**OPEN PEER REVIEW**

## Open Peer Review (OPR)

As a new feature for progressing towards transparency, we decided to open a new window for all of our editors as well as authors titled "**Open Peer Review**". We hope by this new facility, our reviewers will be more motivated and authors will be more satisfied with the review process. We believe that publishing our peer review reports could make a transparent and clear environment for all our efforts within a journal, but not all reviewers tend to publish their comments.

## What is "Open Peer Review" process?

An "Open Peer Review" process is making the details of all review process (including reviewers, associate editors, and EICs comments) as "Public" as it is agreed by EIC, Authors, and reviewers.

## Advantages of "Open Peer Review" process

- More transparency, constructiveness and tactful comments of the peer review process: leads to an increase in the quality of reviews
- More motivations for all involved roles in the review process
- Authors' satisfactions from the review process: Increases honesty between authors and reviewers
- Education of both authors and new students
- Prevents reviewers from following their individual agendas and leading to the detection of reviewers' conflicts of interests

You can find out more at:
https://brieflands.com/briefland/knowledgebase/category/tree.html#opr.html

Middle East Journal of Rehabilitation and Health Studies

Published in: Middle East Journal of Rehabilitation and Health Studies: In Press(In Press) ; e152351

# Peer Review Report for "Psychometric Properties and Cultural Adaptation of the Persian Version of the Family Functioning Questionnaire in Rehabilitation (FFQR) in Parents of Children with Disabilities"

**Author(s):** Samaneh Karamali Esmaili, Mehdi Alizadeh Zarei, Shafagh Saei, Fatemah Bagherzadeh

**Review Timeline:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Submit Date: | 1 Aug 2024 |
| Revised Date: | 4 Nov 2024 |
| Accepted Date: | 2 Nov 2024 |

**Revision (0)**

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

**REFEREE** : Reviewer

22 Sep 2024

Dear Associate Editor
Thank you for the opportunity to review the manuscript. The manuscript needs major revision
In general, an interesting and important topic. The comments to the authors are given below:

You should upload the Questionnaire in Farsi.

Keywords:

• Using MeSH terms. Like Psychometric Properties

Abstract

• The exactly type of study should be written in the method section (cross-sectional study !)

Introduction

• Please explained the importance of the research.

• What is the innovation of the study?

• It should be better if you use systematic reviews in introduction

• The Introduction should answer the question 'Why:' Why did you choose that topic for your research; why it is important; why did you adopt a particular method or approach; and so on. You should clearly state either your hypothesis or research question.

• You should write a Summary of Literature Review in the introduction section

method:

Method

• The method is weak and should explain what you did. Explain your methodological approach, authors should describe their study design. Please write when the study was done.

• Insufficient methodological details: The methods section lacks crucial details on various aspects of the study, such as data collection processes, and specific analytical approaches employed.

• Detail the random sampling technique.

• Place the consent signature in the ethics segment, not within the eligibility requirements, and outline the ethical code.

• Please supply the psychometrics (standardization population, reliability, and validity) and the types and levels of scores derived from each measure for use in analyses

• In the text, mention the signing of the informed consent form

• Inclusion and exclusion criteria should be written carefully. Participants were examined for neurological or orthopedic diseases

• The authors should identify who was responsible for completing the questionnaire and provide information regarding their qualifications

discussion

• Write the minimum and maximum age of the participants

• Please write in-depth interpretation of the specific results obtained, such as the factor analysis findings and the implications of the identified dimensions Discussion

• Add the discussion section followed by the study limitations section, and then the results section.

• The discussion is poor and can't support the results. Authors should explain the results, references to previous research, interpretations and implications or recommendations

• The discussion would be improved with increased organization and perhaps subheadings.
• Address potential biases and study limitations.

**REFEREE** : Reviewer

22 Sep 2024

Dear Editor,
Thanks for inviting me to review the manuscript entitled "Psychometric Properties and Cultural Adaptation of the Persian Version of the Family Functioning Questionnaire in Rehabilitation (FFQR) in Parents of Children with Disabilities ", my comments are as follows:
-Abstract:
The objectives section could be strengthened by specifying the exact psychometric properties that were evaluated (e.g., "This study aimed to assess the reliability, validity, and cultural adaptation of the Persian version of the FFQR in Iranian parents of children with special needs").
- Introduction:

The introduction provides a comprehensive and well-structured overview of the importance of family functioning in the context of children with disabilities
However, the first paragraph could be streamlined by removing some of the more general information and focusing more on the specific challenges faced by families of children with disabilities.
some sentences in the introduction could be shortened for improved clarity and readability (eg: "Children with disabilities require extensive medical, educational, and rehabilitative interventions, profoundly impacting their quality of life ."
that could be split into two sentences:"Children with disabilities require extensive medical, educational, and rehabilitative interventions. These interventions profoundly impact their quality of life .") this form of writing can also be seen in lines 73, 78 and 80.
In line 77 "atypical growth" could be rephrased as "developmental disabilities
-Methods:
The numbering of the steps is wrong, so that the numbers have gone from 2.1 to 3.2 and so on
In the inclusion/exclusion criteria of the study, how and by whom were the diagnoses made?

Translation: What expertise did the translators possess? Who were the research team that reviewed the translation, and what expertise did they have?
Results:
It seems that this section has been written thoroughly. However, it would be better to have it checked by another expert reviewer.

Discussion:
Given the limited number of articles related to the study's title that have been cited, it is suggested that the discussion section be revised again.

**REFEREE** : Associate Editor

23 Sep 2024

Dear EIC
Based on the reviewers' comments, the manuscript cannot be published in its current condition and needs major revisions.

**Fatemeh Ehsani** : EIC

24 Sep 2024

Dear Authors
According to the reviewers and associate editor’s comments, your article needs to be revised majorly. When revising your manuscript, please consider all issues mentioned in the reviewers' comments carefully: please outline every change made in response to their comments and submit the required files up two months.

**OPEN PEER REVIEW**

**Revision (1)**

## Reply to Reviewers

Ideally, the reviewing process can significantly improve the submitted manuscripts by allowing the authors to take into account the advice of reviewers. Author(s) must reply to all reviewers' comments in a separate Word file, point by point. A "**Reply to Reviewers**" document is submitted along with revised manuscript during submission of revised files, summarizing the changes that the authors made in response to the reviewers' comments. The responses to reviewers' comments specifies how the authors addressed each comment the reviewers made.

You can read the authors' responses to the reviewers' comments in the next page.

Thank you for your insightful feedback. Based on your suggestions, we have revised the manuscript to include the following detailed information:

**Reviewer 1 (identified by yellow highlights in the manuscript):**

- **Comment:** You should upload the Questionnaire in Farsi.
- **Reply:** The Persian version of the questionnaire had been uploaded as Supplementary file 1. We revised its name as “Appendix” in this version. Maybe it was not visible for dear reviewers.

- **Keywords**
- **Comment:** Using MeSH terms. Like Psychometric Properties
- **Reply:** The keywords were modified based on the MeSH heading terms.

- **Abstract**
- **Comment:** The exactly type of study should be written in the method section (cross-sectional study !).
- **Reply:** Thank you for your feedback regarding the study design. It was edited.

- **Introduction**
- **Comment:** Please explained the importance of the research.
- **Reply:** In response, we have revised the introduction to include a more concise statement at the goal, emphasizing the significance of the study. This addition highlights how our research contributes to the understanding of family functioning in rehabilitation contexts and the need for a culturally relevant assessment tool.
- **Comment:** What is the innovation of the study?
- **Reply:** Thank you for your valuable feedback. In response, we have added a section to the introduction that clearly articulates the unique contributions of our research. We emphasize the cultural adaptation and validation of the FFQR for Persian-speaking

populations, addressing a significant gap in existing literature and enhancing rehabilitation practices in this context.

- **Comment:** It should be better if you use systematic reviews in introduction.
- **Reply:** We have revised the text to include reference number 6, which cites a recent systematic review that underscores the challenges encountered by families of children with disabilities and emphasizes the critical role of family functioning within rehabilitation contexts.
- **Comment:** The Introduction should answer the question 'Why:' Why did you choose that topic for your research; why it is important; why did you adopt a particular method or approach; and so on. You should clearly state either your hypothesis or research question.

**Reply:** Thank you for your insightful feedback regarding the need to clarify the rationale behind our research. In response, we have revised the introduction to explicitly address the following "why" questions:

1. **Why did we choose this topic?** We emphasized the significance of understanding family dynamics and their influence on the rehabilitation process for children with disabilities.
2. **Why is it important?** We highlighted the impact of family functioning on overall rehabilitation outcomes and the quality of life for families.
3. **Why did we adopt this particular method?** We explained the necessity for a standardized tool and the decision to adapt the Family Functioning in Rehabilitation Questionnaire (FFQR) for the Persian-speaking population.
4. **What is our research question/hypothesis?** We clearly stated our central research hypothesis guiding our investigation.

- **Comment:** You should write a Summary of Literature Review in the introduction section.
- **Reply:** We have added a new paragraph that emphasizes the critical role of family functioning in the rehabilitation of children with disabilities. This paragraph highlights key findings from systematic reviews, the importance of active family engagement, and the gaps in existing assessment tools that lack specificity for rehabilitation contexts. We believe this addition strengthens the introduction by

providing a comprehensive overview of the relevant literature and establishing the context for our research. Thank you again for your constructive suggestions.

**Method:**

- **Comment:** The method is weak and should explain what you did. Explain your methodological approach, authors should describe their study design. Please write when the study was done.
- **Reply:** Thank you for your constructive feedback regarding the study design. In response, we have revised the "Materials and Methods" section to clarify the validity and appropriateness of the cross-sectional design for our research. We emphasized how this approach facilitates the assessment of the FFQR's psychometric properties at a single point in time, allowing for effective evaluation within the target population. We appreciate your insights, which have helped enhance the clarity of our methodology. Moreover, We have added the timeline to the "Materials and Methods" section, indicating that the study took place from spring to summer 2023.
- **Comment:** Insufficient methodological details: The methods section lacks crucial details on various aspects of the study, such as data collection processes, and specific analytical approaches employed.
- **Reply:** We have expanded this section to include a more thorough explanation of our study design, participant recruitment processes, data collection methods, and specific analytical approaches used throughout the research.
- **Comment:** Detail the random sampling technique
- **Reply:** We have expanded the "Sampling Method and Sample Size Determination" section to clarify our use of convenience sampling and the rationale behind this choice. We also highlighted the efforts made to ensure a diverse and representative sample, which contributes to the robustness of our study. Thank you again for your constructive suggestions.
- **Comment:** Place the consent signature in the ethics segment, not within the eligibility requirements, and outline the ethical code.
- **Reply:** we have added a dedicated "Ethical Considerations" section that specifies the ethical approval obtained from the **Ethics Committee of Iran University of Medical Sciences**. This section also outlines the informed consent process, including assurances of confidentiality and the voluntary nature of participation. We believe

these additions enhance the clarity and rigor of our methodology. Thank you again for your constructive suggestions.

- **Comment:** Please supply the psychometrics (standardization population, reliability, and validity) and the types and levels of scores derived from each measure for use in analyses.
- **Reply:** We have expanded the "Data Collection Tools" section to include the standardization population, reliability, validity, and types of scores derived from each measure. We believe these additions clarify the psychometric foundations of our tools and strengthen the overall methodology of our study.
- **Comment:** In the text, mention the signing of the informed consent form.
- **Reply:** We have updated the "Ethical Considerations" section to explicitly include this detail, ensuring that it is clear that all participants signed a consent form prior to enrollment.
- **Comment:** Inclusion and exclusion criteria should be written carefully. Participants were examined for neurological or orthopedic diseases. The authors should identify who was responsible for completing the questionnaire and provide information regarding their qualifications.
- **Reply:** We have revised the "Participants" section to explicitly state that the questionnaire was completed by the parents of children with disabilities. We also included details about their qualifications, emphasizing their familiarity with their child's condition and rehabilitation progress, which enabled them to provide accurate and meaningful responses.

**Discussion**

- **Comment:** Write the minimum and maximum age of the participants.
- **Reply:** We have revised the "Discussion" to specify that the participants ranged in age from 3 to 18 years, with an average age of 6 years and 10 months.
- **Comment:** Please write in-depth interpretation of the specific results obtained, such as the factor analysis findings and the implications of the identified dimensions Discussion
- **Reply:** The "Discussion" section has been expanded to provide a detailed examination of the four identified dimensions: Awareness, Attitude and Behavior, Social Participation, and Rehabilitation Engagement. Each dimension's role in family

functioning within rehabilitation contexts is thoroughly discussed, highlighting how these aspects contribute to the overall understanding of family dynamics and informing targeted interventions.

Additionally, the implications of the factor analysis findings have been explored to demonstrate the cultural relevance and applicability of the FFQR. This expanded discussion offers insights into how healthcare providers can utilize these dimensions to support families more effectively in rehabilitation settings.

- **Comment:** Add the discussion section followed by the study limitations section, and then the results section.
- **Reply:** In response, a "Study Limitations" section has been added to the manuscript. This section addresses potential limitations related to self-reported data, criterion validity, and sample size, and it outlines how future research could improve upon these areas. We believe that this addition provides a balanced perspective on the study's findings and its methodological considerations.
- **Comment:** The discussion is poor and can't support the results. Authors should explain the results, references to previous research, interpretations and implications or recommendations
- **Reply:** Thank you for your insightful feedback regarding the need for a more comprehensive discussion that explains the results, references previous research, and includes interpretations and implications. In response to your comments, the "Discussion" section has been significantly expanded to include a detailed interpretation of the results, particularly the factor analysis findings, and their implications for family functioning in rehabilitation contexts.

  New content has been added to reference relevant literature that supports the importance of the identified dimensions—Awareness, Attitude and Behavior, Social Participation, and Rehabilitation Engagement—highlighting their roles in improving outcomes for children with disabilities. Additionally, the discussion now emphasizes the necessity for future research to explore alternative validation tools to enhance the comprehensive assessment of family functioning.

This revised section aims to provide a clearer connection between the findings and their practical implications, ensuring that the discussion adequately supports the results.

- **Comment:** The discussion would be improved with increased organization and perhaps subheadings.
- **Reply:** In response to your comments, the "Discussion" has been revised to include subheadings that enhance clarity and readability. Each section now clearly delineates different aspects of the findings, including challenges faced by children with special needs, the process of face validity assessment, content validity, factor analysis findings, reliability, cross-cultural applicability, and implications for criterion validity.

  This structured approach allows for a more comprehensive explanation of the results, making it easier for readers to follow the discussion and understand the significance of the findings.

- **Comment:** Address potential biases and study limitations.
- **Reply:** Done.

**Reviewer 2 (identified by green highlights in the manuscript):**

**Abstract**

- **Comment:** The objectives section could be strengthened by specifying the exact psychometric properties that were evaluated (e.g., "This study aimed to assess the reliability, validity, and cultural adaptation of the Persian version of the FFQR in Iranian parents of children with special needs").
- **Reply:** Thank you for your insightful feedback regarding the Objectives section of the abstract. The section has been revised.

**Introduction**

- **Comment:** The introduction provides a comprehensive and well-structured overview of the importance of family functioning in the context of children with disabilities.

However, the first paragraph could be streamlined by removing some of the more general information and focusing more on the specific challenges faced by families of children with disabilities. some sentences in the introduction could be shortened for improved clarity and readability (eg: "Children with disabilities require extensive medical, educational, and rehabilitative interventions, profoundly impacting their quality of life ." that could be split into two sentences:"Children with disabilities require extensive medical, educational, and rehabilitative interventions. These interventions profoundly impact their quality of life .") this form of writing can also be seen in lines 73, 78 and 80. In line 77 "atypical growth" could be rephrased as "developmental disabilities

- **Reply:** The first paragraph has been streamlined to focus more specifically on the challenges faced by families of children with disabilities. Additionally, several sentences have been revised for clarity and readability, including splitting longer sentences into shorter ones to enhance understanding. The phrase "atypical growth" has also been rephrased to "developmental disabilities" for better accuracy and clarity.

**Methods**

- **Comment:** The numbering of the steps is wrong, so that the numbers have gone from 2.1 to 3.2 and so on.
- **Reply:** We have corrected the logical flow throughout the section**.**
- **Comment:** In the inclusion/exclusion criteria of the study, how and by whom were the diagnoses made?
- **Reply:** Thank you for your insightful comment regarding the inclusion and exclusion criteria in the study. We have added clarification to the Methods section to specify how and by whom the diagnoses were made for the participants.
- **Comment:** Translation: What expertise did the translators possess? Who were the research team that reviewed the translation, and what expertise did they have?
- **Reply:** This information was added.

**Results:**

- **Comment:** It seems that this section has been written thoroughly. However, it would be better to have it checked by another expert reviewer.

- **Reply:** Thank you for your positive feedback regarding the thoroughness of the results section.
- **Comment:** Given the limited number of articles related to the study's title that have been cited, it is suggested that the discussion section be revised again.
- **Reply:** Thank you for your valuable feedback regarding the citation of relevant articles in the discussion section. This comment aligns with the earlier suggestion made by the first reviewer, which has been addressed comprehensively. In the revised discussion, additional literature has been incorporated to strengthen the context and relevance of the findings. All changes made in response to this feedback have been highlighted in yellow for your convenience. We appreciate your attention to this matter, as it has contributed to enhancing the robustness of the discussion. Thank you once again for your insights!

## OPEN PEER REVIEW

**Revision (1)**

**REFEREE** : Associate Editor — 1 Nov 2024

Dear Chief Editor
The manuscript is suitable for publication.

**Fatemeh Ehsani** : EIC — 2 Nov 2024

Dear Authors
We are pleased to inform you that your article is accepted for publication in the MEJRHS. We hope to receive the other qualified articles from your group.
Best Regards