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RESEARCH LETTER

Psychometric properties of the Chinese version of the Dutch Eating Behavior Questionnaire in a sample of Taiwanese parents**KEYWORDS**

Dutch Eating Behavior Questionnaire (DEBQ);
Overeating;
Parents;
Psychometric properties

Summary The Dutch Eating Behavior Questionnaire (DEBQ) appraises overeating styles that may contribute to weight gain in adults. The purpose of this analysis was to assess the psychometric properties of a Chinese version of the DEBQ (C-DEBQ) in a sample of parents of school-age children in Taiwan. The C-DEBQ encompassing three subscales that including emotional eating, external eating, and restrained eating. Each subscale's reliability was assessed with Cronbach's alpha internal consistency. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to validate the model fit. A total of 340 normal weight and overweight parents of school-age children from various geographical locations in Taiwan participated in the study. Each subscale, emotional, external, and restrained eating, displayed good-to-excellent internal consistency (Cronbach's alphas: .94, .81, and .89, respectively). CFA showed that the three-factor solution had close goodness-of-fit to the data for supporting the factorial validity ($\chi^2 = 1239.03$, $df = 488$, $p < .001$, $\chi^2/df = 2.54$, root mean square error of approximation = .067, comparative fit index = .879, Tucker–Lewis index = .869). Findings suggest that the C-DEBQ is a psychometrically reliable and valid instrument with the potential to assess overeating styles in Taiwanese parents of school-age children. Replication studies with more age- and gender-diverse populations are needed to provide further evidence of construct validity for the Chinese version of the DEBQ.

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Introduction

The prevalence of overweight and obesity among Taiwanese adults was over 43% in 2013–2014 [1], a rate higher than those of neighboring Asian countries [2]. Behavioral factors, especially overeating, have been recognised as a critical contributor to overweight and obesity [3]. The Dutch Eating Behavior Questionnaire (DEBQ) measures overeating tendencies that may contribute to the development of overweight in adults [4]. The DEBQ has been widely translated, and all versions show good factorial validity and reliability across Western

populations; however, there is no published psychometric testing of a Chinese version adapted for adult populations in Taiwan. As overeating plays an essential role in the development of overweight and obesity, a reliable and valid instrument to assess overeating tendencies is critical. Moreover, parents play an instrumental role in children's eating through various mechanisms, such as modeling eating patterns [4], and adolescents with obesity are more likely to become obese adults when compared with obese children [5]. School age, when risk of onset, complications, and persistence of overweight and obesity increases, is an ideal time

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Table 1 Mean (standard deviations, SD) for the C-DEBQ subscales by parent and weight status.

Subscale	Parent					Weight status	
	All sample (N = 340)	Mother (n = 274)	Father (n = 66)	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Normal weight (n = 226)	Overweight/ obese (n = 114)
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)			Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)
Emotional eating	1.11 (.67)	1.14 (.69)	.98 (.61)	1.66	338	1.09 (.68)	1.14 (.66)
External eating	1.88 (.54)	1.92 (.54)	1.71 (.49)	2.82**	338	1.88 (.54)	1.87 (.55)
Restrained eating	1.88 (.74)	1.95 (.72)	1.57 (.72)	3.83***	338	1.89 (.78)	1.85 (.65)

** $p < .01$.*** $p < .001$.**Table 2** Correlation matrix of the C-DEBQ.

	Emotional eating (13 items)					External eating (10 items)					Restrained eating (10 items)				
	AS	MO	FA	NW	OO	AS	MO	FA	NW	OO	AS	MO	FA	NW	OO
N/n	340	274	66	226	114	340	274	66	226	114	340	274	66	226	114
Exter	.56***	.54***	.62***	.52***	.66***										
Restr	.22***	.17**	.35**	.19**	.29**	.24***	.21***	.27*	.25***	.22*					
Age	-.02	.03	-.12	-.05	.04	-.03	.02	-.08	-.03	-.02	-.06	-.03	.02	-.07	-.04
BMI	.08	.12*	-.08	.12	.04	.03	.05	.09	.04	.07	.04	.04	.25*	.20**	-.04
Edu	.10	.09	.16	.07	.17	.14**	.14**	.18	.15*	.13	.18**	.16**	.36**	.18**	.19*
Inco	.02	.10	-.15	.11	-.09	.11	.16**	.02	.23**	-.02	.17**	.25***	.05	.26***	.07

Notes: Exter = external eating, Restr = restrained eating, Inco = monthly income, Edu = completed education years, AS = all sample, MO = mother, FA = father, NW = normal weight (BMI < 24.0), OO = overweight/obese (BMI ≥ 24.0).

Bold items correspond to statistically significant correlations.

* $p < .05$.** $p < .01$.*** $p < .001$.

for parents to be role models for their children [6]. Hence, the aim of this analysis was to assess the psychometrics of the Chinese version of the DEBQ (C-DEBQ) in a community sample of parents of school-age children.

Methods

Participants and procedure

A cross-sectional design was used and data collection conducted after obtaining approval from the University Institutional Review Board for the protection of human participants. A convenience sample was recruited from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and various geographical communities in Taiwan.

Measures

The C-DEBQ was reviewed by an expert panel for cultural equivalence before data collection. The C-DEBQ uses a 5-point Likert scale to assess emo-

tional, external, and restrained overeating style tendencies [3]. One item is reverse-scored, and a higher sum score for each subscale indicates a higher tendency toward that specific overeating style.

Results

Participant characteristics

A total of 340 parents (274 mothers) were included in the analysis. The age range was 29–63 years with an average of 41.0 ($SD = 4.55$) years. About 33% of the total sample was overweight or obese. Mothers' and fathers' average BMI scores were 22.93 ($SD = 3.13$) and 24.28 ($SD = 2.54$), respectively. Average years of completed education were 13.6 ($SD = 3.16$). Median monthly household income was US\$2,000, lower than the national survey (US\$2,286) [7]. Mothers scored significantly higher than fathers on external eating and restrained eating (Table 1). Overweight/obese groups had slightly higher mean scores for emotional eating than nor-

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