

Localizing the Ambivalent Ageism Scale for Japan

Yuto Sawa, Tokyo Institute of Technology, Japan
Katie Seaborn, Tokyo Institute of Technology, Japan

The Asian Conference on Aging and Gerontology 2022
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

Ageism is a complex prejudice involving positive (e.g., perfect grandparent) and negative (e.g., severely impaired) stereotypes of older adults. Several scales have been developed to measure various forms of ageism. However, most have been written in English and created for Western contexts. An exception is the Fraboni Scale (FSA), which was developed in 1970 and translated into Japanese in 2004, and since then it has been used in many studies of ageism. Still, the FSA is based on hostile expressions of ageism and may otherwise be outdated. A newer scale called the Ambivalent Ageism Scale (AAS) was developed in 2017. It incorporates both benevolent and hostile facets of ageism. However, no Japanese translation of the AAS exists yet. To this end, we translated the AAS with two Japanese native speakers and an English native speaker, all of whom were competent in the other language. We then ran an online study with Japanese adults to evaluate the resulting AAS-JP in an ecologically valid questionnaire. We examined the factor structure and internal consistency of the AAS-JP to ensure that it matched the original English version of the AAS. We report on our results and discuss challenges related to localizing research instruments developed in different languages and cultural contexts.

Keywords: Ageism, Cognitive Biases, Older Adults, Online Survey, Questionnaire Localization, Translation, Validation of Questionnaire

iafor

The International Academic Forum
www.iafor.org

Introduction

Ageism is a type of negative attitude based on limited views of and/or prejudice towards certain age groups. In this research, we focused on older adults. Ageism can appear to be positive, such as assumptions that older adults want or need to be helped, or negative, such as assumptions that older adults are essentially impaired. In today's aging society, it is important to quantitatively measure these attitudes in research related to older adults. A well-known attitudinal instrument is the Fraboni Scale of Ageism (FSA; Fraboni, Salstone, & Hughes, 1990). Since its development in 1970, the FSA has been used in many ageism studies. It was translated and validated in Japan in 2004 and has subsequently been widely used in ageism research in Japan (Yoshida et al., 2017). However, this scale mainly reflects the most negative aspects of ageism attitudes. In 2017, Lindsey et al. developed the Ambivalent Ageism Scale or AAS. This scale captures both benevolent and hostile aspects of ageist attitudes, such as patronizing attitudes as a form of benevolent ageism. But there is yet no translated version that has been validated in Japan. Therefore, we translated the original AAS into Japanese and took the first step towards its validation.

Method

We translated and conducted a pilot validation test of the AAS in Japanese using an online survey. We describe our steps below.

Translation

We first translated the AAS items in the following steps. First, we formed a translation team consisting of two native Japanese speakers who understand English and one native English speaker who understands some Japanese. One of the Japanese translators understood the concept of ageism, while the other was not particularly familiar with it. Next, we forward-translated the original AAS items written in English into Japanese. This was done by the Japanese translator who understood the concept of ageism and the English speaker. Next, the translated Japanese items were back-translated into English to ensure that the meaning of the items was correct. This was done by the Japanese translator who was not familiar with the concept of ageism and the English speaker. Finally, we conducted a pilot test in the lab with Japanese speakers ($n=5$) to evaluate whether the meanings were understandable and clear. After these steps, we deemed the translated version of the AAS complete and ready for larger-scale testing. As with the original, the translated version of the AAS—which we call the AAS-JP—has 13 items in total, including 9 benevolent items and 4 hostile items. All items are rated on 7-point Likert scales and there are no reversed items.

Data Collection and Sample

An online survey including the AAS-JP was delivered through the SurveyMonkey platform to Japanese speakers located in Japan. A total of 47 valid responses were collected, representing 19 women and 27 men (no other identities), with ages ranging from 18 to 74.

Statistical Analysis

Our evaluation focused on reliability and validity. For reliability, we calculated the Cronbach's alpha of each subscale to test internal consistency. This is a value between 0 and 1, where a value closer to 1 indicates a higher degree of correlation between items in that

subscale. In general, an alpha value above 0.7 supports that the scale is significantly reliable (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). For validity, we calculated the correlation coefficient with the FSA, based on the procedure used in the original AAS research. As with in the original AAS research, we also hypothesized that the FSA would be more strongly correlated with the hostile subscale than with the benevolent subscale of the AAS because the FSA reflects hostile concepts such as dislike, avoidance, and slander.

Results

We found that both subscales had a high degree of reliability. We obtained alpha values equal to 0.83 for the benevolent subscale and 0.77 for the hostile subscale. As for validity, Table 1 shows that all scales were strongly correlated, especially the FSA and the AAS hostile subscale. Thus, we can accept the hypothesis that the FSA and the AAS-JP are highly related scales, as with the FSA and the original AAS. In effect, the AAS-JP appears to capture the same attitudinal phenomena as the original AAS.

| Scales | <i>r</i> | <i>p</i> |
|---|----------|----------|
| AAS-JP hostile and benevolent subscales | .477 | < .001 |
| FSA and the AAS-JP hostile subscale | .704 | < .001 |
| FSA and the AAS-JP benevolent subscale | .516 | < .001 |

Table 1: Correlations between the FSA and the AAS-JP

Conclusion

Through translation of the original AAS scale into Japanese and validation of the translated version of the AAS with the FSA, we have provided initial evidence for the validity of the Japanese version of the AAS in Japan. Both the benevolent and hostile subscales showed high reliability, and construct validity was also supported as the hostile subscale correlated strongly with the FSA. Future work will validate these results with larger samples.

Acknowledgements

This work was supported by a Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) Grant-in-Aid for Early-Career Scientists (KAKENHI Wakate) #21K18005. We also thank Mutsumi Kashiwabara for translation assistance.

References

- Cary, L. A., Chasteen, A. L., & Remedios, J. (2017). The ambivalent ageism scale: Developing and validating a scale to measure benevolent and hostile ageism. *The Gerontologist*, *57*(2), e27-e36.
- Fraboni, M., Saltstone, R., & Hughes, S. (1990). The Fraboni Scale of Ageism (FSA): An attempt at a more precise measure of ageism. *Canadian Journal on Aging/La revue canadienne du vieillissement*, *9*(1), 56-66.
- Tsang, S., Royse, C. F., & Terkawi, A. S. (2017). Guidelines for developing, translating, and validating a questionnaire in perioperative and pain medicine. *Saudi journal of anaesthesia*, *11*(Suppl 1), S80–S89.
- Yoshida, K., Tsuji, M., Harada, F., Oyama, Y., Takeshima, J., & Miyahara, H. (2017). Research on ageism in nursing students. *Health Science Research*, *30*, 39-46.
- Tavakol, M., & Dennick, R. (2011). Making sense of Cronbach's alpha. *International journal of medical education*, *2*, 53–55.

Contact email: sawa.y.ac@m.titech.ac.jp