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Malay Language Translation, Cultural Adaptation and Pilot Testing of the SARC-F Questionnaire for Screening Sarcopenia Among the Malaysian Population

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Abstract

Background: Sarcopenia is an increasing concern among ageing populations as it contributes to frailty, falls, and reduced quality of life. Early screening is critical to prevent this disorder. The SARC-F questionnaire is known as a simple tool that can be used to screen for sarcopenia. It has been translated and validated in multiple languages. However, no validated Malay version currently exists, creating a critical gap for sarcopenia screening among Malay-speaking adults who primarily communicate in the Malay language. This study aimed to translate and culturally adapt the SARC-F questionnaire into a Malay version and to validate it preliminarily. Methods: The questionnaire was

subjected to forward–backward translation, followed by expert panel evaluation (n = 8). Face validity was carried out among 25 Malay-speaking community-dwelling adults to assess the clarity and comprehensibility of the Malay SARC-F questionnaire using the Face Validity Index (FVI). Reliability was assessed using internal consistency (Cronbach’s α) and test–retest reliability (Intraclass Correlation Coefficient, ICC). Results: A translated Malay SARC-F was agreed after the forward translation. The backward translation of the Malay SARC-F showed minimal discrepancy from the original version. Expert panels agreed to revise certain phrases and terms to better suit the Malaysian context to optimise clarity and comprehension. Face validity was also excellent (I-FVI = 1.00; S-FVI = 1.00). Internal consistency was acceptable (Cronbach’s α = 0.78), and test–retest reliability was excellent (ICC = 0.88; 95% CI: 0.83, 0.92). Conclusion: The Malay SARC-F demonstrates preliminary evidence of reliability as a culturally appropriate screening instrument for sarcopenia among Malaysian adults. Although this study establishes its preliminary psychometric soundness, larger studies are warranted to confirm construct and criterion validity. © Penerbit Universiti Sains Malaysia, 2026.

Author keywords

geriatric assessment; health surveys; muscular atrophy; reliability; sarcopenia; validity

Indexed keywords

EMTREE medical terms

adult; aged; Article; clinical article; criterion related validity; face validity; female; health survey; human; Malay (language); Malaysian; male; muscle atrophy; pilot study; questionnaire; reproducibility; SARC-F questionnaire; sarcopenia

Device trade names

Commercial names given to devices, used for branding and differentiation in the market, commonly referenced in scientific and clinical research.

Tradename	Country	Manufacturer
IBM SPSS Statistics version 27	United States	IBM

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