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# **The spider and the snake – A psychometric study of two phobias and insights from the Hungarian validation**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Specific phobias — particularly zoophobias — are prevalent worldwide and can have fairly dramatic health consequences. Self-report measurements play a crucial role in phobia research studies; thus, it is important to have a reliable tool in different languages. The present investigation examined the psychometric properties of the Hungarian version of two commonly used measures of fear: the Spider Phobia Questionnaire (i.e. SPQ) and the Snake Questionnaire (i.e. SNAQ). The SPQ and SNAQ scores both demonstrated excellent reliability, including a test-retest over a 4-week period. Supportive evidence for the validity of the SPQ and SNAQ scores was found using questions assessing fainting and avoidance history, regarding snakes and spiders, based on DSM-V criteria. Both questionnaires could discriminate between participants who reported such an event and those who did not. Further analyses also revealed a sex difference, with women scoring higher than men on both scales. Moreover, 9.5% and 4.24% of the respondents reached the cut-off point, set by previous studies, for spider and snake phobias, respectively. These findings suggest that the SPQ and SNAQ have excellent psychometric properties, making them suitable for use in further cross-cultural research and epidemiological studies.

## **Keywords:**

Adaptation, Arachnophobia, Assessment, Ophidiophobia, Snake Questionnaire, SNAQ, Spider Questionnaire, SPQ, Specific phobia, Standardization, Zoophobia

## **1. Introduction**

Specific phobia is an anxiety disorder, and it is one of the most common mental disorders. It is characterised by a persistent and unrealistic fear that is cued by the presence or thought of a specific object. Recent studies estimate the lifetime prevalence of specific phobias

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