



International Journal of Clinical and Health Psychology

www.elsevier.es/ijchp



ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Validating Sizing Them Up: A parent-proxy weight-related quality-of-life measure, with community-based children

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Received 18 July 2017; accepted 23 October 2017

KEYWORDS

Child;
Community;
Parent;
Weight-related
quality of life;
Instrumental study

Abstract *Background/Objective:* A weight-related Quality of Life (QoL) questionnaire elicits parents' perceptions to understand the impacts of weight on children's QoL. Sizing Them Up, a parent-proxy of a weight-related instrument, is a proper measure for the purpose, but its psychometric properties have not been validated on a non-clinical child population. This study aimed to thoroughly examine the psychometric properties of the Sizing Them Up on a non-clinical child population. *Methods:* Children from Taiwan ($M_{age} = 11$; $SD = 1.02$; $N = 236$) filled out a weight-related QoL instrument (Sizing Me Up) while their parents completed Sizing Them Up and two generic QoL instruments. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), concurrent validity, and known-group validity were conducted. *Results:* CFA supported the factor structure of Sizing Them Up. The concurrent validity of the Sizing Them Up total score was satisfactory: $r = .46$ to $.53$ with other QoL instruments. Known-group validity was supported as obese children had significantly lower Sizing Them Up total score than did normal-weight and underweight children. *Conclusions:* We extended the use of Sizing Them Up from clinically obese children to a community-based sample of underweight as well as overweight children. Healthcare providers may use Sizing Them Up to measure the weight-related QoL for children.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijchp.2017.10.001>

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Please cite this article in press as: Lin, Y. -C., et al. Validating Sizing Them Up: A parent-proxy weight-related quality-of-life measure, with community-based children. *International Journal of Clinical and Health Psychology* (2017), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijchp.2017.10.001>

PALABRAS CLAVE

Niños;
comunidad;
padres;
peso ;calidad de vida;
estudio instrumental

Validación del Sizing Them Up para padres: una prueba de evaluación de la calidad de vida de niños en función del peso

Resumen *Antecedentes/objetivo:* Un cuestionario que relaciona peso y calidad de vida (CV) estimula la percepción de los padres para comprender los impactos del peso sobre la CV de los niños. *Sizing Them Up* es un instrumento para padres, relacionado con el peso, pero sus propiedades psicométricas no se han validado en población infantil no clínica. Este estudio examina minuciosamente dichas propiedades en una población infantil no clínica. *Método:* Niños de Taiwán ($M_{\text{edad}} = 11,00$; $DT = 1,02$; $N = 236$) completaron el Sizing Me Up, mientras sus padres completaron este mismo instrumento y otros dos genéricos de CV. Se realizó análisis factorial confirmatorio (CFA), y se examinó la validez concurrente y validez de grupo conocido. *Resultados:* El CFA apoya la estructura factorial del *Sizing Them Up*. La validez concurrente fue satisfactoria. La validez de grupo conocido fue apoyada, ya que los niños obesos obtuvieron una puntuación en *Sizing Them Up* significativamente menor que los niños de peso normal o bajo peso. *Conclusiones:* Los proveedores de atención médica pueden utilizar *Sizing Them Up* para medir la CV relacionada con el peso de los niños.

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The rising prevalence of overweight and obesity has been described as a global pandemic (Popkin, Adair, & Ng, 2012; Swinburn et al., 2011), and the long-term consequences may lead to detrimental threats to the economy and health-care systems (Trasande & Chatterjee, 2009), a possibility that should increase our awareness of childhood overweight and obesity, which can cause unfavorable health conditions later in life (Wardle, Brodersen, Cole, Jarvis, & Boniface, 2006). Between 1980 and 2013, the combined global prevalence of childhood overweight and obesity rose by 47.1% (Chang, Wu, Chen, Wang, & Lin, 2014). More specifically, the prevalence of overweight and obese children was estimated to be 23.8% for boys and 22.6% for girls in developed countries, and 12.9% for boys and 13.4% for girls in developing countries (Karnik & Kanekar, 2015; Ng et al., 2014). In Taiwan, the prevalence of obesity and overweight in children 6-13 years old is 30.2% for boys and 23.5% for girls (Lin, Su, Wang, & Ma, 2013), which is comparable to the trend in developed countries, except that the rate for boys is higher in Taiwan, regardless of age (Liou, Huang, & Chou, 2009). Chronic overweight puts a child at great risk of weight-related physical, emotional, and social deficits (Jafari, Allahyari, Salarzadeh, & Bagheri, 2016). Indeed, studies showed that weight-related issues such as body dissatisfaction or impaired body image may contribute to a person's psychological problem: eating disorder (Dakanalis et al., 2016; Lucena-Santos, Carvalho, da Silva Oliveira & Pinto-Gouveia, 2017). These problems should be investigated and measured along with health-related quality of life (HRQoL) in local and international discussions about weight management and overweight prevention (Ahuja et al., 2014; Lin, Su et al., 2013).

HRQoL contains a broad range of elements that explains how quality of life (QoL) influences the physical health, psychological condition, social interaction, independence, and environmental impact of an individual (World Health Organization, 1993). Evaluating HRQoL provides subjective

perceptions of overall health and well-being, which is information essential for healthcare decision-making, especially when we want to understand which treatment (e.g., practicing physical activity) is effective (Carbó-Carreté, Guàrdia-Olmos, Giné, & Schallock, 2016). Yet, in practical terms, these generic instruments are designed to compare children's general health condition to certain diseases such as obesity for further clarification, but not to identify emerging weight-related concerns. Studies show that, even when using standard medical criteria, many people misclassify their weight status due to overlooking contextual factors, such as cultural/ethnic preferences of body size or obesity bias (Cachelin, Rebeck, Chung, & Pelayo, 2002; Olvera, Suminski, & Power, 2005). It is, therefore, necessary to assess whether using a particular instrument is suitable for a non-clinical population, such as children from a community (Eiser & Morse, 2001), in order to monitor children's health and detect potential weight-related problems early.

When a generic instrument for investigations or follow-up interventions is used, specific health conditions might not subsequently be considered for in-depth measurement (Ahuja et al., 2014). For instance, even though the psychosocial outcomes of obese children are important, they are often under-reported. This might jeopardize the chances of assessing and managing their health condition (Al-Hashimi, Davis, & Bull, 2016). Therefore, a weight-related questionnaire about QoL might be needed to more precisely measure QoL for overweight and underweight children.

Also, being brief but comprehensive, and having adequate psychometric properties, are essential for developing a HRQoL instrument with both self-report and parent-proxy report versions (Eiser & Morse, 2001). Children's subjective evaluations, combined with parallel parental perceptions, can help shape a more precise description of children's QoL (Varni, Seid, & Kurtin, 2001; Varni, Seid, & Rode, 1999). That is, the proxy report is a helpful and fairly accurate approach when children are unable to respond to measures

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