonstrated its positive associations with social adaptive variables. In these studies it was found that civic engagement positively related to neighborhood social connectedness (Lenzi, Vieno, Pastore, & Santinello, 2013), higher interest in the news media (Erentaite, Zukauskienė, Beyers, & Valickienė) and stronger connection in all family (Duke, Skay, Pettingell, & Borowsky, 2009). There were also demographic differences in terms of civic engagement. Rozario's (2007) study proved that women have higher rates of volunteer participation than men. It was also found that married people have higher levels of civic engagement than non-married ones (Zedlewski & Schaner, 2005). Lastly both higher education and income are positively associated with volunteer and civic activities (Choi, 2003; Tang, 2006).

Briefly, since civic engagement influences deeply individuals' social, psychological and physical life, it is very important to measure this. Therefore the purpose of this study is to adapt into Turkish and to examine the validity and reliability of the Civic Engagement Scale (Doolittle & Faul, 2013).

METHOD

Participant

Participants were 275 undergraduate students (162 (59 %) were female, 113 (41%) were male) who were enrolled in Sakarya University, in Turkey.

Measures

Civic Engagement Scale. The Civic Engagement Scale (Doolittle & Faul, 2013) is a self-report questionnaire with 14 items rated on a 7-point scale. The scale has two sub-dimensions: Attitude (8 items) and behavior (6 items). High scores indicate higher levels of civic engagement. The Cronbach alpha internal consistency reliability coefficients of the scale were .91 for attitude subscale and .85 for behavior subscale.

Translation and adaptation process

Primarily the scale was translated into Turkish by three academicians who know English well. After that the Turkish form was back-translated into English and examined the consistency between the Turkish and English forms. Than Turkish form has been reviewed by two academicians from educational sciences department. Finally they discussed the Turkish form and along with some corrections this scale was prepared for validity and reliability analyses.

Procedure

Permission for participation of students was obtained from related chief departments and students voluntarily participated in research. Completion of the scales was anonymous and there was a guarantee of confidentiality. The scales were administered to the students in groups in the classrooms. Prior to administration of scales, all participants were told about purposes of the study. In this study confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was executed to confirm the original scale's structure in Turkish culture and Cronbach' Alpha reliability coefficient was calculated to examine the reliability. Data were analyzed using LISREL 8.54 and SPSS 15 package programs.

RESULTS

Construct Validity

Confirmatory factor analysis demonstrated that the two-dimensional Civic Engagement model was well fit ($\chi^2=167.35$, $df=71$, $RMSEA=.072$, $GFI=.92$, $CFI=.93$, $IFI=.93$, and $SRMR=.060$). Factor loads of items belonging Turkish version of Civic Engagement Scale are presented in Figure 1.

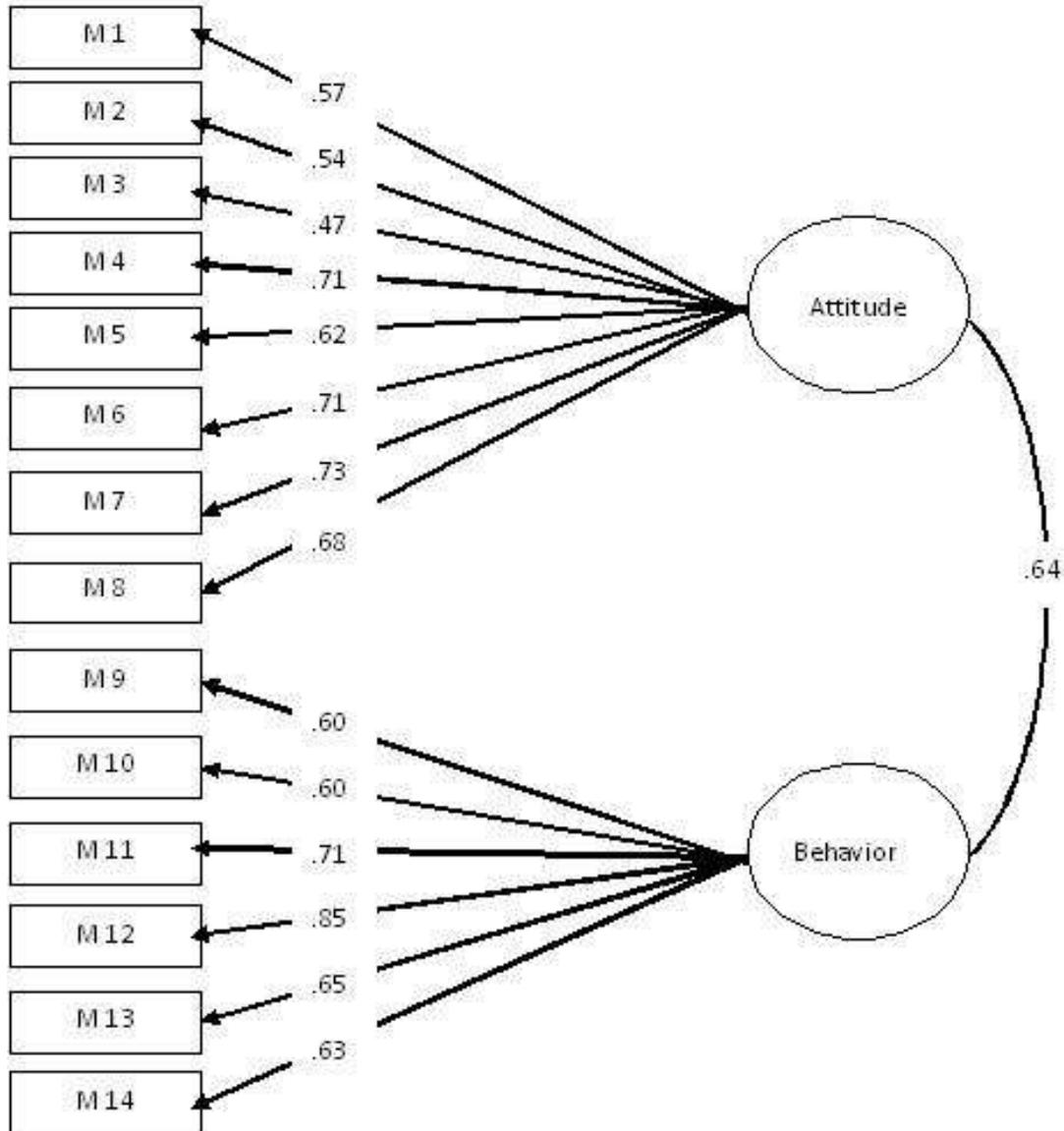


Figure 1: Factor Loadings for the Turkish version of the Civic Engagement Scale

Item Analysis and Reliability

The Cronbach alpha internal consistency reliability coefficients of the Turkish form were .83 for attitude subscale and .85 for behavior subscale. The corrected item-total correlations ranged from .47 to .73.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to translate Civic Engagement Scale into Turkish and to examine its psychometric properties. Overall findings demonstrated that this scale had acceptable validity and reliability scores. Further studies that will examine the convergent validity of the Civic Engagement Scale are important for its measurement force. Also the temporal stability of the Civic Engagement Scale may be calculated using test re-test method.



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