

RELIABILITY AND VALIDATION OF THE MALAY VERSION OF THE GENDER EQUITABLE MEN SCALE QUESTIONNAIRE

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Abstract

Gender role beliefs refer to individuals' belief that men and women should shoulder their role-related behaviour. Evidence showed that patriarchal gender roles are directly associated with violence perpetration. Gender roles can be measured with the GEMS questionnaire, which was developed in English. Thus, it needs to be adapted to the local language to be used in a family violence study among married men in Sarawak, Malaysia. This study aims to translate and validate the original English version of the GEMS into the Malay language. The English version was translated forward and backward into Malay, followed by content validation by six public health and language experts. The scale was further tested for face validity among 30 people from the general population, followed by a cross-sectional study involving 200 male respondents. The item-level content validity index (I-CVI) ranges from 0.83 to 1. Exploratory factor analysis resulted in three components within the scale, and confirmatory factor analysis established convergent and discriminant validity. The overall Cronbach's alpha ranged from 0.778 to 0.921. In conclusion, the Malay version of the GEMS is a valid and reliable tool for measuring gender equity among men in Sibu, Sarawak.

Keywords: Gender Equitable Men Scale, Content Validation, Face Validity, Exploratory Factor Analysis, Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Introduction

Gender role belief refers to the appropriate behaviour and work-life balance within a particular society. Individuals believe that men and women should shoulder their role-related behaviour. The concept of gender roles includes traditional or patriarchal versus modern or egalitarian (1, 2). Patriarchal gender roles prioritise men, portraying men as the head of households, men as having the final say in decision-making, and women as being submissive. From the feminist theory perspective, men with patriarchal gender roles are highly likely to perpetrate violence in the family (1, 3). The patriarchal concept reinforces the dominant masculinities, emphasising men's power and control over women. On the contrary, egalitarian gender roles divide men and women equally and endorse more flexibility in dividing family roles (2).

Empirical evidence shows that patriarchal gender roles are directly associated with intimate partner violence perpetration. Gender roles can also mediate violence through exposure to family violence during childhood (4). Moreover, gender-related attitudes such as rigid

gender roles, beliefs, and attitudes toward inequality are also associated with violence against women (5). Therefore, the United Nations (UN) Women (6) emphasises gender equality to prevent violence against women. Understanding the male attitude is essential to producing sound interventions to transform rigid gender norms and promote gender equality.

Regarding gender role measurements, Reyes et al. (1) and Shen et al. (2) employed the Attitudes Towards Women Scale (ATWS). It consists of 11 statements of normative beliefs about the roles of men and women in society, measured through a four-point Likert scale. A higher score indicates patriarchal gender role beliefs. On the other hand, Das et al. (7) used the Gender Equitable Men Scale (GEMS), which consists of 31 statements covering gender norms, gender attitudes, and gender-based violence. In the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) by the United Nations, the GEMS has been adapted in six countries. The number of items retained by each country ranges from 15 to 21. The responses were measured through a three-point Likert scale; strongly agree, somewhat agree, and do not agree (8).