



Development and Validation of an Indonesian Social Comparison Scale: A Psychometric Evaluation

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Abstract: Social comparison is a process through which individuals evaluate their abilities and opinions in relation to other people. This study developed an Indonesian Social Comparison Scale (SCS) informed by Festinger's social comparison theory and the Iowa-Netherlands Comparison Orientation Measure (INCOM), rather than directly translating the original INCOM. An initial pool of 72 items was constructed to represent Ability (36 items) and Opinion (36 items). Content evaluation was conducted by 10 psychology-trained assessors using Aiken's V, followed by empirical testing with 242 participants who met the inclusion criteria of being 17-35 years old and male or female. Item discrimination and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) were used to obtain a concise 12-item form consisting of six Ability and six Opinion items. The final scale showed high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = .914). CFA yielded CFI = .913, TLI = .892, GFI = .952, RMSEA = .101, 90% CI [.085, .117], and SRMR = .057. Thus, the model-fit evidence was mixed: CFI, GFI, and SRMR supported the model, whereas TLI and RMSEA indicated limitations. The findings provide preliminary evidence for the reliability and construct validity of the 12-item Indonesian SCS, while further validation in independent samples is recommended.

Keywords: Social Comparison, Confirmatory Factor Analysis, Validity Instrument

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INTRODUCTION

Social comparison is a common psychological process through which individuals evaluate themselves in relation to other people. The process becomes particularly relevant when objective standards are limited or when individuals need social information to understand their own position. Festinger (1954) proposed that people possess a drive to evaluate their abilities and opinions, and that comparison with others becomes an important source of

self-evaluation when direct objective evaluation is difficult. In everyday life, individuals may compare academic achievement, occupational performance, popularity, physical appearance, attitudes, beliefs, and other personal characteristics. Consequently, social comparison is not limited to a single life domain but can occur across a broad range of interpersonal situations.

In contemporary social environments, opportunities for comparison have become increasingly visible. Social

media, for example, exposes individuals to information about other people's achievements, lifestyles, appearance, relationships, and opinions. Such information can provide reference points for evaluating the self. Sharma et al. (2022) noted that social-media environments may facilitate comparison processes, while Yue et al. (2022) showed that social comparison can be involved in the relationship between passive social-media use and psychological well-being. In the Indonesian context, social comparison has also been examined in relation to body dissatisfaction and self-esteem (Najla & Zulfiana, 2022; Syachfira & Nawangsih, 2020). These findings illustrate why the construct remains important for psychological research and why its measurement requires careful conceptualization.

Social comparison may produce different psychological consequences depending on the comparison target, the domain being evaluated, and the meaning attributed to the comparison. Some comparisons may provide information, motivation, or standards for self-improvement, whereas others may be accompanied by dissatisfaction or unfavorable self-evaluation. For this reason, social comparison should not automatically be interpreted as either beneficial or harmful. The central characteristic is the evaluative process itself: information about another person is used as a reference for understanding one's own condition, performance, or viewpoint (Guyer & Vaughan-Johnston, 2018). A psychometric instrument intended to measure this tendency should therefore focus on the comparison process rather than assuming a particular emotional consequence.

One distinction frequently discussed in the literature concerns the direction of comparison. Upward comparison occurs when individuals compare themselves with people whom they perceive as better, more successful, more attractive, or otherwise superior on a relevant attribute. Downward

comparison occurs when the comparison target is perceived as worse off or lower on the relevant attribute (Guyer & Vaughan-Johnston, 2018). Upward and downward comparisons describe the direction or target of a comparison. They are useful for explaining how comparison operates in specific situations, but they should not automatically be treated as the same construct as an individual's general tendency to engage in social comparison.

A second distinction concerns the domain in which the comparison occurs. Festinger's (1954) theory emphasized the evaluation of abilities and opinions. Ability comparison concerns performance and competence: individuals may want to know how well they perform, how capable they are, or how their achievements compare with those of others. Opinion comparison concerns attitudes, thoughts, beliefs, values, and judgments. In this domain, other people provide information that may be used to evaluate whether one's own viewpoint is similar to, different from, or as convincing as the views of others. Schneider and Schupp (2014) and Gerson et al. (2017) illustrate the continued relevance of the Ability-Opinion distinction in the measurement of social comparison orientation.

The distinction between comparison direction and comparison domain is central to the present study. Upward and downward comparison refer to whom a person selects or perceives as the comparison target, whereas Ability and Opinion refer to what is being compared. An individual may make an upward comparison about ability, for example by comparing an academic score with a higher-performing peer, or may make an upward comparison about opinion by regarding another person's view as more convincing. Similarly, downward comparisons can occur in either domain. Accordingly, the present scale treats Ability and Opinion as the two latent dimensions evaluated in the factor model, while upward and downward comparison are understood

as possible directions within the broader comparison process.

The Iowa-Netherlands Comparison Orientation Measure (INCOM) developed by Gibbons and Buunk (1999) is one of the most influential instruments for assessing individual differences in social comparison orientation. The original instrument contains 11 items and was designed to capture a person's tendency to compare with others, particularly in the domains of Ability and Opinion. The measure has subsequently been examined in different studies and contexts. Gerson et al. (2017), for example, investigated its dimensionality, while Schneider and Schupp (2014) introduced a short form and examined associations with life satisfaction. This body of work provides an important theoretical and psychometric foundation for further scale development.

Nevertheless, using an established instrument in another linguistic and cultural context raises more than a translation issue. Item content needs to be meaningful for the target respondents, the behavioral examples need to be recognizable, and the intended factor structure needs to be examined empirically. The present research therefore did not simply translate the 11 original INCOM items. Instead, Festinger's theoretical framework and the Ability-Opinion structure represented in the INCOM were used as conceptual references for constructing a substantially larger pool of Indonesian-language items. This positioning is important because the resulting instrument should be understood as an Indonesian scale development informed by the INCOM, rather than as a direct linguistic adaptation of the original scale.

Previous Indonesian studies demonstrate that social comparison is already relevant to local psychological research. Najla and Zulfiana (2022) examined social comparison in relation to body dissatisfaction among early-adult male Instagram users, while Syachfira and Nawangsih (2020) investigated social

comparison and self-esteem among student Instagram users. Rahayu Intan Dinata and Mario Pratama (2022) also examined social comparison in relation to body image among early-adult TikTok users. These studies show that the construct has practical relevance in Indonesia, especially in contexts involving social media, self-evaluation, and body-related outcomes.

However, the studies identified by the authors generally positioned social comparison as one variable within a broader correlational model and relied on existing conceptualizations or available scales. This observation does not establish that no Indonesian social comparison instrument exists, because the present study did not conduct a formal systematic review of all available instruments. Rather, it identifies a practical measurement gap: there is value in documenting an Indonesian item-development process in which the theoretical domains, content evaluation, item screening, internal consistency, and factor structure are reported transparently. Such documentation allows future researchers to evaluate the evidence supporting the instrument instead of relying only on the use of an existing scale.

The target criteria in the present construction were individuals aged 17 to 35 years and of male or female gender. This age range encompasses a period in which educational, occupational, interpersonal, and social-role transitions can provide numerous opportunities for self-evaluation. The original manuscript discussed adulthood broadly, but the empirical inclusion criterion used in this study was specifically 17-35 years. The revised manuscript therefore reports this criterion directly rather than imposing a different developmental age definition on the sample. Detailed frequencies by age and gender were not retained in the analytic dataset and are consequently not reconstructed.

The development process began with 72 items constructed by three researchers. The item pool was designed to

provide broad coverage before empirical reduction, with 36 items representing Ability and 36 items representing Opinion. Content evaluation involved 10 assessors with psychology training and included quantitative Aiken's V ratings as well as readability feedback. The full item pool was then administered to 242 participants, followed by corrected item-total correlation analysis and confirmatory factor analysis. This sequence enabled the researchers to move from broad theoretical coverage toward a more concise set of empirically functioning indicators.

Based on this rationale, the present study aimed to develop and provide preliminary psychometric evaluation of an Indonesian Social Comparison Scale grounded in the Ability and Opinion domains of social comparison. Specifically, the study examined content evidence, item discrimination, internal consistency, and the two-factor construct structure, and then selected a concise 12-item form from the initial 72-item pool. By clarifying the conceptual distinction between Ability/Opinion and upward/downward comparison and by reporting both supportive and nonsupportive fit indices, the study seeks to provide a more transparent foundation for subsequent validation of social comparison measurement in Indonesia.

METHOD

Participant. Participants in this study were 242 individuals who met two inclusion criteria: (1) being between 17 and 35 years of age and (2) being male or female. Sampling used an accidental or convenience approach. The retained analytic dataset did not contain the detailed frequency distribution of participants by age and gender; therefore, those distributions are not estimated in this article. The scale used five response categories: Very Suitable, Suitable, Neutral, Not Suitable, and Very Unsuitable.

Research Design. This study used a quantitative scale-development design.

Three researchers constructed the Social Comparison Scale based on Festinger's social comparison theory and the Ability-Opinion framework represented in the INCOM. The study is therefore positioned as development of an Indonesian item set informed by the INCOM rather than a direct translation of the original 11-item instrument. The initial pool contained 72 items, consisting of 36 Ability items and 36 Opinion items, with favorable and unfavorable wording.

Content Evaluation. The 72-item pool was evaluated by 10 assessors with psychology training. The assessor group included final-year psychology students and students in professional/master's psychology programs. Because their levels of professional qualification differed, they are described as content assessors rather than uniformly as expert judges. Ratings were summarized using Aiken's V and were complemented by readability feedback. The compiled content-validity table yielded an overall mean Aiken's V of approximately .720. The content stage was used to identify relevance and wording issues before empirical administration, and the full 72-item pool was retained for field testing.

Data Collection Techniques. The questionnaire was distributed online using Google Forms between 10 June 2026 and 15 June 2026. The link was shared through social-media platforms including WhatsApp, Telegram, Instagram, Twitter, and other channels. The online format was used to reach respondents who met the inclusion criteria and to collect responses to all 72 initial items.

Statistical Analysis. Corrected Item-Total Correlation was analyzed using SPSS version 26 as an indicator of item discrimination and was treated separately from reliability. Internal consistency of the final scale was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. Construct validity was examined using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) in JASP 0.17.2.0. The hypothesized model contained two correlated latent factors, Ability and Opinion. Item retention

considered item discrimination, the magnitude and direction of standardized factor loadings, statistical significance, and conceptual representation. Empirical screening reduced the initial 72 items by 60 items and produced a final 12-item form containing six Ability and six Opinion items. Model fit was interpreted using multiple indices, including CFI, TLI, GFI, RMSEA with its 90% confidence interval, and SRMR, rather than using a single index to determine fit.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results. Aiken's V coefficients were calculated from the ratings of the 10 content assessors. The compiled content-validity results across the 72-item pool produced an overall mean coefficient of approximately .720. Following administration of all 72 items, item-discrimination information and CFA results were considered together with conceptual representation. Sixty items were excluded during empirical screening, leaving 12 items in the final scale. The total score of the final 12-item SCS had a mean of 27.23 (SD = 9.46). Cronbach's alpha was .914 and the standardized alpha was .913, indicating high internal consistency. The reported standard error of measurement was 2.77.

Model Fit. The CFA of the final two-factor model yielded mixed evidence of fit. CFI (.913) and GFI (.952) exceeded the .90 reference value, and SRMR (.057) was within the commonly used .08 criterion. In contrast, TLI (.892) was slightly below .90 and RMSEA was .101, with a 90% confidence interval of [.085, .117], which exceeded the preferred criterion used in this study. The chi-square test was significant (chi-square = 183.39, $p = .001$). Consequently, the revised interpretation does not describe the model as fully fitting; instead, the pattern is considered partially supportive or marginal and in need of further replication.

Table 1. Fit index measuring device social comparison scale

Fit Indexes	Cut Off	Result	Explanation
Chi-Square	Expected small	183,39	Model fit
P-value	$\geq 0,05$	0,001	Mode fit
CFI	$> 0,90$	0,913	Model fit
RMSEA	0,05-0,1	0,101	Moderates
TLI	$> 0,90$	0,892	Good fit
GFI	$> 0,90$	0,952	Model fit

Model fit measuring instrument social comparison scale as follows:

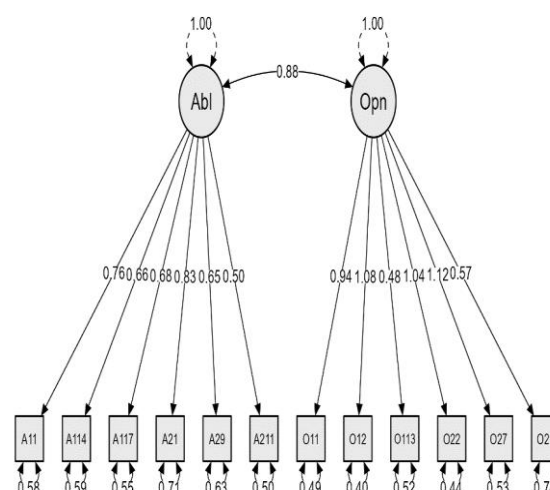


Figure 1. Models fit instrument social comparison scale

Final Items. All 12 retained indicators were statistically significant ($p < .001$) in the final model. The standardized factor loadings ranged from .553 to .863. The final form included six Ability items and six Opinion items, thereby preserving representation of both theoretically defined domains.

Tabel 2. *Aitem social comparison which has been analyzed*

NO	Social Comparison Scale's Item	Item Code	Standardized Factor Loading	p-value	R ²
1	Saya tidak puas dengan liburan yang sudah lalu, karena melihat teman saya berlibur ditempat yang saya impikan.	A11	0.705	<0.001	0.497
2	Saya menerima nilai jelek tanpa membandingkan dengan orang lain.	A114	0.654	<0.001	0.428
3	Saya bukan tipe orang yang sering membanding-bandingkan diri saya dengan orang lain.	A117	0.677	<0.001	0.458
4	Saya merasa tersaingi saat nilai teman lebih tinggi dari saya.	A21	0.777	<0.001	0.491
5	Ada keinginan untuk terkenal saat melihat orang lain lebih populer.	A29	0.632	<0.001	0.400
6	Saya senang dengan kemenangan orang lain meskipun saya kalah.	A211	0.578	<0.001	0.335
7	Saya senang melihat orang lain mendapatkan tiket liburan meskipun saya tidak.	O11	0.810	<0.001	0.641
8	Saya ragu dengan pemikiran sendiri dan cenderung menganggap pemikiran orang lain lebih baik.	O12	0.863	<0.001	0.745
9	Saya ragu untuk memberikan pendapat dalam forum meskipun memiliki kedudukan yang sama dengan orang lain.	O113	0.553	<0.001	0.306
10	Saya merasa ragu untuk mengemukakan pendapat saat berargumen dengan orang yang berbeda pemikiran.	O22	0.844	<0.001	0.712
11	Saya ragu memposting di media sosial karena takut dengan tanggapan orang lain.	O27	0.837	<0.001	0.700
12	Pemikiran saya merupakan yang terbaik dari pada yang lain, saya percaya akan kemampuan saya.	O215	0.556	<0.001	0.309

Discussions. The present study developed a concise Indonesian Social Comparison Scale from a broad initial item pool. This revised positioning resolves an important conceptual issue in the original manuscript. Although the INCOM provided a theoretical and measurement reference, the researchers constructed 72 Indonesian-language items rather than simply translating the 11 original INCOM items. The resulting instrument should therefore be interpreted as a newly developed scale informed by Festinger's theory and the INCOM framework.

The two-factor organization of the final scale is theoretically meaningful.

Ability items represent comparison involving performance, achievement, competence, popularity, and related evaluations, whereas Opinion items represent comparison involving thoughts, beliefs, judgments, and confidence in one's own views. This distinction is consistent with the conceptual foundation of the INCOM (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999; Schneider & Schupp, 2014). Importantly, the revised manuscript no longer treats upward and downward comparison as the two factors. Those terms describe comparison direction and may occur within either Ability or Opinion content.

The internal-consistency result provides strong preliminary support for the coherence of the retained item set. Cronbach's alpha of .914 indicates that the 12 items share substantial common variance at the scale level. However, internal consistency is not equivalent to construct validity. For this reason, the revised analysis distinguishes Cronbach's alpha from corrected item-total correlations. The latter are treated as item-discrimination evidence used during empirical screening, not as reliability coefficients.

The CFA results are more appropriately interpreted as mixed than as uniformly good. CFI = .913, GFI = .952, and SRMR = .057 support aspects of the proposed two-factor model. At the same time, TLI = .892 falls slightly below the .90 reference value, and RMSEA = .101 with a 90% confidence interval from .085 to .117 indicates residual misfit. The significant chi-square result also does not support exact fit. Although chi-square can be influenced by sample size, this does not justify ignoring the statistic; it should be considered alongside the other fit indices. Taken together, the findings support continued investigation of the Ability-Opinion structure while also indicating that model refinement or cross-validation is needed.

The item-reduction process resulted in a balanced final form with six items for each domain. Standardized loadings in the final model ranged from .553 to .863 and were statistically significant. These values suggest that the retained indicators were meaningfully associated with their intended factors. Nevertheless, because item selection and evaluation of the final model were conducted within the same participant dataset, the observed loadings and fit indices may reflect sample-specific characteristics. Replication using a new sample is necessary before the structure can be regarded as stable.

The Indonesian item content also deserves consideration. Several retained items refer to academic scores, popularity,

vacations, social media, and expressing opinions. Such examples may make the comparison process concrete and recognizable for respondents, but contextual specificity may also influence how items covary. Therefore, the present results should not be interpreted as evidence that the scale is psychometrically equivalent to the original INCOM. Future research may compare the present instrument directly with an established Indonesian translation of INCOM or other social-comparison measures to examine convergent and discriminant validity.

The content-evaluation stage provides an additional source of evidence, but it also has limitations. Ten assessors with psychology training provided relevance ratings and readability feedback, and the compiled Aiken's V results averaged approximately .720 across the item pool. However, the assessors included individuals at different stages of psychology training. Future studies should specify the expertise criteria for content judges in advance, report item-level decision rules explicitly, and distinguish expert content evaluation from readability or cognitive testing with members of the intended population.

The participant criteria were 17-35 years of age and male or female gender. These criteria are now reported directly and consistently. However, detailed demographic distributions were not retained in the analytic dataset. Consequently, the present study cannot describe the proportion of participants at particular ages or by gender and cannot test whether the factor structure is invariant across these groups. Future validation should systematically collect demographic information and test measurement invariance when sample size permits.

Overall, the study offers preliminary evidence that a 12-item Indonesian scale can represent Ability and Opinion components of social comparison with high internal consistency and several supportive CFA indices. At the same time, the elevated

RMSEA and slightly low TLI prevent a conclusion of unequivocal model fit. The principal contribution of the present development is therefore not a claim of final validation, but the documentation of a theoretically grounded item-development process and an empirically selected short form that can be examined further in independent Indonesian samples.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION:

The present study provides preliminary psychometric evidence for an Indonesian Social Comparison Scale developed from Festinger's theoretical framework and informed by the INCOM. From an initial pool of 72 items representing Ability and Opinion, content evaluation, item analysis, and CFA resulted in a 12-item final form containing six indicators for each factor. The final scale demonstrated high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = .914), and all retained factor loadings were statistically significant.

Evidence for the two-factor model was mixed. CFI, GFI, and SRMR supported the model, whereas TLI was slightly below the stated criterion and RMSEA was above

the preferred range. The scale should therefore be described as showing preliminary evidence of reliability and construct validity rather than as a fully established measure. The dimensions represented in the final model are Ability and Opinion; upward and downward comparison remain directions of comparison rather than dimensions of this CFA model.

Future studies should cross-validate the 12-item structure in an independent sample, collect complete demographic information, examine measurement invariance across relevant groups, use a clearly defined panel of subject-matter experts for content validity, and evaluate convergent and discriminant validity with established measures. Such work is necessary before broad generalization or routine population-level use of the scale is recommended.

Based on the findings of this study, the Social Comparison Scale, encompassing both upward and downward social comparison dimensions, demonstrates satisfactory psychometric properties. Consequently, the instrument can be considered a valid and reliable measure for assessing social comparison among Indonesian adults.

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