YSFC01-02 - **PRELIMINARY VALIDATION OF THE ARABIC VERSION OF THE BEHAVIORAL AND EMOTIONAL RATING SCALE**

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In correspondence to the call for moving beyond symptoms reduction to helping children reach their potentials, Epstein and Sharma (1998) have developed the Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale (BERS), consisting OF 52 items, taping several area of strengths.

This study attempted to ascertain the factor structure as well as the psychometric properties of this instrument in a non-western country, namely, the State of Kuwait.

A stratified probability sample was drawn from private and public schools in all counties. A trained coordinators administered the Arabic versions of BERS- parent form (the scale under investigation) and the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), developed by Goodman (1997).

Results were encouraging and speak to the sound psychometric properties of the Arabic version of BERS. With respect reliability, the overall reliability was excellent (Alpha= .903). By retaining items with factor loading of .50 and above, 28 items were retained with a factorial structure consisting of six components, partially different from the original five-factor solution. Coefficients pertaining to CFA, namely, RMR and GFI indicated a good model fit. Finally, the total strength index of BERS correlated significantly with SDQ and its subscales.

Unlike the original form, the resultant 28-item scale is more consistent with recent calls for use of shorter form of scales (Rapid Assessment Instruments, RAI). The six areas of strengths are very conducive in terms of planning interventions and evaluating outcomes. Differences in the extracted latent variables in both versions will be discussed from theoretical as well as cultural points of view.