

Adaptation of the early parenting attitudes scale to Turkish: A validity and reliability study

Erken ebeveynlik tutumları ölçeği'nin Türkçe'ye uyarlaması: Geçerlik ve güvenirlik çalışması

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ABSTRACT

Aim: Early childhood is a critical process characterized by rapid advancements in all developmental domains. This period holds great importance for both individual development and societal impacts. It is considered that parental attitudes and supportive environments provided during this period contribute significantly to children becoming healthy adults. This study aimed to examine the validity and reliability of the Early Parenting Attitudes Questionnaire (EPAQ).

Methods: The research was conducted with 266 mothers of children aged 3-6 years. In the adaptation process, linguistic equivalence, content validity, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), reliability, and discrimination tests were utilized.

Results: Following linguistic equivalence procedures, no significant meaning differences were found between Turkish and English forms. Content validity was evaluated using Lawshe's technique, with a content validity index of 0.98. EFA results indicated that the scale possesses a two-factor structure explaining 42.20% of the total variance. This structure is acceptable in social sciences, and fit indices support this finding. CFA results also confirmed this two-factor structure. Cronbach's Alpha was 0.613 for the entire scale, 0.792 for the "early learning" sub-dimension, and 0.658 for "love and attachment."

Conclusion: These results indicate that the EPAQ is a valid and reliable tool for Turkish mothers.

Keywords: early parenting attitudes, early childhood period, scale adaptation, early learning, love and attachment

ÖZ

Amaç: Erken çocukluk dönemi, çocuğun tüm gelişim alanlarında hızlı ilerlemelerin olduğu kritik bir süreçtir. Bu süreç hem bireysel gelişim hem de toplumsal etkiler açısından büyük önem taşır. Bu dönemde sergilenen ebeveyn tutumları ve sağlanan destekleyici ortamların, çocukların yetişkinlik dönemlerinde sağlıklı bireyler olmaları noktasında önemli katkılar sunduğu düşünülmektedir. Bu çalışmada, Erken Ebeveynlik Tutumları Ölçeği'nin (EETÖ) geçerlik-güvenirliğinin yapılması amaçlanmıştır.

Yöntem: Araştırma, 3-6 yaş arasında çocuğu olan 266 annenin katılımıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir. Ölçek uyarlama sürecinde dilsel eşdeğerlik, kapsam geçerliği, açıcı faktör analizi, doğrulayıcı faktör analizi, güvenirlik ve ayırt edicilik testleri kullanılmıştır.

Bulgular: Dilsel eşdeğerlik uygulamaları sonrasında Türkçe ve İngilizce formlar arasında anlam farklılığı olmadığı saptanmıştır. Kapsam geçerliği, uzman görüşlerine dayalı olarak Lawshe tekniği ile değerlendirilmiş ve kapsam geçerlik indeksi 0.98 olarak belirlenmiştir. Yapı geçerliğini değerlendirmek amacıyla yapılan AFA sonucunda ölçeğin iki faktörlü bir yapıya sahip olduğu belirlenmiştir. Ölçek, toplam varyansın %42.20'sini açıklamaktadır. Bu yapı, sosyal bilimlerde kabul edilebilir bir seviyede olup, uyum indeksleri bu sonucu desteklemektedir. Yapılan DFA sonuçları da bu iki faktörlü yapıyı doğrulamıştır. Güvenirlik analizi sonucunda ölçeğin tamamı için Cronbach's Alfa değeri 0.613, erken öğrenme alt boyutu için 0.792, sevgi ve bağlanma alt boyutu için 0.658 olarak bulunmuştur.

Sonuçlar: Bu sonuçlar EETÖ'nün Türk anneler için geçerli ve güvenilir bir ölçme aracı olduğunu göstermektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: erken ebeveynlik tutumları, erken çocukluk dönemi, ölçek uyarlama, erken öğrenme, sevgi ve bağlanma

Introduction

The concept of parenting encompasses bidirectional relationships between generations, established through both biological and social connections. It is defined as a dynamic process involving belief systems, behavioral patterns, and attitudes directed toward children (Kulaksızoğlu, 2008; Ren et al., 2023). Attitudes, in this context, refer to the aggregate of an individual's responses toward themselves and their environment, including events, situations, or objects (İnceoğlu, 2010).

Early childhood represents a critical developmental stage that lays the foundation for subsequent life phases. During this period, children are particularly receptive to external influences and require substantial protection (Güven & Efe-Azeskin, 2020). The provision of appropriate care and enriched learning experiences during this rapid growth phase is essential for fostering healthy development. Parents serve as the primary agents of interaction, with their behaviors, parenting strategies, and quality of communication significantly shaping children's emerging personalities and behaviors (Can-Yaşar & Kaya, 2020). Beyond fulfilling basic needs, parents guide children's educational and socialization processes, acting as key facilitators as children explore the external world, form social relationships, and develop emotional expression (Bornstein & Putnick, 2012).

Parental attitudes and behaviors are interpreted through multiple theoretical frameworks. The psychodynamic model, rooted in Freud's theory of personality development, posits that the foundational structure of personality is formed within the first five years, influencing later behaviors and attitudes. Critical psychological faculties such as self-confidence, autonomy, and gender identity emerge during the anal and phallic stages (Geçtan, 1994). Empirical research underscores the importance of parent-child relationships in these developmental processes (Ashraf et al., 2020; Chaplin et al., 2022; Prime et al., 2023). Contrasting Freud's

perspective, Erikson's psychosocial theory asserts that personality development is lifelong, characterized by stage-specific crises whose successful resolution facilitates healthy progression. Failure to resolve these crises may result in psychopathology, with adverse experiences during these stages linked to behavioral problems in adolescence and beyond (Erikson, 1950; Geçtan, 1994; Johnson, 1972).

Bowlby's attachment theory emphasizes the critical role of secure early attachments for psychological and social adjustment. Insecure attachment styles are associated with difficulties in stress management and social relationships (Chaplin et al., 2022). The behavioral model views parental attitudes as direct determinants of children's behavior, where reinforcements shape learning and personality development. Children acquire behaviors through environmental feedback, with parental attitudes serving as key influences (Sarwar, 2016). Bandura's social cognitive theory further highlights parental modeling as central to children's social and emotional development, wherein positive parental behaviors foster similar traits in children, while negative attitudes may have detrimental effects, including on self-efficacy (Bandura, 1969; Saygi, 2011).

Baumrind's typology categorizes parenting styles into authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive, each differing in expectations, warmth, and limit-setting, thereby influencing children's social and psychological outcomes distinctly (Baumrind, 1966; Nas, 1986). Maccoby and Martin expand this framework by conceptualizing parenting along responsiveness and demandingness dimensions, identifying four styles: authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and neglectful. These styles differentially impact children's emotional and social development, with neglectful parenting linked to significant developmental challenges and authoritative parenting associated with more balanced outcomes (Maccoby & Martin, 1983).

Despite advances in conceptualizing parenting, ongoing debates persist regarding optimal frameworks and measurement approaches. Traditional models emphasizing stable, general parenting styles have been critiqued for insufficiently capturing contextual variability and cultural specificity. This has prompted a shift toward more flexible, situation-specific, and domain-specific models that better reflect the complexity of parenting practices (Smetana, 2017).

In Türkiye, several scales have been developed or adapted to assess parenting attitudes (Acar et al., 2019; Kisbu et al., 2023), predominantly focusing on general parenting styles and parental behaviors (Bulunuz & Bulunuz, 2022; Gozu et al., 2020). However, early parenting is a multidimensional and contextual process that includes recognizing developmental needs, fostering emotional intimacy, providing stimulating environments, and demonstrating developmental sensitivity (Wachs et al., 2014; Zheng et al., 2017; Chakraborty, 2022). Consequently, there is a clear need for psychometrically robust instruments grounded in developmental theory and culturally sensitive frameworks to assess early parenting attitudes accurately (Fox, 1992; Derlan et al., 2016).

This study addresses this gap by adapting the Early Parenting Attitudes Scale (EPAQ) into Turkish and evaluating its validity and reliability. While prior research often targets children's behavioral and adjustment problems, interventions focused solely on modifying child behaviors may provide short-term solutions but risk long-term issues by neglecting parent-child relational dynamics (Jeong et al., 2021). Positive parental behaviors create a supportive environment conducive to healthy development, whereas negative attitudes pose risks ranging from minor harm to severe consequences such as child mortality. Multidisciplinary research and intervention in early parenting are therefore critical for promoting child health (Jeong et al., 2021; Prime et al., 2023). By adapting and validating the EPAQ, this study aims to contribute a culturally relevant tool that enhances understanding and support of parental attitudes, ultimately fostering child development.

Method

Research Design

This study is a scale adaptation study conducted based on the general survey design, utilizing quantitative research methods. The study procedure included the steps of translation, pilot application, linguistic equivalence, content validity, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), reliability analysis, and item discrimination tests (Büyükoztürk et al., 2020).

Participants

The population of the study consists of mothers of children aged 3–6 attending preschools affiliated with the Van Provincial Directorate of National Education. The sample comprises a total of 266 mothers who voluntarily participated in the research and whose children attend five preschools selected from the population via the simple random sampling method. Regarding the participating mothers, it was determined that 71.1% were in the 30–39 age range, 61.3% of their spouses were in the 30–39 age range, 50.4% were university graduates, 48.1% of their spouses were university graduates, 59.8% were not employed, 50.4% had two children, and 28.6% identified themselves with a balanced and consistent maternal profile. As for the children of the participants, it was determined that 50.4% were male, 35% were six years old, 51.9% were firstborns, and 47.7% were described mostly as sociable.

Data collection tools

The data were collected using the “*Personal Information Form*” and the “*Early Parenting Attitudes Scale*”.

The Personal Information Form was developed by the researchers to gather information regarding the demographic characteristics of the mothers and children. The form includes questions regarding the age and educational level of the mother and her spouse, the mother's employment status, the number of children, and the gender, age, and birth order of the child, as well as the mother's perception of parenting and assessments of the child's general temperament.

The Early Parenting Attitudes Scale (EPAQ) was developed by Hembacher and Frank (2020). The scale comprises three sub-dimensions and a total of 24 items. These sub-dimensions are “affection and attachment,” “early learning,” and “rules and respect.” The items are rated on a 7-point Likert-type scale. The original form of the scale contains 12 reverse-coded items. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated as 0.90 for the total scale, 0.82 for the “affection and attachment” sub-dimension, 0.83 for the “early learning” sub-dimension, and 0.81 for the “rules and respect” sub-dimension.

Data collection

The necessary permissions for the adaptation study were obtained from the owner of the scale via e-mail. Ethics committee approval (25-10-2024/45) was obtained from the Çankırı Karatekin University Ethics Committee for Science, Mathematics, and Social Sciences, and official permission for implementation was secured from the relevant schools. Participation in the study was on a voluntary basis, and the data collection tools were distributed to the mothers via school administrators and teachers.

Data analysis

Evaluations regarding construct validity and item analyses were conducted during the scale adaptation process. Data related to construct validity were tested via EFA and CFA. In the reliability analyses, the Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient was examined, and the upper-lower group discrimination test was conducted.

Findings

The findings regarding the linguistic equivalence, content validity, construct validity, and reliability analyses of the Early Parenting Attitudes Scale are presented below.

Findings on Linguistic Equivalence and Content Validity

The linguistic equivalence and cross-cultural adaptation of the EPAQ were conducted in accordance with the established forward-backward translation methodological framework (Brislin, 1970). In the initial forward translation phase, the original English scale was independently translated into Turkish by two bilingual field experts in child development and educational sciences. Following this, an expert panel consisting of the researchers and the translators reviewed both Turkish drafts to evaluate semantic and cultural appropriateness, leading to a reconciled single Turkish draft.

In the subsequent back-translation phase, this reconciled Turkish draft was translated back into English by two independent bilingual language experts who were completely blind to the original English version. Finally, the research team meticulously compared the original English scale with the back-translated English versions to ensure conceptual, semantic, and idiomatic equivalence. Minor discrepancies were discussed and resolved through a consensus-based reconciliation process, confirming that no significant shifts in meaning occurred. This rigorous process ensured the linguistic validity of the finalized Turkish form prior to expert evaluation.

Following the linguistic adaptation, the Lawshe technique, one of the most frequently preferred methods in content validity evaluation, was applied to determine the extent to which the scale and scale items cover and represent the domain intended to be measured. According to the Lawshe (1975) method, the participation of at least five and at most forty experts is required for content validity evaluation. Lawshe (1975) explains the content validity process with the following stages: forming a group of field experts, preparing the candidate scale form, collecting expert opinions, calculating content validity ratios (CVR) for items, obtaining the scale's content validity indices (CVI), and creating the final form in line with these ratios and indices. Content validity ratios are calculated by the ratio of the number of experts evaluating an item as "Appropriate" to the total number of experts expressing an opinion minus one (Yurdugül, 2005). In this study, content validity analysis was conducted by asking ten experts (4 Associate Professors in Child Development, 1 Assistant Professor in Child Development, 2 Associate Professors in Educational Sciences, 1 Professor in Developmental Psychology, 1 Professor in Midwifery, and 1 Assistant Professor in Public Relations and Publicity) to evaluate the scale items as Appropriate or Not Appropriate. The CVR and CVI resulting from the evaluations of the ten experts are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Content validity ratios of EPAQ items

EPAQ	Expert Opinion		CVI
	Appropriate	Not Appropriate	
1.m	10	0	1
2.m	10	0	1
3.m	10	0	1
4.m	10	0	1
5.m	10	0	1
6.m	9	1	0.80
7.m	10	0	1
8.m	10	0	1
9.m	10	0	1
10.m	10	0	1
11.m	10	0	1
12.m	10	0	1
14.m	10	0	1
14.m	10	0	1
15.m	10	0	1
16.m	10	0	1
17.m	10	0	1
18.m	10	0	1
19.m	10	0	1
20.m	10	0	1
21.m	10	0	1
22.m	10	0	1
23.m	10	0	1
24.m	10	0	1
Number of Experts	10		

Content Validity Criterion	0.62
CVR	0.98

According to Table 1, all 24 items in the scale were deemed appropriate, and expert consensus was achieved. The content validity ratios were calculated using the formula $CVR = N_g / (N/2) - 1$. The values presented in Table 2 were utilized to determine the statistical significance of the content validity ratios. These reference values were established by Veneziano and Hooper (1997) at the 0.05 significance level.

Table 2. Minimum values for content validity ratios

Number of Experts	Min. Value
(5)	0.99
(6)	0.99
(7)	0.99
(8)	0.78
(9)	0.75
(10)	0.62
(11)	0.59
(12)	0.56

According to Table 2, the minimum values based on the number of experts ensure the statistical significance of the items. Since the number of experts in this study was ten, the value of 0.62 was accepted as the minimum criterion. The content validity ratios of all items in the scale were above this threshold value, and the items were deemed significant. Consequently, the overall CVI of the test was determined to be 0.98.

Once the content validity was established by the experts, a pilot study was conducted with 10 mothers to evaluate the comprehensibility of the scale by mothers with children aged 3–6, who constitute the target application group of the scale. As a result of the pilot study, it was determined that the scale items were found to be clear and understandable by the mothers. This finalized the scale form for the subsequent statistical validation processes.

Findings on Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted to determine the construct validity of the EPAQ. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test was used to measure the adequacy of the sample size, and Bartlett's test was utilized for the normality of distribution. In this context, it is expected that the KMO value be 0.50 or higher and the Bartlett's test result be statistically significant (Jeong, 2004). In the factor analysis, factor loading values were taken into consideration during the process of assigning scale items to factors or excluding them.

Table 3. KMO and Bartlett's test of sphericity results

KMO		0.808
Bartlett Test	X ²	928.049
	sd	91
	p	0.000

In the conducted factor analysis, the KMO value was found to be 0.808. Therefore, the sample size was deemed sufficient for factor analysis (KMO > 0.500). As a result of Bartlett's test of sphericity, the X² value was found to be 928.049, which is statistically significant (p < .05). Thus, it was determined that the condition of normal distribution was met. The results of the KMO and Bartlett's tests indicate that the data are suitable for EFA. To determine the factor structure, the distribution of eigenvalues was examined using the Scree Plot.

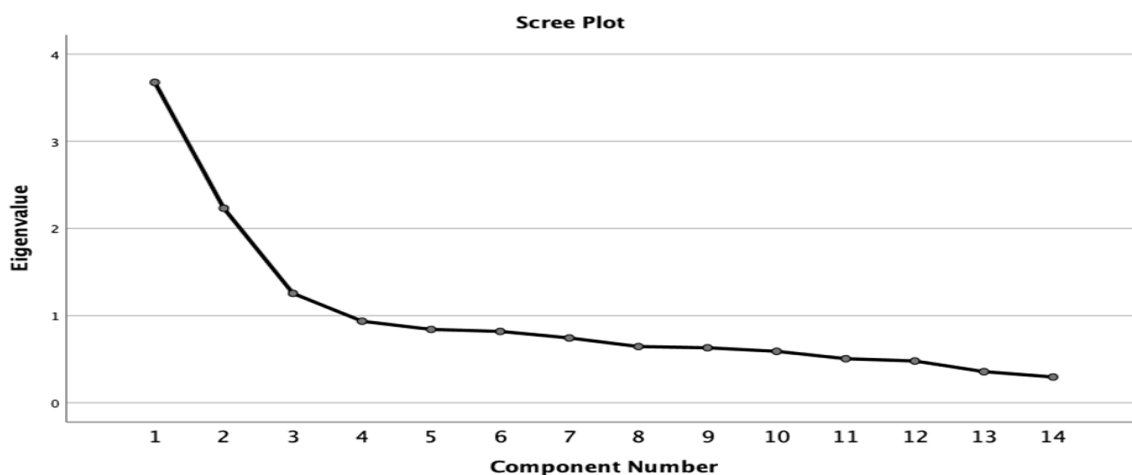


Figure 1. Scree plot

Factor analysis was conducted on the original form of the measurement tool, which comprises three sub-dimensions and 24 items. The lower limit for factor loadings was set at 0.30, and items with factor loadings below this value were excluded from the scale (Büyüköztürk, 2020). According to the EFA results, items 1, 4, 6, 10, 11, 13, 14, 17, 18, and 21 were excluded, and it was determined that the scale possesses a two-factor structure consisting of 14 items. The analysis results regarding the obtained factor structure of the scale are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Analysis results regarding the factor structure of the EPAQ

Sub-dimension	Item	Factor Loading	Explained Variance	Cronbach's Alpha
Erken Öğrenme	9. Ebeveynler, bebekleri ile konuşarak onların dil öğrenmelerine yardımcı olabilir.	0.766	26.260	0.792
	7. Ebeveynlerin, çocukların duygularıyla başa çıkmayı öğrenmelerine yardımcı olmaları önemlidir.	0.757		
	8. Ebeveynleri ile yakın bağları olan bir çocuk, yaşamının ilerleyen günlerinde daha iyi ilişkiler kurabilecektir.	0.756		
	3. Çocukların keşfetmesine ve araştırmasına izin verilmelidir.	0.681		
	15. Çocukların ebeveynleri ve öğretmenleri gibi yetişkinlere saygı duymayı öğrenmeleri çok önemlidir.	0.612		
	5. Ebeveynler, küçük çocuklara şekil ve sayı gibi kavramları öğretmek onları okulda başarılı olmaları için hazırlayabilirler.	0.557		
	16. Çocuklar, korktuklarında veya mutsuz olduklarında rahatlatılmalıdır.	0.473		
	24. Ebeveynler, çocuklarının neleri sevdiklerine ve sevmediklerine dikkat etmelidir.	0.467		
	19. Ebeveynleri tarafından çok fazla ilgi gören çocuklar şımarık olur.	0.695		
	2. Sarılmak ve öpmek gibi aşırı sevgi gösterileri çocuğun dayanıksız olmasına neden olabilir.	0.651		
Sevgi ve Bağlanma	20. Çocuklar ebeveynlerine minnettar olmalıdır.	0.627	15.942	0.658
	23. Küçük çocukların kendilerine söyleneni yapmaları çok önemlidir, örneğin beklemleri söylendiğinde beklemleri gibi.	0.603		
	22. Bebekler konuşmayı öğrenmeden, dünya hakkında herhangi bir şeyi öğrenemezler.	0.504		
	12. Çocuklar güvende olduğu sürece, çocukların ve ebeveynlerin birbirlerine duygusal olarak yakın hissetmelerine gerek yoktur.	0.487		
	Toplam Varyans		42.202	

The early learning sub-dimension consists of eight items with factor loadings ranging between 0.467 and 0.766. The rate of total variance explained by this factor is 26.26%, and the Cronbach's Alpha value was determined as 0.792.

The affection and attachment sub-dimension consists of six items with factor loadings ranging between 0.487 and 0.695. This factor explains 15.94% of the total variance, and the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was determined as 0.658. It is observed that the total variance explained is 42.20%.

Findings on Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to examine the accuracy and fit indices of the two-factor structure of the EPAQ revealed by the exploratory factor analysis. In this context, the final analyses were performed using LISREL software. A path diagram illustrating the processes related to the confirmatory factor analysis was generated. Figure 2 presents the path diagram regarding the numerical data for the t-values obtained from the analysis.

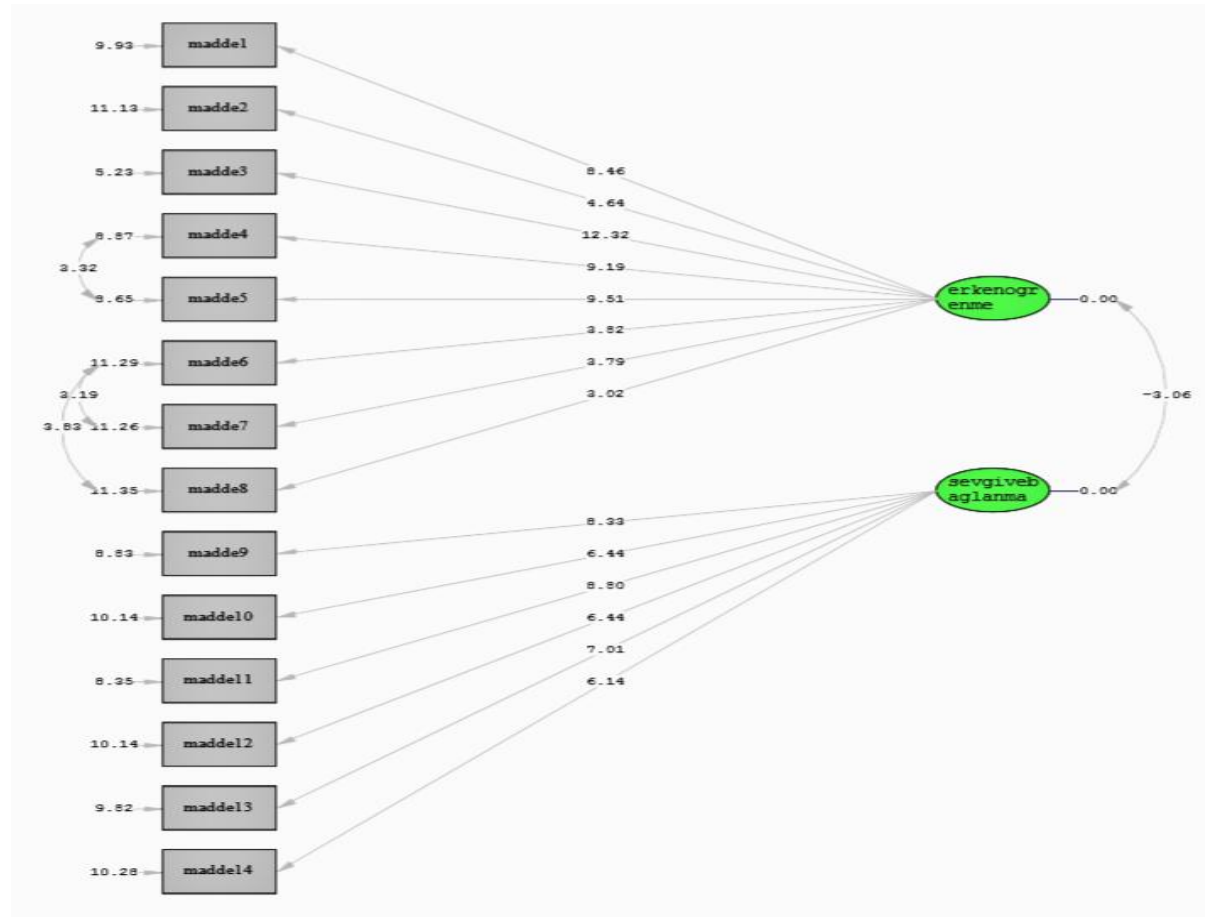


Figure 2. Findings regarding the t-values of the confirmatory factor analysis of the EPAQ.

When the t-values in Figure 2 are analyzed, the absence of any items indicated by red arrows between the sub-dimensions and the scale items reveals that there is no incompatibility regarding the scale items (Seçer, 2015). As stated by Büyüköztürk et al. (2021), if the t-value exceeds 1.96, significance is present at the .05 level; if it exceeds 2.56, significance is present at the .01 level. When the path diagram belonging to the EPAQ in Figure 2 is examined, it is observed that the scale consists of two sub-dimensions named Early Learning and Affection and Attachment. The scale comprises a total of 14 items, with items belonging to the Early Learning factor (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8) and items belonging to the Affection and Attachment factor (9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14). The fact that all t-values obtained as a result of the CFA are greater than 2.56 indicates significance at the .01 level. Furthermore, within the scope of the confirmatory factor analysis, factor loading values were examined alongside t-values. Table 5 presents the CFA results regarding the Early Parenting Attitudes Scale.

Table 5. Confirmatory factor analysis results of EPAQ items.

Sub-dimension	Item	t-value	Standardized Loadings	R ²
Early Learning	M1	8.46	0.55	0.30
	M2	4.64	0.32	0.10
	M3	12.32	0.79	0.63
	M4	9.19	0.61	0.37
	M5	9.51	0.63	0.40
	M6	3.82	0.26	0.69
	M7	3.79	0.26	0.68
	M8	3.02	0.21	0.44
Affection and Attachment	M9	8.33	0.58	0.34
	M10	6.44	0.46	0.21
	M11	8.80	0.61	0.37
	M12	6.44	0.46	0.21
	M13	7.01	0.49	0.24
	M14	6.14	0.44	0.19

As seen in Table 5, the t-values regarding the observed variable's explanation of the latent variable are significant ($t > 2.56$, $p < .01$). When the standardized loadings were examined, it was determined that the values ranged between 0.21 and 0.79. Furthermore, it was concluded that the R² values were high. Figure 3, which presents the factor loadings and error variances belonging to the CFA, is provided below.

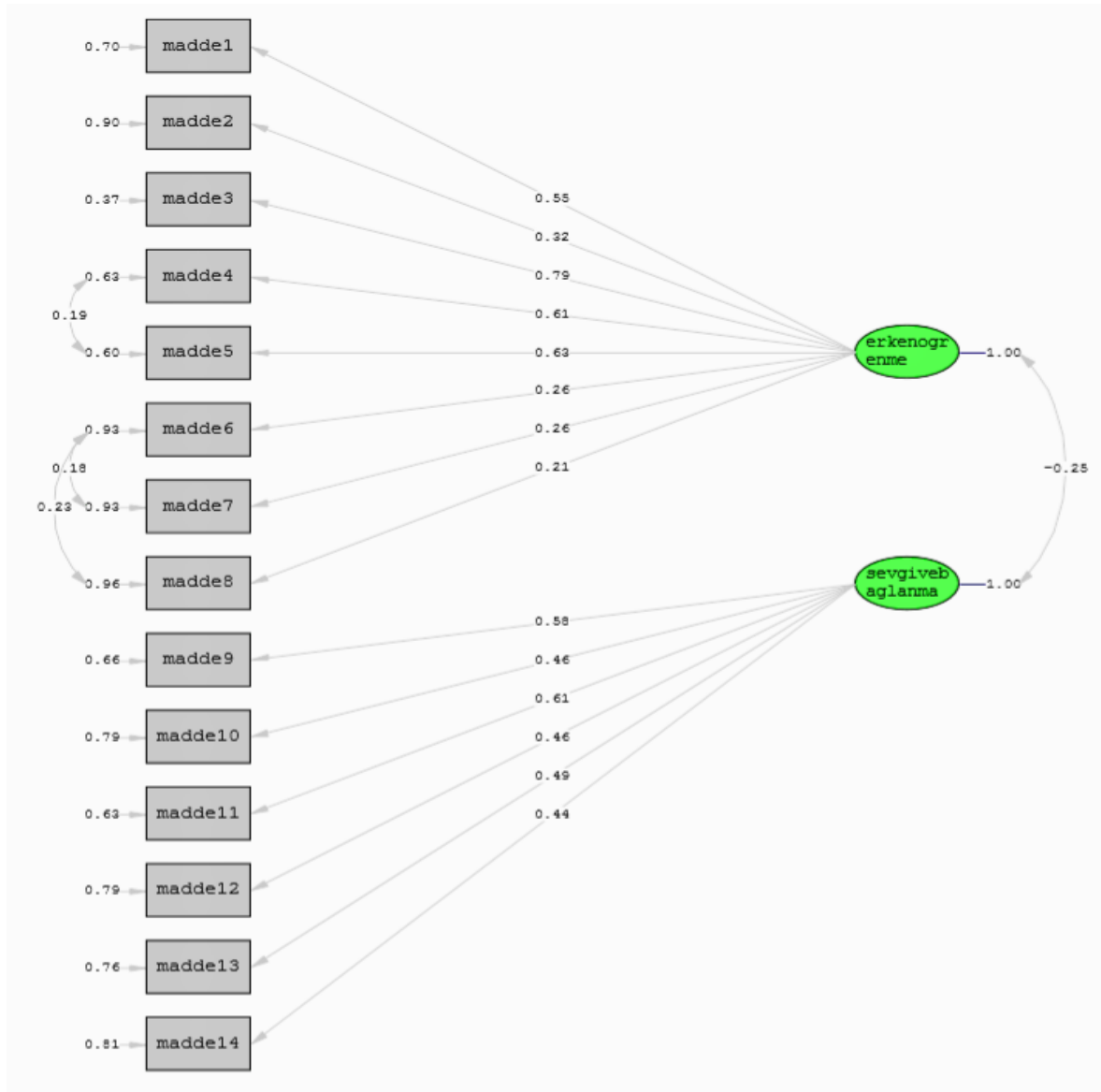


Figure 3. Path diagram of CFA factor loading values

Figure 3, the error variances of the observed variables were analyzed; it was determined that the error variances of m6 (.93), m7 (.93), and m8 (.96) were high. Since significant t-values regarding these items were obtained in the designed model, it was decided to include these indicators in the model (Büyüköztürk et al., 2021). Within the scope of the confirmatory factor analysis, alternative fit indices were also evaluated, and it was determined that the X^2/df (1.73) and RMSEA (0.05) values indicated perfect fit (Brown, 2006; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). The CFI (0.91), IFI (0.91), and SRMR (0.08) values were found to be at an acceptable fit level (Marcoulides & Schumacher, 2001; Thompson, 2004; Brown, 2006; Hair et al., 2014), while the GFI (0.91) and AGFI (0.91) values were at a good fit level (Marcoulides & Schumacher, 2001; Hair et al., 2014). Accordingly, it was concluded that the Early Parenting Attitudes Scale is a valid data collection tool.

Findings on Reliability Analysis

In the reliability analysis of the adapted EPAQ, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were determined. Cronbach's alpha indicates the reliability level of the scale. This coefficient ranges between 0 and 1. The findings regarding the reliability analysis of the EPAQ are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Reliability analysis results

Scale/Sub-dimension	Cronbach's Alpha
EPAQ	0.613
Early Learning	0.792
Affection and Attachment	0.658

According to Table 6, the reliability coefficient of the EPAQ falls within the range of $0.60 \leq \alpha = 0.613 < 0.80$, and the scale is considered quite reliable. As the reliability coefficient of the early learning sub-dimension falls within the range of $0.60 \leq \alpha = 0.792 < 0.80$, this sub-dimension is also considered quite reliable. For the affection and attachment sub-dimension, values of $0.60 \leq \alpha = 0.658 < 0.80$ were observed, and this sub-dimension was also determined to be quite reliable.

Findings on Item Discrimination

Test to determine the reliability of the Early Parenting Attitudes Scale, the item means of the upper and lower 27% groups were compared, and the differentiation was examined using the t-test. The fact that the differences were found to be significant ($p < 0.05$) as a result of the statistical analysis indicates that the test possesses internal reliability.

Table 7. Item discrimination test results between the upper and lower 27% groups

Group	n	Mean	ss	t	p
Upper %27	72	51.31	3.51	24.710	0.000*
Lower %27	72	36.47	3.70		

According to Table 7, a significant difference ($p < .05$) was determined between the upper and lower 27% groups based on the total test scores.

Discussions

Early parenting attitudes assume a determinant role in all developmental domains of children, primarily cognitive, emotional, and social development. Existing studies demonstrate that sensitive, supportive, and structured parental attitudes in the early period support children's cognitive skills, language development, motor skills, and social-emotional development (Jeong et al., 2021; Tania & Alfita, 2025). Attachment theory, social learning theory, and ecological systems theory are among the theories explaining the effects of parental attitudes on the child's emotional, cognitive, and social development (Chaplin et al., 2022; Prime et al., 2023). These theories are significant for grounding the relationship between the behavioral indicators included in the adapted scale and developmental processes within a theoretical framework. The systematic evaluation and measurement of parental attitudes in the early period are of great importance for both planning interventions to support child development and the early detection of risky parenting behaviors (Holden & Edwards, 1989). In this context, the EPAQ, adapted into Turkish in this study, offers the opportunity to evaluate parental behaviors to which children are exposed in the early period in a structured manner, thereby making a significant contribution to the literature. Early childhood is a critical period in which the foundations of emotional, cognitive, and social development are laid through parent-child interaction. Parental attitudes during this period are among the most important environmental factors shaping the child's developmental process. The systematic examination of early parenting attitudes is extremely important for both developmental interventions and planning (Mihelic et al., 2017; Prime et al., 2023). Research indicates that structured parenting interventions in the first three years of life support children's cognitive, language, physical, and social-emotional development. Additionally, it is known that such interventions improve attachment, enhance parenting knowledge and practices, and support parent-child interaction (Jeong et al., 2021). The scale adapted in this research consists of the sub-dimensions of "Early Learning" and "Affection and Attachment." These sub-dimensions offer a comprehensive assessment to determine parents' beliefs regarding their children's development and attachment. Valid and reliable measurement tools are needed to plan interventions, evaluate the effectiveness of interventions, and identify families in need of support. Evaluating early parenting attitudes and approaches is crucial for assessing child development and sustaining developmental support (Blower et al., 2019; Ren et al., 2023). In this regard, the adapted measurement tool evaluates parents' attitudes and beliefs from a new perspective; as one of the first applications addressing the concept of early parenting in our country, it fills an important gap as an original measurement tool that can be used in holistic support applications to be offered to families. The validity analyses of the scale adapted in the research yielded holistic and positive results. The findings obtained indicate that the scale is valid and reliable. In this scope, the adaptation process of the EPAQ into Turkish was carried out in line with linguistic equivalence, content validity, construct validity, reliability, and item discrimination analyses. In the linguistic equivalence stage, the translation-back translation method was applied, and it was observed that semantic integrity was achieved between the Turkish and English forms. In the pilot application conducted with mothers of children aged 3–6, it was determined that the items were found to be clear and understandable. Content validity was examined using the Lawshe (1975) method based on expert opinions; with a content validity ratio of .98, it was concluded that the scale items represented the parenting attitudes intended to be measured. These findings demonstrate that the cultural adaptation of the scale was successful in terms of both language and content. As a result of the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), it was determined that the measurement tool in question has a two-factor structure. This structure explains 42.20% of the total variance. The relevant factors were named "Early Learning" and "Affection and Attachment." The fact that factor loadings were at an acceptable level indicates that the scale presents a valid structure for evaluating parenting attitudes. The validity of the scale was supported by Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). Fit indices were found to be at an acceptable level. The findings obtained show that the construct validity of the scale was ensured and the two-factor model was confirmed. The model's good fit on the sample reveals that the scale measures the construct it intends to evaluate in a valid and reliable manner. Furthermore, it is observed that significant relationships were established between the measured variables and the conceptual structure (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001; Brown, 2006). The findings show parallelism with measurement tools evaluating early parenting attitudes. For instance, the original scale developed by Hembacher and Frank (2020) and the adaptation studies conducted by Bikovska and Hancheva (2022) for the Bulgarian culture aim to evaluate early parenting attitudes. No specific measurement tool developed or adapted to determine early parenting attitudes was encountered in Türkiye. The "Infant Parenting Styles Questionnaire," adapted to Turkish culture by Bahtiyar-Saygan (2025) with the participation of mothers of newborns, indicates the need for indigenous measurement tools and supports findings similar to our research. In this context, it is seen that the adapted measurement tool presents findings consistent with other validated scales in the existing literature. As a result of the reliability analysis, the internal consistency of the scale was found to be at a sufficient level. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was determined as .613 for the overall scale. The alpha values regarding the sub-dimensions were calculated as .792 for Early Learning and .658 for Affection and Attachment. These values reveal that both dimensions can reliably measure parenting attitudes (George & Mallery, 2003). In

the comparisons of the upper and lower 27% groups conducted within the scope of discrimination analyses, statistically significant differences ($p < .05$) were detected between all items. This finding indicates that the scale can accurately discriminate between different parenting attitudes and reflect individual differences at a significant level. In this respect, the EPAQ contributes to the field as a valid and reliable measurement tool specific to the Turkish sample. It is thought that the scale can make significant contributions to understanding parenting attitudes, especially through the dimensions of early learning and affection-attachment. Examining the validity and reliability of the scale on different socio-cultural groups in future research will increase the generalizability of the scale. Furthermore, creating a broader data set by applying it to different parent groups will allow for obtaining more in-depth findings regarding parenting attitudes.

Conclusion

In this study, the Early Parenting Attitudes Scale (EPAQ) was adapted to Turkish culture, and validity and reliability studies of the scale were conducted. The obtained findings support that the scale is a valid and reliable tool for evaluating early parenting attitudes. The measurement tool offers the opportunity to evaluate parents' attitudes and beliefs regarding child development in a structured manner, particularly through the "Early Learning" and "Affection and Attachment" sub-dimensions. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses support the validity of the scale's two-factor structure. Furthermore, internal consistency coefficients and item discrimination analyses confirm the reliability of the scale.

The linguistic equivalence, content validity, construct validity, reliability, and item discrimination analyses conducted during the adaptation process of the EPAQ into Turkish yielded significant results. These results indicate that the scale can be utilized as an effective tool for the successful evaluation of early parenting attitudes in both research and practice fields. The scale represents a significant contribution regarding parenting attitude measurement tools specific to the early period, which are currently limited in the literature. In this context, the following recommendations can be offered.

In line with the research findings, it is recommended to develop training programs to increase parents' awareness regarding early learning and attachment processes. These programs should offer content supporting parent-child interaction specific to early childhood and should be disseminated at the national level.

The developed scale can be used to comparatively examine the attitudes of parents in different demographic groups. Thus, the effects of environmental and cultural variables on parenting approaches can be evaluated more comprehensively.

The development of positive parental attitudes can be supported by organizing informative campaigns regarding the importance of early childhood throughout society.

Finally, sharing the data obtained from the study with practitioners and policymakers will contribute to the formulation of social and educational policies prioritizing child development.

Competing Interests

The authors hereby state that they hold neither any competing financial or non-financial interests nor personal association that might in any way affect or bias the research presented within this manuscript.

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Ethic Statement

Ethics committee approval was obtained from the Çankırı Karatekin University Ethics Committee for Science, Mathematics, and Social Sciences (25-10-2024/45).

Informed Consent

Formal informed consent was secured from each of the individual participants who took part in this research study. Participation was voluntary, and participants could withdraw at any time without any consequences.

Peer-Review

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Author Contributions

U.G., N.K.: Concept, Design, Analysis and Interpretation, Literature Review, Writing, Critical Review

U.G., N.K.: Concept, Data Collection and Processing, Writing

U.G., N.K.: Design, Analysis and Interpretation, Literature Review, Writing, Critical Review

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