Abstract

*Background*

The extent of concern about physical appearance is increasingly the subject of scientific study, interventions by health professionals, and media attention. To enable carefully evaluated studies exploring the psychosocial antecedents of appearance distress, and to determine the success of interventions, the Derriford Appearance Scale 24 (DAS24) was developed (Carr, Moss, & Harris, 2005). This psychometrically sound measure is well used and cited in the appearance psychology field. Outside a Western context, the extent and impact of appearance distress is less well known. This paper describes the adaptation of the DAS24 for use in Taiwan.

*Method*

A formal translation protocol was followed to adapt the DAS24 into Taiwanese/Cantones. Two hundred and eight participants from a general population and a visibly different population were recruited in Taipei, Taiwan. These participants completed a test pack administered comprising the translated DAS24, and established measures of anxiety and depression. The scale was analysed on the basis of classical test theory.

*Results and Discussion*

A translated DAS Scale comprising 19 items and including three clear factors was the best solution. The scale had good internal consistency, clear convergent validity, and good test-retest reliability. The three factors which emerged were appearance related social avoidance, social distress, and negative affect. Consistent with expectations, (i) women scored higher than men (greater appearance distress), (ii) the cause of appearance difference (burns, cleft lip/palate, et cetera) was unrelated to appearance distress, and (iii) those with visible differences were more concerned about their appearance than those without.

*Conclusion*

The Taiwanese DAS19 is a user-friendly and psychometrically sound scale which fills an important clinical and scientific need. The items which were omitted from the translated version were considered in relation to cultural differences in the experience and expression of shame between Western and Taiwan/China, which demands a careful future analysis.