Background, Rationale & Item Development

Scenarios and potential responses for the TOSCA-R were developed in consultation with a team of counseling psychology doctoral students, as well as established scholars in humanities and social sciences. The researchers first used word associations to generate scenarios designed to elicit self-directed feelings of White racial anxiety, with four responses each that would correspond to one of four hypothesized subscales (i.e., White guilt, White shame and detachment, White shame and internalization, and White guilt and internalization). The scenarios were then pre-tested with undergraduate students in various states. The responses were rated on a six-point Likert scale concerning their ability to consider the face validity of the items and the instrument’s basic psychometric properties. Based on feedback from the respondents, slight modifications were made before moving into the first formal study.

The first study (Grzanka & Fassinger, 2009; Grzanka, 2010) involved 2,200 randomly selected White undergraduates at the Mid-Atlantic University. Complete online responses (N = 1939; 130), 117-129); this is at least partially due to the 3-factor structure continues to make theoretical sense and is required first-year seminar for honors students. The paper survey included demographic items and the TOWGAS; students were asked to think of a time when something other than White, including biracial students, were directed to take the TOSCA-3 instead. The survey took 20 minutes to complete and was administered by the PI and RAs in classes of no more than 20 students and no fewer than 5.

RESULTS

Only complete data from self-identified White students were used (N = 308; 47 men, 53 women). Data were analyzed using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) (Field, 2005). Based on preliminary EFA, one item was moved from the White guilt subscale to the shame subscale prior to the CFA and the panhandling scenario was once again removed due to double-loading. Subscale (White guilt, White shame, & negation) reliability was consistent with prior findings (Cronbach’s alpha = .73; Tangney & Dearing, 2002). White guilt had the highest mean of 3.06, which was higher than the White shame subscale (M = 2.56) and White shame and internalization (M = 2.33). The initial set of items underwent three tests to establish the instrument’s face validity and reliability. The Test of White Guilt and Shame (TOWGAS) (Grzanka & Fassinger, 2009; Grzanka, 2010). CFA represents the requisite next step in validation and refinement of the TOWGAS prior to test-retest analysis for temporal stability (Worthington & Whittaker, 2006).

CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

• The 3-factor structure falls short of optimal levels, these levels are consistent with CFA findings for complex, multidimensional scales like the TOWGAS (Marsh, 2004; Tangney & Dearing, 2002). A similar conclusion was reached from the CFA that the 3-factor structure continues to make theoretical sense and is supported by psychometric data gleaned from diverse populations and testing situations.
• The 3-factor structure of the TOWGAS, particularly the distinction between guilt and shame factors/facet variables, affirms our argument that White guilt and White shame are distinct and separate constructs.
• Our next and final step in initial validation of the TOWGAS is to conduct test-retest analysis to measure the temporal stability of the instrument.

Sample Scenarios and Items
You read a Civil War novel about American slavery that describes violent abuse of Black slaves by White slave-owners. Feelings of guilt and shame are bordering on real fear about the history of racism in the United States.
You would think: “I wish there was something I could do to make up for all the harm slavery caused Black people.”
You would feel guilty: “slavery was awful, but people need to get over it and move on.”
You would wonder why slavery is still discussed because it happened so long ago.

In a diversity workshop at school/work, you have a conversation with a Black peer/colleague about White privilege.
You would feel proud because of all of your privileges.
You would think: “I can’t be held responsible for being born White.”
You would wish there were a way to make up for all your unfair advantages.
You would think: “Race doesn’t matter as much as people say it does.”

One of your White friends uses the N-word in a joke and you laugh.
You would think: “It was all in fun; it’s harmless.”
You would feel small and think about it for days.
You would think: “Black people can use the N-word, why can’t White people?”
You would laugh and tell the friend that you don’t think racial language is okay, even when joking.

You read a news article about a recent hurricane in which wealthy White people were able to evacuate a city while the poorer Black majority was left behind; many people died.

You would think: “That’s not a race issue. That’s a social class issue.”
You would feel sad and send whatever money you could to the relief effort.
You would feel horrible about being White.

The current project represents the second stage in the development of a new survey-based instrument to measure respondents’ proneness to the construct ‘White guilt’ and to explore its relationships with other relevant emotions, externalization of blame that which the 3-factor structure has manifested in EFA’s psychometric properties. First, a pilot study was administered online with a random sample of the White American population. The TOWGAS was then analyzed to consider the face validity of the items and the instrument’s basic psychometric properties. Based on feedback from the respondents, slight modifications were made before moving into the first formal study.

The first study (Grzanka & Fassinger, 2009; Grzanka, 2010) involved 2,200 randomly selected White undergraduates at the Mid-Atlantic University. Complete online responses (N = 1939; 130, 117-129). CFA represents the requisite next step in validation and refinement of the TOWGAS prior to test-retest analysis for temporal stability (Worthington & Whittaker, 2006). CFA revealed satisfactory fit levels for the predicted three-factor structure of the scenario-based instrument: White guilt-proneness, White shame-proneness and shame-negation. However, the test-retest analysis for temporal stability revealed that the instrument’s basic psychometric properties as well as its face validity, was an important step in establishing the real effects of negative racial affect on racial attitudes and behaviors, as well as combating their harmful consequences.

HYPOTHESIS

Based on prior psychometric testing, we hypothesized that:

The TOWGAS would exhibit a 3-factor structure as established by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of the 3-factor structure continues to make theoretical sense and is required first-year seminar for honors students. The paper survey included demographic items and the TOWGAS; students were asked to think of a time when something other than White, including biracial students, were directed to take the TOSCA-3 instead. The survey took 20 minutes to complete and was administered by the PI and RAs in classes of no more than 20 students and no fewer than 5.

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