

Research Paper

Validating the psychometric Properties of Hindi – Perceived Partner Responsiveness (PPR) Scale (H – PPRS) on an Indian Sample

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ABSTRACT

Aim: Relationship science is growing rapidly, but mostly in a few specific cultures. There are limited reported studies on relationships from the Indian context and one reason for this gap is the lack of validated psychometric tools in Indian regional languages. This study was an attempt to validate the measure of perceived partner responsiveness scale—one of the most essential constructs in relationship studies. **Methods:** We collected data from a community sample of 311 individuals from north India using cross-sectional research design. **Results:** The exploratory factor analyses, confirmatory factor analyses, and tests of reliability and validity were conducted. Findings suggest a unidimensional structure for H-PPRS, and high reliability and internal consistency. **Conclusion:** The validation of H-PPRS fills an important gap in the literature and concludes that H-PPRS can be used confidently on the Indian population.

Keywords: *Perceived partner responsiveness scale, Reliability, Validity, Exploratory Factory Analysis, Confirmatory Factor Analysis, Indian Sample, Personal Relationships*

Intimate and personal relationships play an essential role in determining the overall physical and psychological well-being of an individual. In recent years relationship science has witnessed a multi-fold increase in the number of studies on interpersonal relationships in diverse fields. Unsurprisingly there are numerous theories and constructs that have emerged within psychological sciences to study relationship processes and relationship functioning intricately. However, most of the empirical studies on relationships remain focused on the WEIRD sample (western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic) [Henrich, Heine, Norenzayan, 2010]. One essential reason for the lack of exploration of relationship processes in non-western contexts, particularly in India, is the absence of tools in regional languages to measure psychological constructs. In the present study, we aimed to validate the Hindi version of the perceived partner responsiveness scale—a measure of an essential relationship construct.

Perceived partner responsiveness is an important psychological construct for investigating relationship processes. This construct is derived from the theory of interpersonal process model of intimacy [Reis, Shaver, 1988]. According to this model, 'disclosure' and

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'responsiveness' play a significant role in developing an intimate bond between two individuals. When individuals indulge in self-disclosure, they share their internal thoughts, views, and experiences with their partners. The intimacy develops depending on whether or not the partner is responsive to them and their disclosures.

Responsiveness can be of two types—actual (or enacted) and perceived. Enacted responsiveness is the actual responsiveness provided by the partner. Debro et al. (2012) have conceptualized enacted responsiveness in terms of kind gestures such as "cooking a special meal for a partner, leaving a kind letter, or sending a warm text message" and in terms of touch such as "hugging or stroking." Thus, the partner's actual behaviors are his/her enacted responsiveness, whereas the perceived responsiveness is the partner's responsiveness as perceived by the individual. Perceived responsiveness is partly dependent on the actual responsiveness and partly on the individuals' motives, desires, and individual dispositions. Reis (2014) has argued that while enacted responsiveness influences the perceived partner responsiveness, the latter is more effective in determining the development of intimacy. If the partner is responsive, but the individual does not perceive him/her as responsive, it may not have the required effect on the individual's intimacy.

Perceived partner responsiveness has been defined as how the individuals in a relationship perceive the extent to which their partner understands them, validates them, and cares for who they are (Reis & Gable, 2015). According to Reis (2021), these three qualities determine the perception of responsiveness. These are defined as: "Understanding, or whether the partner is believed to have accurately and appropriately "got the facts right about oneself," "Validation, or the belief that partners value and appreciate one's abilities, traits, and world view," and "Caring, or the confidence that partners will provide help when it is needed, which demonstrates their concern for one's well-being." Birnbaum et al. (2016, p. 535) have conceptualized partner responsiveness of understanding as "listening, gathering information, and getting the facts right," validation as "reinforcing the partner's self-views and making the partner feel valued and respected," and caring as "communication of feelings of affection for one's partner."

Reis et al. (2008) provide a broad definition of perceived partner responsiveness as "a process by which individuals believe that relationship partners both attend to and react supportively to central, core defining features of the self." These authors believe that the partners are expected to be responsive in different ways in romantic relationships, such as "cost, effort, money, and psychological resources" (p. 215). Further, Reis (2021) conceptualizes perceived partner responsiveness as the phenomenon whereby partners respond supportively toward the needs, values, and goals of the individuals which leads to the enhancement of physical and psychological well-being. This leads to enhancement of emotional self-regulation. The absence of such supportive responses could lead to impairment of emotional self-regulation.

Although several studies have used the PPRS to measure an individual's perceived responsiveness from the partner, there are only limited studies that have explored the psychometric properties of the perceived partner responsiveness scale. The PPR scale was first introduced in an unpublished study by Reis that was published in a book (Reis et al. 2017). The reliability scores originally reported ranged from .91 to .98. The convergent validity was supported with the help of association of PPR with relationship satisfaction, trust, empathy, and emotional support. Zhou et al. (2022) developed and validated a Chinese

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version of perceived partner responsiveness scale (C-PPRS). C-PPRS is a 15-item scale that has four dimensions—understanding, Intimacy, Acceptance, and Trust. They provided psychometric validation for this scale. The reliability score for the scale was .90 with the domain values ranging from .78 to .92. However, there are limited studies exploring the psychometric properties of the PPR scale on the Indian population. We aimed to fill this essential gap in the literature.

METHODS

We collected data from a community sample in northern India. The initial pool of collected data consisted of 361 cases. The sample size was arbitrarily chosen based on some guidance from a previous study and based on the adequate requirement for conducting structural equation modelling (SEM) analyses (Meyers et al., 2006). However, 24 cases were removed because of incomplete filling of data forms. Of the 337 remaining cases, 26 cases did not fulfil the inclusion criteria. We removed these cases from further analysis. Thus, the final data set contained 311 cases.

Altogether 168 (54%) participants were males, and 143 (46%) were females. 49 (15.8%) participants had educational qualifications either till standard 10th or below 10th, 81 (26%) had an educational degree of 12th, or below 12th, 92 (29.6%) participants had undergraduate or below undergraduate degree, and 89 (28.6%) participants had an educational degree of postgraduate or above. Further, 146 (46.9%) participants came from a rural background, and 165 (53.1%) participants came from an urban background. In 93 (29.9%) cases, participants lived in nuclear families, and in 218 (70.1%) cases, participants stayed in the joint family system.

As far as socio-economic conditions are concerned, most participants rated themselves as belonging to lower socio-economic strata. 121 (38.9%) participants reported their family income below 2 lakh rupees annually, 101 (32.5%) participants reported their family income to be between 2 – 5 lakh rupees annually, 48 (6.1%) participants reported their family income to be between 5 – 8 lakh rupees annually, and 19 (6.1%) participants reported their family income as above 12 lakh rupees annually. As far as the mode of data collection is concerned, 82 (26.4%) cases came through online mode, and 229 (73.6%) data was collected through the paper and pencil method. The age of participants ranged from 18 – 63 years ($M = 36.51$, $SD = 7.66$). And their marital duration ranged from 0 – 30 years ($M = 13.23$, $SD = 7.61$).

Translation of Scale:

We adopted and translated the scales into Hindi to collect data for the present study. Two forward (English to Hindi) and one backward (Hindi to English) translations were carried out for all scales with the help of volunteers who had university-level knowledge of Hindi and English. The volunteers were instructed to use language that could be understood by north India's rural and urban people. After the forward translations, the items were analyzed, and the ones with more precise and apt meanings were selected. These items were translated with the help of another volunteer back to English. Any item which showed a discrepancy from the original version was retranslated. Thus, the final version of the adapted scale had items that were most representative of the original scales.

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Perceived Partner Responsiveness Scale (PPRS):

Reis et al. (2017) profiled the perceived partner responsiveness scale (PPRS), which has eighteen items measured on a five-point Likert scale. However, the scale measures only two of the three domains of perceived partner responsiveness construct, understanding, and responsiveness. It does not measure the caring domain. This study used the eighteen-item scale version to measure the perceived partner responsiveness. A sample of the item is as under:

1. *Item no. 1.* My partner really understands me. (Understanding)
2. *Item no. 2.* My partner is responsive to my needs. (responsiveness)

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Data analysis was carried out in SPSS (v. 23) and Amos (v. 23). There were no missing values in the dataset. We tested each individual items for the descriptive statistics. The mean and standard deviation for each item is presented in Table 1. The mean for all items were in the range of 3.5 to 4.3. We also conducted both exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to test the psychometric properties of the perceived partner responsiveness scale.

For exploratory factor analysis, we conducted a principal component analysis. We forced the extraction of one dimension by restricting the derived number of factors to one without any rotation because PPRS is a unidimensional scale. The KMO and Bartlett's test of sphericity indicated that factor analysis was meaningful (KMO=.946; for Bartlett's test =3038.08, df=153, sig < 0.01). One single factor was derived explaining altogether 49.4% of the variance in the data. Thus, suggesting high internal consistency in the scale. Table 1 presents the factor loading for each item. It is evident from the table that the factor loading for all items lay in the range of 0.56 (item 5) to 0.78 (item 17). Table 1 also presents item-total correlation for the scale, which depicts the correlation of each item to the whole scale. Here again, the correlation ranged from .52 for item 5 to 0.74 for item 17. When 'scale if item removed' values were assessed it revealed that removal of any item other than item 5 reduced the Cronbach's α value below .93. Removal of item 5 had no change in the Cronbach's α value indicating item no. 5 was redundant for the scale.

We conducted the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in Amos (v. 23) with maximum likelihood estimation and performed bootstrapping on 5000 resamples. We tested the model-fit indices for the unidimensional model. The model fit indices indicated that the model had an adequate fit (χ^2 (df) = 406.95 (135); Normed χ^2 (χ^2 /(df)) = 3.01 (P < 0.01); GFI=.87; CFI=.90; RMSEA=.08). The modification indices (MI) suggested that certain error terms if covaried could enhance the model fit. We re-tested the modified model (figure 1). This modification enhanced the model fit values substantially for the Goodness-of-fit index (GFI), Comparative-fit-index (CFI), and Root-mean-square-error of approximation (RMSEA) were .91, .94, and .06 respectively. These values were within acceptable range.

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Table 1 Descriptive, and test statistics for each item of the perceived partner responsiveness scale (PPRS)

Items on factor	Mean (SD)	Factor Loadings	Item Total Correlation	Cronbach's α for the Scale
Item 1	4.08 (1.08)	.72	.66	.93
Item 2	4.34 (0.922)	.76	.72	
Item 3	3.92 (1.16)	.70	.65	
Item 4	4.14 (0.99)	.67	.62	
Item 5	3.66 (1.23)	.56	.52	
Item 6	4.04 (1.02)	.77	.73	
Item 7	3.83 (1.24)	.63	.58	
Item 8	4.18 (1.00)	.75	.70	
Item 9	3.54 (1.23)	.62	.58	
Item 10	4.12 (0.98)	.74	.69	
Item 11	4.02 (1.06)	.72	.68	
Item 12	4.11 (1.04)	.68	.63	
Item 13	3.92 (1.12)	.57	.53	
Item 14	4.09 (1.00)	.72	.67	
Item 15	4.13 (0.91)	.77	.73	
Item 16	3.90 (1.02)	.59	.54	
Item 17	4.11 (0.98)	.78	.74	
Item 18	4.36 (0.85)	.77	.72	

Note: SD is standard deviation;

As noted earlier Cronbach's α value for the scale was .93 indicating the scale had a high reliability score. To test the convergent validity of the scale, we calculated its composite reliability. The composite reliability was 0.92 indicating a very high reliability score. This result further supports the internal consistency of the scale. All of the values discussed so far

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indicate that the PPR scale has high internal consistency and reliability and thus can be used confidently with Indian adults.

DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to assess the psychometric properties of H-PPRS. The factor analyses (both EFA and CFA) supported a one-dimensional structure corresponding to the structure proposed by Reis et al. (2017). Various test statistics average variance extracted (AVE) score, Cronbach's α , composite reliability, and factor loadings suggest that the Hindi version of PPRS has good internal consistency and measures the construct aptly. Thus, the Hindi version of PPRS would be valid and reliable to use on Indian adult samples.

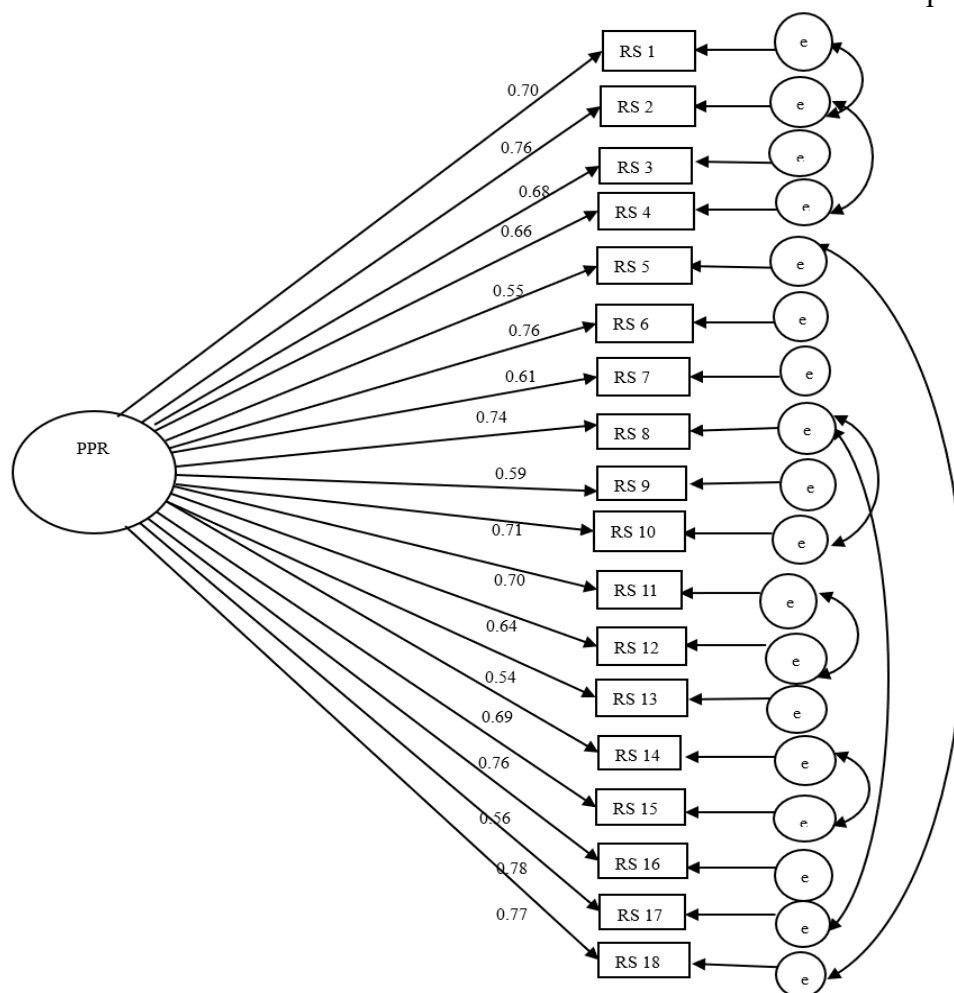


Figure 1 Factor loadings for individual items of PPR; PPR is Perceived Partner Responsiveness, RS represents items of perceived partner responsiveness

In recent years, relationship science has witnessed a surge in its growth. Perceived partner responsiveness (PPR) is an important relationship construct that has contributed to this surge. Several studies have explored the effects of PPR on an individual's physical well-being. For instance, Stanton et al. (2019) in their longitudinal study have evidenced a significant and positive association between PPR and mortality and physical health. PPR was also an influential variable for smoking cessation among single-smoker couples in Britton et al.'s study (2019). Selcuk and Ong (2013) have found links between PPR and sleep quality, and the anxiety of individuals mediates this, and Li et al. (2020) found PPR as a significant predictor of personal well-being in a Chinese sample.

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Besides the essential association between PPR and health and well-being, other studies have investigated the role of PPR on relationship outcomes. Some studies have evidenced a direct association between PPR and sexual desires, sexual satisfaction, and sexual fantasies (Bergeron et al., 2021; Mizrahi et al., 2018; Birnbaum et al., 2016). Impett et al. (2019) have showcased that responsiveness toward sexual desires in intimate relationships enhances relationship satisfaction. Other research has evidenced the direct significant and positive effects of PPR on several relationship outcomes such as relationship satisfaction [Champagne, Muise, 2021], affectionate touch (Jolink et al., 2021), commitment (Farrell et al., 2016), and relationship quality (Adair et al., 2018). Raposo and Muise (2021), in their study, found that PPR positively influenced relationship outcomes of commitment, trust, and relationship quality for anxiously attached individuals. Gordon and Chen (2016) in their study have evidenced that conflicts adversely affect relationship satisfaction when PPR is absent; however, in the presence of PPR, the adverse effects of conflicts on relationship satisfaction are reduced. These studies evidenced the strong association between PPR and relationship processes.

Although the cross-cultural studies on PPR are limited, they report similar findings. Gunaydin et al.'s (2021) study on a sample from Turkey found that average responsiveness and responsiveness variability (daily variations of responsiveness) negatively influenced attachment insecurities over a period of time. While the former decreased attachment avoidance, the latter increased attachment anxiety. Candle and Turliuc's (2021) study involving the Romanian sample found that PPR and self-disclosure enhanced relationship satisfaction. Similarly, Cao et al.'s (2020) study from China evidenced the positive effects of PPR on relationship satisfaction in a cross-cultural context. Based on the studies reviewed here it can be strongly argued the perceived partner relationship plays a significant role in determining both individual and relational well-being, in both Western and non-western contexts. Thus, the availability of a measure of perceived partner responsiveness in regional languages can be a valuable tool for relationship studies. This study is a step in this direction. By validating an important tool for an essential relationship construct in Hindi, this study contributes significantly to the growth of relationship science in the Indian context.

Despite this significant contribution, there are several limitations to the study. To begin with, the sample size of the study was arbitrarily chosen and was only moderate in size. Validating the tool on a large sample may provide more nuanced characters of the scale. Besides the sampling technique used was non-random sampling. Future studies can use random sampling techniques to assess the properties of this scale. Moreover, the scale measures only two domains of the responsiveness construct—understanding and validating, adding the third domain, i.e., ‘caring,’ will make the scale more holistic. Future studies can incorporate this domain in the scale.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the present study provides promising results for the Hindi PPRS scale and suggests further extension of work. Hindi PPRS performed relatively well on the internal consistency, reliability, and validity tests. The future studies can add items for the ‘caring’ domain of responsiveness construct in the scale. In conclusion, it is argued that Hindi PPRS can be meaningfully used to measure perceived partner responsiveness in the Indian context. It will be beneficial in extending research on various relationship domains in Indian culture.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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