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# DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION OF THE C.A.R.E INVENTORY: A FACTOR ANALYSIS MODEL FOR MEASURING POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY CONSTRUCTS

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## ABSTRACT

The present study examines the factor structure of the C.A.R.E Inventory. This psychological assessment tool was developed by the authors in response to the COVID pandemic when there was a lacuna of locally developed assessment tools to assess positivity and hence develop such positive psychology constructs for empirical assessment. After ethical approval, items were generated based on a survey of 2780 adults on the specific positive psychology constructs necessary during the present pandemic scenario and its aftermath. The participants gave the maximum rating for four main positive psychology constructs based on which the acronym C.A.R.E was devised where:

**C:** stands for Compassion and Self-Compassion

**A:** stands for Achieving a Purpose in Life

**R:** stands for Relationship Building

**E:** stands for Enhancing Positive Emotions

Following this, items were generated and subjected to content validity with subject experts and stakeholders. After establishing the required content validity ratio, normality assessments were conducted followed by exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis for a final sample of 862 adults. CFA models reveal that the 36 item C.A.R.E Inventory has sufficient model fit indices, namely the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Incremental Fit Index (IFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), and Relative Fit index (RFI), all above 0.9, indicating good model fit. This psychological tool is hence ready for use globally as it has no culturally biased items.

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**KEYWORDS:** C.A.R.E inventory, positive psychology, factor analysis model, reliability, validity

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Positive psychology postulates that the absence of “negative”, that is, the absence of disease, does not ensure well-being. The theoretical framework given by Martin Seligman called the PERMA model consists of five building blocks to human well-being namely Positive emotions, Engagement or flow, Relationships, Meaning or purpose and Accomplishment. Using this framework as the foundation, it was attempted by the authors to ideally construct and validate a psychological tool to quantify positive psychological constructs from the Indian viewpoint. For this purpose, an initial survey was conducted with 780 adults to help identify the positive psychology constructs meaningful to the present scenario. The participants were asked to rate 26 positive psychology constructs such as optimism, hope, compassion, self-compassion, accomplishment, humour, courage, zest, savouring, gratitude, achievement of a purpose in life, happiness, relationship building, and many more. The participants gave the maximum rating for four main positive psychology constructs based on which the acronym C.A.R.E was devised where:

**C:** stands for Compassion and Self-Compassion

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### 1.1. Operational definition of constructs taken up for study

Compassion and self-compassion is operationally defined as the kindness shown to oneself and others through thoughts, words, gestures and/ or actions

Achieving a purpose in life is operationally defined as awareness or recognition of one’s call or purpose of existence and having a plan of action to follow through.

Relationship building is operationally defined as awareness and deliberate effort to build and maintain constructive relationships with others.

Enhancing positive emotions is operationally defined as an effort to be aware of the positive emotions within oneself and also an effort to enhance or maintain them.

A brief review of literature suggests that there are many tools of positive psychology measuring specifically one of the positive psychology constructs namely, gratitude, resilience, optimism, life satisfaction, hope and happiness. The objective of this paper is to develop a tool to measure different positive psychology constructs in one brief tool, a one stop solution to understand and measure many elements of positive psychology that are essential for

human well-being in the COVID and post COVID scenario. An analysis into the validation of positive psychology interventions by Seligman et al. (2005) reveals that the future of positive psychology interventions lies in the placebo control trials of interventions that help to increase happiness of the participants. This paper also vouches for longitudinal studies that can use the internet for collecting and recording data of participants is the way forward. An analysis into the positive psychology constructs that were identified reveal that constructs like compassion, purpose in life, positive relationships and positive emotions are the need of the hour. Compassion has been studied for its effect on the human body and its various functions. Di Bello, et al. (2021) studied the relationship between empathetic sensitivity, and levels of compassion to heart rate variations. This study concluded that compassion stimulated a greater level of sensitivity to emotional pain. This sensitivity leads reduced heart rate variability. When the participants indulged in any action to help or reduce the pain of others resulting in better well-being for self. An example of compassion and kindness of human beings during the COVID pandemic where, ordinary people rose above their own suffering to show compassion and kindness to alleviate the suffering of others by helping secure medicine, oxygen cylinders and hospital beds for patients in India. (Mander, 2022). Many such inspiring stories arose during the pandemic. A school in Orissa, a state in India, began “school on wheels”, where the schools distributed food, medicines and other essentials to students in villages in at three-wheeler. (“Stories From India That Show Endless Kindness in the Midst of a Cruel Second Wave of COVID-19 Pandemic,” 2021).

The COVID pandemic has changed priorities and given a new purpose in life to many individuals in India and the world over. Many people have re-evaluated their purpose in life and made physical and mental health as the purpose of their existence. (“Coronavirus Gives Us an Opportunity to Re-Evaluate the Purpose of Life,” 2020). A study on the crisis of the pandemic and its effects highlights the need for better understanding and coping techniques to improve the well-being of the public. (Umaiorubagam et al., 2021). Another research into the search for purpose propels people to search for 6 C’s, namely, capability, credibility, connectivity, contemplation, compassion, and companions. According to Fernández, 2021, these six constructs are important to tide over the pandemic and serve as lessons the pandemic leaves with us for a better and fruitful life. Not only priorities but adjustment styles

too got a revamp due to the pandemic. The situation was a test for many relationships as lockdowns forced proximity on families and forced new adjustment patterns among couples and families in India. (Mohan, 2022). Research has shown that presence of positive emotions has a better effect on relationships and helps develop better coping styles during such crisis situations. (Israelashvili, 2021). The above review indicates the need for such positive psychology constructs and the need to empirically measure such positive psychology constructs.

In an editorial article reviewing the recent developments in positive psychology measures, Constantini et al, (2022) gave a collection of 12 tools to measure different positive psychology constructs. The paper recommends that the tools are specific to any one particular positive psychology construct and emphasize the need for a scale that would assess a comprehensive set of positive psychology constructs (Constantini et al, 2022). The authors conclude that there is a need for more deeper understanding of many positive psychology constructs, hence a need to develop newer positive psychology assessment measures so that a deeper and better understanding of positive psychology can be achieved. A similar study on the challenges in the field of positive psychology, van Zyl and Rothmann (2022) identified challenges to the field of positive psychology namely, lack of a unifying metatheory, "jingle- jangle" fallacy (constructs being misunderstood, for example, "flourishing"), poor validity of positive psychological assessment measures, interventions failing produce significant or sustainable changes, relying on "contextual factors" for justification rather than self-correcting or updating existing theories, overemphasis of quantification and statistics, and finally being culturally biased. To overcome such challenges, the authors suggest developing responses and developing newer assessment methods giving newer meanings into positive psychology. A similar review by Ryff (2022) suggests researchers look for newer combinations of measures that could overcome the inequality created by the pandemic.

From the above review, it can be understood that there is a need for further developing assessment measures of positive psychology constructs.

## 2. METHODS AND MATERIALS

### 2.1. Research Objectives

The research objective for this study is to develop and validate the C. A. R. E inventory.

### 2.2. Item Generation

The next step of the tool construction was item generation. C.A.R.E inventory version 1 was created

with 80 items (20 for each construct). Further versions 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 were created with consultation from subject experts and stakeholders. Further language correction was done by two professors from the department of English of the institute of affiliation. This version was also sent to experts in the field of positive psychology explaining the further steps involved in validation. On their approval to go ahead, the Version 7 consisting of 40 items (10 items for each of the 4 constructs identified) was subjected to Content Validity. 12 subject experts from all over India and 25 stakeholders (adults chosen randomly) were given the C.A.R.E inventory to be validated. The Content Validity Ratio (CVR) was computed using the formula given below:

$$\text{Content Validity Ratio CVR} = (N_e - N/2) / (N/2)$$

Where  $N_e$  = Number of raters with ratings of 3 (Relevant item) and 4 (Highly Relevant Item)

$N$  = Total Number of Raters

Using the above formula CVR\* for subject experts was 0.95\*\*, and CVR\* for stakeholders was 0.88\*\* (\*\*Acceptable value for CVR is 0.99 for 5 raters, 0.85 for 8 raters, and 0.62 for 10 raters) (Polit, D. E., Beck, C. T., and Owen, S. P. (2007).

### 2.3. Ethical approval

At the same time, ethical approval for the study was sought from the Institutional Human Ethics Committee of institute of affiliation. The approval was granted vide AUW/IHEC/PSY-21-22/FHP-20 (attached in the title page and cover letter only as the name of the institute is mentioned in the document)

### 2.4. Pilot study

A Pilot study was conducted with a sample of 208 adults chosen through simple random sampling. The C.A.R.E inventory was administered to the participants. Data was collected and analysed using the SPSS Software version 21 and the AMOS graphics version 22. Normality testing assessed the skewness, kurtosis and histogram for normal distribution. The values for skewness and kurtosis were between 0.1 and -0.1 which was found to be adequate. (Griffin, and Steinbrecher, 2013). Item Correlation also revealed sufficient intercorrelations between items. Exploratory factor analysis extracted four principal components and the confirmatory factor analysis done using AMOS graphics revealed sufficient model fit indices. It was decided to go for the final data collection.

### 2.5. Sample for the final study

The sample for the final study consisted of 1000 adults selected randomly, all from 10 tier-2 cities (according to the classification of Indian cities given

by the Indian government to allot house rent allowance to its employees and provide tax exemptions). These cities all have a population between 50,000 and 99,000. They have the maximum scope for growth and development due to the presence of maximum health care facilities, educational institutions and work places according to economists.

**2.6. Final Study**

Data was collected from 1000 adults chosen through simple random sampling. 862 responses were valid. There were omissions missing data from the other 132 responses and hence were left out in the data analysis. The 862 responses were analysed using SPSS software version 21 and the AMOS graphics Version 22.

**3. RESULTS**

An analysis into the means, standard deviations, skewness, kurtosis and normality testing was initially done.

**3.1. Normality Testing**

The Skewness and Kurtosis (values between - 0.95

and -0.03) \* and Normal Distribution (Histogram) was present for all the 40 items in the C.A.R.E inventory. The next step was Item Intercorrelation. All item intercorrelations are significant.

(\*The maximum and minimum values for the skewness and Kurtosis fall within the expected range of -2 to +2, Griffin, and Steinbrecher, 2013)

**3.2. Exploratory Factor Analysis**

All 40 items of the instrument were subjected to an exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis (KMO = 0.94). Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity Chi-Square (780) = 30096.96,  $p < .001$ , indicating that correlation structure is adequate for factor analyses (Field, A. 2009). The maximum likelihood factor analysis with a cut-off point of 0.40 and the Kaiser’s criterion of eigenvalues greater than 1 yielded a four-factor solution as the best fit for the data, accounting for 69.70% of the cumulative variance. The table below indicates the factor loadings for all the items in the exploratory factor analysis.

(Table 1 to be placed here)

**Table 1: Results from an Exploratory Factor Analysis for the 40 item C.A.R.E inventory**

C.A.R.E item	Factor loading			
	1	2	3	4
<b>Factor 1: Compassion and Self-Compassion</b>				
3. I see a casual friend in need of my help on the way. I will stop and help him/her, though I am getting late.	0.59			
18. Whenever I help people, I feel satisfied and good about myself	0.57			
26. I am kind to myself	0.61			
5. I rate myself as a kind and compassionate person.	0.61			
13.I think that Compassion and Hope are important human values to be followed in my life.	0.63			
38. I feel inadequate in many ways when compared to other people (R)	0.66			
9. When I am in emotional distress, I will try to remind myself to be compassionate	0.63			
15. I am intolerant and disapproving of my own faults. (R)	0.67			
24. I am intolerant and disapprove of others’ faults. (R)	0.65			
22. I understand others’ emotional pain.	0.63			
<b>Factor 2: Achievement of Purpose in Life</b>				
17. I feel that my life is worthwhile and valuable.		0.57		
7. I think that I am making progress towards achieving the goals that I have set for myself.		0.67		
5. I think that I have achieved the goals that I have set for myself.		0.64		
39. In general, I think that I lead a meaningful and purposeful life.		0.68		
19. I feel contented and satisfied with the direction my life is taking.		0.57		
31. I have clarity as to what I want in life.		0.59		
1. I can clearly picture myself 5 years from now.		0.64		
21. I feel unsure of what I am doing in my life. (R)		0.59		
33. I feel that I lack a mission in my life. (R)		0.67		
23. I feel that I am constantly searching for fulfilment. (R)		0.63		
<b>Factor 3: Relationship Building</b>				
30. I feel loved by the people around me.			0.49	
25. I feel lonely even when I am surrounded by people. (R)			0.56	
10. I readily receive help and support from others when I need it.			0.53	
35. I am satisfied with my personal relationships.			0.57	
27. I feel that the people in my life understand and cooperate with me.	0.43		0.54	
2. I feel that I can trust the significant others in my life.			0.57	
40. Even when I fail in certain things, I feel that there are people to support me			0.56	
6. I feel that people in my life are unpredictable. (R)			0.56	
29. I feel that people in my life will not care for me when I am in distress. (R)			0.58	



Next, the discriminant Validity and Reliability (Table 3 to be placed here) were calculated as can be seen below:

**Table 3: Discriminant validity for the 36-item C.A.R.E Inventory**

	CR	AVE	MSV	ASV	R	C	A	E
R	0.962	0.716	0.042	0.028	0.846			
C	0.924	0.604	0.049	0.032	0.206	0.777		
A	0.961	0.753	0.049	0.024	0.150	0.221	0.868	
E	0.953	0.669	0.020	0.008	0.141	0.059	0.019	0.818

It can be seen from the above Table 4 that the factor loadings are all above 0.6, and the Construct Reliability (CR) from the above table are 0.96, 0.92, 0.96 and 0.95 for the four factors extracted, it can also be seen that the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values are 0.71, 0.60, 0.75, and 0.67. Hence there is good Convergent Validity being established.

From the Intercorrelations between dimensions, it can be seen that the diagonal R2 values (highlighted) are all above the other intercorrelations, this scale has sufficient Discriminant Validity.

Next, the concurrent validity of the C. A. R. E. inventory was tested by correlating the scores obtained on each of the dimensions of the schedule with already standardized tools. For this a sample of 230 adults selected through simple random sampling was used. The tools used for this purpose are

1. C. A. R. E. inventory (being validated)
2. Self-compassion scale (Raes et al., 2011) short form consisting of 12 items
3. Brief resilience scale (Smith et al., 2008)

4. Life orientation scale (Scheier, Carver & Bridges, 2004).
5. The Adult Trait Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991)

The results indicate that the C. A. R. E inventory has a significant high correlation with self-compassion (r=0.48), resilience (r=0.44), life orientation (r=0.43) and hope (r=0.49). This indicates that the scores on compassion and self-compassion, achievement of purpose, relationship building and enhancing positive emotions all correlate significantly with the scores obtained on already standardized tools. Hence, the concurrent validity of the C. A. R. E. inventory is established.

**Reliability:** The reliability was established using Cronbach Alpha which was computed using SPSS Version 21. The Cronbach Alpha value for the 36-item C.A.R.E inventory was 0.920.

A comparison of the fit indices arrived at for all three models were done. The results are shown below.

(Table 4 to be placed here)

**Table 4: A comparison of the fit indices of the three models**

C.A.R.E Inventory	MODEL FIT INDICES									
	Normed Chi-square	CFI	IFI	TLI	NFI	RFI	RMSEA	SRMR	AIC	BIC
40-item	3.369	0.942	0.942	0.938	0.919	0.914	0.052	0.0308	2644.98	3054.78
38-item	3.497	0.943	0.943	0.940	0.922	0.917	0.054	0.0293	2648.65	2858.91
36-item	3.678	0.943	0.943	0.939	0.924	0.917	0.056	0.0294	2318.75	2689.97

Since all the 3 models received the required fit indices, it was decided to use the model with the least AIC and BIC values, that is the 36-item model for further proceedings. This model with 36-items received the best-fit indices and is considered the best fit in the CFA test for goodness of fit.

A summary of the reliability and validity of the 36 items C. A. R. E. inventory is as follows

**3.4. Reliability statistics**

1. Cronbach’s alpha: 0.92
2. Construct reliability: 0.96, 0.92, 0.96 and 0.95 for each of the constructs respectively

**3. Validity statistics**

4. Content validity: 0.95 for subject experts, and 0.88 for stakeholders

5. Convergent validity: 0.71, 0.60, 0.75, and 0.67 from the AVE scores
6. Discriminant validity: 0.84, 0.77, 0.86 and 0.81 from the R2 scores
7. Concurrent validity: Significant positive correlations established.

The 36 items C.A.R.E Assessment Schedule is hence sufficiently standardized.

**4. DISCUSSION**

In the study, the C. A. R. E inventory was validated initially for content using content validity ratio. Following this, the exploratory factor analysis revealed four factors, followed by the confirmatory factor analysis which was repeated three times in order to arrive at items with the best model fit indices.

For the developed 36-item C.A.R.E inventory, the model fit indices were acceptable. The internal consistency was also sufficient. The C. A. R. E inventory is sufficiently validated to measure positive psychology constructs namely compassion and self-compassion, achievement of purpose in life, relationship building and enhancing positive emotions. The inventory is now ready for use globally. Similar studies on scale development in psychology have used exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis and also have used model fit indices to report the validation of the scale developed (Cabrera-Nguyen, 2010; Brown, 2006). Best practices in validating scales reported by Boateng et al, (2018), recommend a similar step-by-step method to follow in validation of scales measuring behavioural and psycho-social outcomes. McCoach et al., (2013) similarly outline the steps involved in scale construction for validation and standardization. An earlier paper reported the method of validation through convergent and discriminant validity (Campbell and Fiske, 1959). As can be seen many studies report that scale construction methods for social sciences can be done through exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The findings of the present study indicates that the 36 item C.A.R.E inventory shows a goodness of fit model that can sufficiently measure the positive

psychology constructs namely, compassion, achievement of purpose in life, relationship building and enhancing positive emotions. In comparison with the 40-item model and the 38-item model, the 36-item model fulfils reliability, content validity and discriminatory validity.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Further research is required to develop an intervention that could help improve the constructs measured by this assessment tool. The author is already in process of developing and validating the C.A.R.E Intervention Module to improve the measured constructs.

## ETHICAL STATEMENT

The author hereby declares compliance with Ethical Statement. Ethical approval has been taken from the Human Ethical Committee of the University of affiliation that has granted approval for the study. (Ethical Clearance attached with title page and cover letter)

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The author hereby declares that there is no conflict of interest or acknowledgements.

## INFORMED CONSENT

An Informed consent has been obtained from all participants of the study.

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