

## **ADAPTATION OF THE SELF-COMPASSION SCALE FOR BANGLADESHI CULTURE**

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### **Abstract**

Self-compassion is a raising construct in the field of positive psychology. Evidence supported that self-compassion is an important factor in increasing psychological well-being and reducing symptoms of anxiety, depression and rumination. In the present study, authors determined the psychometric properties of the Bangla version of Self-Compassion Scale (SCS). The study was carried out in a sample of 160 adults, ranging from 18 to 28 years old. Although the original scale has 26 items, in item-total correlation analysis it was found that 24 items in the questionnaire were significantly correlated with total items, the rest two items consumed negative/low correlation (below 0.30). So, these two items were excluded from the Bangla version and 24 items were selected for the final version of the SCS. The internal consistency of the SCS was computed by Cronbach's Alpha which was 0.83 and the split-half coefficient of the scale was 0.84. Thus the results support the Bangla SCS is suitable for use in Bangladeshi culture.

### **Introduction**

Self-compassion is theme of Buddhist psychology for centuries and it has become the focus of eastern and western psychologies<sup>(1)</sup>. The term "Self-compassion" derives from the word "compassion", which refers to an understanding of another's pain and the desire to alleviate that pain. Directing the same compassionate attitude towards oneself involves self-compassion. Self-compassion is defined as treating oneself kindly in moments of failure and acknowledging negative feelings with openness and acceptance<sup>(1)</sup>. It works as buffer against negative coping such as self-criticism and acts as a protective factor against mental illness. It involves being kind, compassionate and understood toward oneself when one is emotionally distressed or when there is a feeling of incompetence or failure<sup>(2)</sup>. There are three interrelated components of self-compassion. These components might be of great help in times of suffering, if it is well trained. The three main elements include: (i) Self-kindness - being supportive, kind and caring toward oneself rather than being harshly self-critical when individuals having a

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hard time, (ii) common humanity - realizing the pain and suffering as a part of larger human experience rather than isolating oneself from others, (iii) mindfulness - recognition of one's negative emotions without being judgmental and accepting present moment<sup>(1,2)</sup>.

Researchers have distinguished between self-compassion and self-esteem; the self-esteem involves personal evaluation, whereas self-compassion is the acknowledgment of shared human character. Moreover, self-compassion is not the same as self-indulgence; self-compassionate individuals acknowledge and accept their mistakes without suppressing them and that is different from self-indulgence<sup>(3)</sup>. Self-compassion is also different from self-pity. In this regard, self-pitying individuals become self-absorbed in their personal problems and disregard others, whereas even when self-compassionate individuals facing personal problems, they tend to be available for others. Recent research has exhibited a relationship between self-compassion and psychological health, it has positive effect on happiness, optimism, conscientiousness, wisdom, curiosity, agreeableness, extraversion and decreased anxiety, depression, rumination<sup>(4)</sup>. A study showed that resilient adolescents and young adults practiced self-compassion regularly and also found that family functioning, maternal support and attachment styles were predictors of self-compassion<sup>(5)</sup>. A body of research demonstrates that practicing self-compassion has facilitated a number of important health behaviors. For instance, self-compassion is associated with exercise behavior<sup>(6)</sup>, healthy eating behaviors<sup>(7)</sup>, medical adherence<sup>(8)</sup>, dietary adherence<sup>(9)</sup> and indices of general health-promoting behaviors<sup>(10)</sup>. A nascent body of evidence demonstrated that self-compassionate individuals experiencing greater psychological soundness than those who lack self-compassion. Evidence showed that self-compassion is linked to greater life satisfaction, personal growth, social connectedness, emotional resilience, autonomy, optimism and less anxiety, self-criticism, depression, rumination, neuroticism, thought suppression and perfectionism<sup>(1)</sup>. Self-compassion is regarded as beneficial in helping parents cope with the challenges that emerge when caring a disabled child<sup>(11)</sup>.

To adapt the SCS authors can provide compassion exercise and meditation that lead to improve mood, more altruistic behavior, reduced stress, less anger, and reduced symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. Moreover, practicing self-compassion allows us to cultivate empathy, kindness and understanding toward ourselves and to improve our overall quality of life and vitality.

Unfortunately, there is no valid scientific tool to measure self-compassion in Bangladeshi culture. So, considering the significance of the tool, the aim of the present study is to adapt SCS into Bangla language and to validate it in our culture through psychometric testing.

## Materials and Methods

The sample consisted of 160 adult respondents (63 males, 97 females), aging from 19 to 28 years old were taken following purposive and convenience sampling technique. All of the respondents were students, studying in the University of Dhaka.

For the data collection, following materials were used: (a) Demographic and personal information questionnaire, (b) Bangla version of self-compassion Scale.

Self-compassion is assessed using the self-compassion scale which had been developed by Kristin Neff in order to measure compassion towards oneself<sup>(1)</sup>. The original scale has 26 items which has six subscales include the Self-Kindness subscale (5 items), the Self-Judgment subscale (5 items), the common humanity subscale (4 items), the isolation subscale (4 items), the Mindfulness subscale (4 items) and the Over-identification subscale (4 items). Responses are given on a 5-point scale from "1-Almost Never" to "5-Almost Always." The original SCS has high internal reliability ( $\alpha = 0.90$ ) and test-retest consistency (0.93)<sup>(1)</sup>. A total SCS is computed by reversing the negative subscale items and then adding all the subscale subsequently which may range from 24 to 120, with higher scores indicating greater self-compassion.

The adaptation of SCS involved several multistage procedures following the cross cultural standard guideline regarding adaptation and validation of psychometric instrument<sup>(12)</sup>. The items of SCS were translated into considering the meaning, clarity and simplicity of the items. Then blind back translation was done by two faculty members of Department of Psychology, University of Dhaka. The translated version and the back translated version were reviewed by two experts, proficient in both Bengali and English language. The synthesis version was then administered to 25 students to examine the strength of items concerning their meaning and difficulty. The scale was finalized after the pilot study. The final translation of SCS was administered to 160 students from University of Dhaka.

## Results and Discussion

Item analysis of a Likert-type scale is done by calculating the correlation between individual item's score with the total scale score. During pilot study, all 26 items were thoroughly analyzed and corrected item total correlation coefficients were determined. From those corrected item-total correlation value, SCS\_8 (-0.398) and SCS\_21 (-0.267) were detected as negative or low correlation score ( $r < 0.03$ ) with total score indicates that the items were defective in measuring what the whole SCS questionnaire was supposed to measure. These two items required further review to accept it in the Bangla version of SCS. The rest 24 items were found to have significant (at 0.05) correlation coefficients shown in Table 1. So it was concluded that these 24 items had satisfactory level of internal consistency and selected for the final Bangla version of Self-compassion Scale.

The Cronbach's Alpha was found 0.83 for 160 cases and the odd-even Split-half reliability coefficient was found 0.84 after using the Spearman-Brown correlation formula (Table 2). These reliability coefficients proved the Bangla version of the Self-Compassion Scale (SCS) to be a reliable scale.

**Table 1. Item-total statistics and Cronbach's alpha if the item is deleted.**

Items	Corrected item-total correlation	Cronbach's alpha if item deleted
SCS_1	0.133	0.836
SCS_2	0.314	0.829
SCS_3	0.358	0.827
SCS_4	0.593	0.816
SCS_5	0.406	0.825
SCS_6	0.447	0.823
SCS_7	0.439	0.824
SCS_8	0.398	0.826
SCS_9	0.348	0.828
SCS_10	0.496	0.822
SCS_11	0.392	0.830
SCS_12	0.496	0.822
SCS_13	0.439	0.824
SCS_14	0.521	0.821
SCS_15	0.317	0.829
SCS_16	0.311	0.829
SCS_17	0.432	0.824
SCS_18	0.297	0.830
SCS_19	0.154	0.835
SCS_20	0.294	0.829
SCS_21	0.191	0.833
SCS_22	0.476	0.822
SCS_23	0.444	0.824
SCS_24	0.496	0.822

**Table 2. Reliability coefficient of the Bangla version of SCS.**

Scale	Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient (n = 160)	Split-half reliability
Self-Compassion Scale	0.83*	0.84*

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Face and content validity of the scale were assured by checking items during construction of the test. Principle component analysis was used to determine the construct validity of the scale. The Scree plot of the principle component analysis (Fig. 1) showed that scale has Eigen values greater than 1. The Eigen values of 24 items of the SCS are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3. Total variance explained.**

Component	Initial Eigen values		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	5.343	22.262	22.262
2	3.267	13.613	35.875
3	1.389	5.786	41.661
4	1.211	5.046	46.707
5	1.153	4.803	51.510
6	1.102	4.590	56.100
7	1.013	4.222	60.322
8	0.982	4.091	64.412
9	0.842	3.508	67.920
10	0.828	3.452	71.372
11	0.761	3.170	74.541
12	0.724	3.016	77.557
13	0.678	2.824	80.381
14	0.568	2.366	82.748
15	0.551	2.297	85.045
16	0.526	2.190	87.234
17	0.493	2.055	89.290
18	0.467	1.946	91.236
19	0.424	1.766	93.002
20	0.406	1.690	94.692
21	0.386	1.610	96.302
22	0.328	1.365	97.667
23	0.286	1.190	98.857
24	0.274	1.143	100.000

Extraction method: Principal component analysis.

The component matrix analysis found 7 factors. In the original scale there were 6 subscales. May be there are a bit more variability in the data collected for adaptation process. Data of the factorial validity are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4. Component matrix.**

	Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
SCS1	0.137	0.279	0.465	-0.080	0.147	0.524	0.422
SCS2	0.345	0.590	0.254	-0.033	-0.013	-0.211	0.020
SCS3	0.471	-0.549	-0.012	0.114	-0.006	-0.196	0.302
SCS4	0.642	0.382	-0.001	0.121	-0.075	0.027	0.135
SCS5	0.504	-0.232	0.227	0.027	-0.368	-0.247	0.029
SCS6	0.498	0.365	0.272	0.098	-0.035	0.041	-0.406
SCS7	0.548	-0.236	-0.103	-0.236	-0.194	-0.042	0.169
SCS8	0.509	-0.249	-0.138	-0.403	0.246	-0.170	0.040
SCS9	0.441	-0.378	-0.084	0.098	0.502	0.060	0.276
SCS10	0.566	0.177	0.336	-0.388	0.185	0.051	-0.171
SCS11	0.440	0.437	-0.120	0.345	0.133	0.166	0.046
SCS12	0.598	-0.159	-0.273	0.064	0.038	0.013	-0.322
SCS13	0.543	-0.468	-0.060	0.097	0.105	0.240	0.071
SCS14	0.581	0.380	0.174	-0.166	-0.057	-0.104	0.032
SCS15	0.414	-0.398	0.259	0.117	-0.145	-0.113	-0.107
SCS16	0.349	0.433	-0.425	0.187	0.148	0.122	0.073
SCS17	0.554	-0.304	-0.064	-0.074	-0.172	-0.191	0.115
SCS18	0.345	0.497	-0.227	-0.086	0.239	-0.229	-0.151
SCS19	0.225	-0.251	-0.054	-0.256	-0.405	0.610	-0.152
SCS20	0.385	-0.376	-0.190	0.333	-0.186	0.129	-0.087
SCS21	0.257	-0.362	0.528	0.479	0.220	-0.073	-0.116
SCS22	0.540	0.360	-0.104	-0.122	-0.232	-0.084	0.319
SCS23	0.470	0.488	-0.134	0.319	-0.250	0.084	-0.003
SCS24	0.600	-0.257	-0.084	-0.212	0.264	0.183	-0.326

Extraction method: Principal component analysis.

a. 7 components extracted.

In order to analysis the appropriateness of data (adequacy), authors also conducted KMO and Bartlett's test. In Table 5, it was noticed that the KMO value (0.815) of this present study was greater than the desired level ( $KMO > 0.50$ ). So, it could be concluded that authors had good sampling by which the variables could be factored. Bartlett's test

also showed that our correlation matrix is not an identity matrix (as Sig. < 0.05) which is significant for factor analysis meets the criteria necessary to proceed.

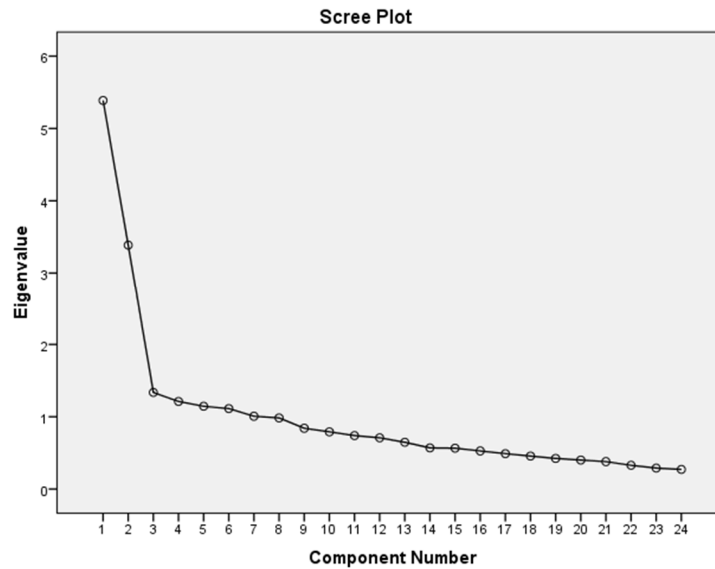


Fig. 1. Scree plot of Eigen values of scale components.

**Table 5. KMO and Bartlett's test.**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy		0.815
Bartlett's test of sphericity	Approx. Chi-square	1131.857
	df	276
	Sig.	0.000

Thus the adapted Bangla scale proved to be a reliable and valid measure of self-compassion. So the mental health professionals and the counselors can use this scale and can also provide self-compassion mediation and exercise to their clients. However, the study has a number of recommendations. The scale needs to be further examined in larger and more diverse populations. Additionally the scale's sensitivity and discriminant validity should be undertaken in future to provide sufficient proof of its appropriateness in Bangladeshi culture and population.

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