

ASSESSING QUALITY OF LIFE IN YOUNG PEOPLE: THE ITALIAN VERSION OF THE YOUTH QUALITY OF LIFE INSTRUMENT

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INTRODUCTION

Improving the quality of life (QOL) should be a primary focus for psychological interventions with children and adolescents and self-perceived QOL is particularly relevant for Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT). Nevertheless there is no validated Italian questionnaire to measure QOL of young people without a specific medical disease. The aim of this study is to validate the Italian version of the Youth Quality of Life Instrument – Research Version (YQOL-R, Patrick & Edwards, 2002), a self-report measure that evaluates children and adolescents' self perceptions about positive and negative aspects of their life in four different domains: **Self, Relationships, Environment and General QOL**.

SAMPLE AND METHODS

YQOL is a 41 items questionnaire about self perceived aspects of life evaluated by the subject on a 11 points scale (see Figure 1). The Italian translation of the original version was provided by the authors.

A sample of 1287 Italian students aged 11-18 was recruited from different parts of Italy (see Table 1 and Graph 1).

YQOL was administered in classrooms, during school hours by a psychologist, along with other measures:

- Avoidance and Fusion Questionnaire for Youth, (Greco et al. , 2008)
- Child and Adolescents Mindfulness Measure (Greco et al. , 2011)
- Child Behavior Checklist Youth Self Report - YSR (Achenbach, 2001).

YQOL was administered again after a months interval to a part of the sample (N= 395 , Age 11-18)

RESULTS

Reliability

Cronbach's alpha was used to assess for **internal consistency** of YQOL's domains (See table 2).

R-Pearsons' coefficient of correlation between the first administration and the second administration of YQOL was used to evaluate **test-retest reliability** (See Table 3).

- All domains and total score of YQOL have a good internal consistency .
- All domains and total score have a low/moderate reliability at 3 months.

Factorial structure

A principal component analysis with orthogonal varimax rotation of a four factor solution was used to test the hypothesized factorial structure.

- KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin index of sampling adequacy) = .961
- The 4 factors solution accounted overall for 53,54 of the variance.

Correlations

R-Pearsons' coefficient of correlation was used to assess for **relations between quality of life, avoidance and fusion and psychopathological symptoms** (See table 4).

- A strong significant negative correlation was found between *self* domain and *total score* of YQOL and Internalizing Problems of YSR (anxious depressed + withdrawn depressed + somatic complaints scales).
- Moderate significant negative correlations were found between all domains of YQOL and Total Problem of YSR.
- Moderate significant negative correlations were found between all domains of YQOL and AFQ-Y.
- Moderate significant positive correlation was found between *self* and *general QOL* domains, YQOL total scores and CAMM.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The Italian version of YQOL showed acceptable psychometric properties and can be effectively applied in the Italian context to assess self-perceived QOL of adolescents for screening or therapeutic purposes.

Results indicate that low QOL (especially in *self* domain) is associated with internalizing symptoms and ACT processes of avoidance and fusion.

Other analysis on this data could be conducted to reduce the number of items; further studies should investigate the relation between anxiety and depression and QOL and the impact of life events on QOL in adolescence.

Figure 1: Item's example

	I am able to do things as well as I want											
Not at all	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Very much

Table 1:Sample

TOTAL	Sample	N = 1287
GEOGRAPHIC AREA	North	581 (45.4%)
	Center	44 (3.4%)
	South and Islands	655 (51.2%)
AGE	Mean	14,42
	Range	11 - 18
GENDER	F	738 (57,8%)
	M	539 (42,2%)

Graph 1 : Mean of scores

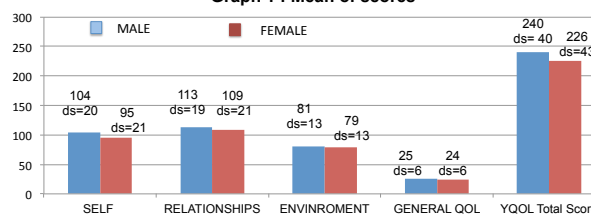


Table 2: Internal Consistency

Domain	Cronbach's α
SELF	.886
RELATIONSHIPS	.910
ENVIRONMENT	.836
GENERAL	.866
QOL Total Score	.957

41 Items N = 1243

Table 3: Test-Retest Reliability

Domain	Pearson's r
SELF	.616**
RELATIONSHIPS	.637**
ENVIRONMENT	.526**
GENERAL	.554**
QOL Total score	.645**

N = 395 **p<.01

Table 4: Correlations

YQOL domains	AFQ-Y (8)	CAMM	Internalizing (YSR)	Externalizing (YSR)	Total Problem (YSR)
Self	-.410**	.346**	-.527**	-.157**	-.458**
Relationships	-.348**	.282**	-.462**	-.273**	-.467**
Environment	-.291**	.220**	-.370**	-.219**	-.379**
General QOL	-.427**	.327**	-.495**	-.241**	-.471**
QOL Total score	-.404**	.332**	-.526**	.227**	-.490**

N = 1243 **p<.01

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