Abstract

The Brief Experiential Avoidance Questionnaire (BEAQ) has been widely used to measure experiential avoidance (EA). However, the BEAQ is not available in Chinese. The current study aimed to translate the BEAQ into Chinese and validate it on a sample consisting of college students in China. A convenience sample of 698 students completed two surveys in June 2019 (T1) and July 2019 (T2) in a longitudinal study. Both surveys were included in the analyses. Using the T1 data, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) showed that the original one-factor model of the BEAQ did not fit the data adequately. Moreover, exploratory factor analysis revealed that a 2-factor structure in this Chinese version of the BEAQ (labelled as *cognitive avoidance* and *behavioural avoidance*) and a subsequent CFA of the BEAQ using T2 data replicated the two-factor structure. The two BEAQ subscales demonstrated good internal consistency in T1 and T2 (Cronbach's alpha values of > 0.78) and acceptable test–retest reliability over a two-month interval (ICC > 0.45). T1 cognitive avoidance scores were associated significantly with another measure of experiential avoidance and negative measures of negative affect and anxiety and depression. They also significantly predicted increased negative affect in T2. However, T1 behavioural avoidance scores were associated significantly with positive outcomes of positive affect, life satisfaction and resilience, and significantly reduced predicted negative affect and increased positive affect and life satisfaction in T2. Results highlight the importance of interpreting experiential avoidance through cultural lens. The Chinese version of the BEAQ could be used to measure experiential avoidance in Chinese college students and hence support further research in developing knowledge regarding the mechanisms of diverse strategies used by people in avoiding negative internal experience in different cultures.

Keywords: BEAQ; experiential avoidance; psychological flexibility; college students; psychometrics