FAMILY RELATIONSHIP ASSESSMENT IN RESEARCH AND PRACTICE: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF MEASUREMENT TOOLS AND SCALES

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Abstract

The study explores the varied scales and instruments used in the literature while assessing family relations from family members' viewpoints. The researcher depended on the systematic review methodology. The systematic review procedure adhered to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) and the JBI methodology for systematic reviews of qualitative evidence. Scopus and APA PsycInfo were used for extracting the required studies after applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The results revealed that family assessment instruments—whether scales or questionnaires—are essential because they provide standardized and structured methods for assessing the intricate dynamics of family functioning. These scales are shared by the majority of family assessment instruments, including adaptability or flexibility (ability to modify roles and rules in response to stress), communication (clarity and openness of exchanges), cohesion (emotional bonding and connectedness), and problem-solving or coping (ability to address and resolve difficulties) are some examples. (149 word)

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INTRODUCTION

Affective and interactive dynamics within the family, the first and most significant context for human development, significantly impact people's mental health, relationship skills, and socio-emotional well-being. The inherent complexity of family relationships arises from the realization that each family system is a dynamic system, composed of individuals with different perceptions, needs, and personal stories. Their reciprocal interactions create a systemic and continually evolving relational framework. As a result, comprehending family dynamics is extremely difficult and requires a thorough, varied methodological approach. Through a range of research tools and constructs, a multidimensional perspective is essential for assessment, emphasizing the internal representations and lived experiences of various family members as well as the caliber of the relationships and interactions within the family (Gennari et al., 2025)

The ultimate goal of a relationally-oriented family assessment is to gain a thorough understanding of family functioning, going beyond a description of its interactive patterns. By using a relational lens in family assessment, one can better understand the "whys" of observed behaviors and narratives, rather than just the "hows," by exploring the meanings and motivations behind family actions. In addition to a specific theoretical perspective, this process requires standardized instruments and protocols. The environment and the entire data collection procedure must support the collection of relational data that goes beyond individual family members and connects the disparate bits of information generated by various members to achieve this goal (Gennari et al., 2024).

Problem Statement

Accurate evaluation of family relationships is crucial for research, clinical practice, and policy development. To assess aspects such as parenting dynamics, communication, cohesiveness, and conflict, a variety of instruments and scales have been developed in recent decades. Few studies have examined family systems holistically or taken into account the viewpoints of both parents and children (Roca et al., 2024). The diagnostic level of parental marital conflict and family cohesion has yet to be established by a widely recognized standard. More research is required to determine certain dimensions of various family relationships and functioning (Gao et al., 2022). The problem lies in the assumption that numerous tools exhibit inconsistent psychometric robustness, limited cross-cultural validation, or overlapping constructs. Additionally, it can be difficult for researchers and practitioners to determine which tools are best suited for particular age groups, populations, or cultural contexts. The effectiveness of interventions and the comparability of results across studies have been limited by this fragmentation, which has produced a gap between research evidence and real-world application. A thorough, methodical synthesis that assesses the validity, reliability, and applicability of these instruments across contexts is lacking, despite individual reviews of particular instruments. To guide future research, enhance real-world applications, and support culturally appropriate, evidence-based interventions, it is imperative that current family relationship measurement tools be critically reviewed, categorized, and evaluated for their strengths and limitations.

Main Research Question

What are the varied scales and instruments used in the literature while estimating family relations from family members' viewpoints?

Research Significance

The review identifies the most popular, underutilized, and developing family relationship scales, laying the groundwork for future research frameworks. It identifies conceptual gaps and overlaps in the available instruments, helping researchers create more multifaceted, integrated, and culturally aware tools. The review advances measurement in psychology and family studies by critically evaluating psychometric properties such as validity, reliability, and cultural adaptability. It provides a thorough synthesis of instruments and scales that have been created and proven effective in a variety of settings by bringing together disparate works on family relationship assessment. The study serves as a reference manual for researchers selecting the most appropriate and reliable instruments for their specific study populations and goals. It provides evidence-based recommendations for practitioners, educators, and clinicians regarding the practicality of current tools, facilitating precise evaluation and intervention in social work, family therapy, and counseling. By highlighting issues such as cultural bias, inadequate contextual adaptation, and inadequate validation, the study promotes advancements in future tool design and testing.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

As a methodological tool for analyzing social interaction data, the Social Relations Model (SRM) was first developed in the field of social psychology. One of the primary benefits of the SRM is that it allows us to evaluate family relationships at multiple levels (individual, dyadic, and family), accurately capturing the interdependencies within family relationships. These analyses require round-robin family data, meaning that each family member rates his or her relationship with every other family member. A family of four (two parents and two kids) yields 12 relationship scores. Relationship metrics that are similarly developed for each family member are also necessary (Eichelsheim, 2010; De Mol et al., 2010). The SRM approach is used in family research to identify and quantify the various sources of variance that influence family relationships. The actor effect, partner effect, relationship effect, and group effect are the four sources of variance that the model suggests influence a family member's relationship with another. The term "actor effect" describes a person's tendency to act in a particular way when surrounded by different partners. The degree to which a person tends to elicit particular behavior from others is known as the "partner effect". The relationship effect describes how one individual adjusts to another in a particular relationship, while the group or family effect represents traits of the typical group or family member (Cook, 2005; Eichelsheim, 2010).

When looking at the negative relationship between the father (the actor) and the adolescent child (the partner), for instance, a significant father-actor variance indicates that the father reports being consistently negative toward family members. Children are viewed differently by other family members, as evidenced by significant variation in child partners. Significant family variance suggests that there is a shared level of negativity within families (a particular family climate of negativity), while significant relationship variance suggests that there is a distinct element of negativity (regardless of the other SRM effects) in this particular relationship between father and child (Eichelsheim, 2010; Kluger et al., 2025). According to Murray Bowen's Family Systems Theory, families are interdependent emotional entities (Brown & Errington, 2024). It draws attention to the potential for one family member's actions and emotional state to both influence and be influenced by the dynamics of the entire family system. Bowen's

research has demonstrated that families are interdependent systems and that people cannot be comprehended in isolation from their relationships. Key principles of the Family Systems Theory include:

Differentiation of Self: It is the degree to which family members' emotional and cognitive abilities can set them apart from others. More differentiation allows family members to maintain their attachment while remaining independent.

Triangles: Bowen realized that the involvement of a third party, or "triangle," helps to diffuse tension between any two family members. Although these triangles can improve relationships, they can also reinforce unhealthy behaviors.

Family Projection Process: This explains how parents can influence their children's development and emotional functioning by projecting their own emotional issues onto them (Oluwagbohun, 2024).

Family Systems Theory demonstrates how patterns, roles, and communication are crucial in families. When parents are in stressful situations, like when there is a lot of conflict between them, emotional problems do not get resolved and manifest as dysfunctional communication patterns, such as avoidance or over-involvement. Another theoretical framework that can be discussed here is "stress process theory". According to stress process theory, a person's well-being can be significantly impacted by both the positive and negative aspects of their relationships. Family ties offer tools that can improve a person's well-being by helping them manage stress, adopt healthier habits, and boost their self-esteem. However, stressors that can negatively impact a person's well-being include broken marriages, poor relationship quality, and providing extensive care for family members (Thomas et al., 2017).

LITERATURE REVIEW

A family functions as a microsystem, with each member's experiences and behaviors shaped by the context of the entire family. The physical and mental well-being of family members is linked to strong bonds among them and to the preservation of harmony and boundaries (Tsoutsi & Dikeos, 2024). In other words, a person's unique issue is shaped by their relationships with other family members and highly depends on their parents' capacity to fulfill their parental responsibilities (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Minuchin, 2018).

Individuals and society are largely shaped by family relationships. They impart morals, foster personal development, and offer emotional support. Trust, communication, and respect for one another are hallmarks of healthy family dynamics that promote a sense of security and belonging. Family ties are the cornerstone of human social structures, impacting intergenerational continuity, societal stability, and individual well-being (Guin, 2024).

Many people believe that one of the key elements influencing teens' success in life is the quality of their relationships with their parents. People who have closer bonds with their parents typically perform better in a variety of spheres of their lives (Denton, 2006). Research suggests that healthy family environments contribute to psychological well-being and resilience in young adults. Family cohesiveness builds confidence and problem-solving, and expressive communication fosters emotional regulation and coping strategies (Awomi, 2025).

Mental health and well-being are often discussed in terms of human relationships, including the significance of emotional intimacy and open family relationships. The quality of the bonds within the family is also crucial. Relationships within the family may suffer when its structure changes, as old patterns of interaction become ineffective (MÄRTSIN et al., 2023). When working with families, healthcare professionals must consider the nature of family relationships (Kim et al., 2021). Family therapists can gain a better understanding of how a family operates by using an empirically based family assessment.

Family Relationship Assessment

The family interpersonal structure schema retained in the individual's mind through real-life social interactions among family members serves as the basis for the family relationship assessment (Ge et al., 2022). Both quantitative and qualitative methods have historically been employed in family relationship assessment to manage this complexity, and mixed-method designs that integrate these perspectives on family systems are commonly used. By integrating complementary perspectives on family dynamics, this methodological approach provides a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of how families function (Gennari et al., 2025).

The three main categories of family assessment tools are clinical interviews, observational rating checklists, and self-reported questionnaires. Self-report questionnaires are one of the most popular quantitative approaches. When family members (parents, grandparents, or kids) fill out these forms on their own, it makes it easier to gather standardized data about their internal working models, attitudes, and experiences with family relationships. The purpose of self-report family assessment questionnaires is to gauge how well families work together to accomplish tasks as they move through the family life cycle. These tools usually include items related to categories such as family emotional cohesion,

communication and problem-solving, roles and routines, and so on. There are numerous self-report family assessment tools available (Hamilton & Carr, 2016).

The history of the family system, the meanings attached to relationships, and family narratives can all be thoroughly examined through clinical interviews. Studying family interactions requires the use of observational methods alongside self-report tools and qualitative interviews. By providing insights into communication patterns, interactive sequences, and the caliber of family member exchanges, these methods enable the direct analysis of behavioral and relational dynamics in real time. By capturing relational dynamics that family members may not consciously report, direct observation—bolstered by structured coding systems—overcomes the drawbacks of subjective reports (Gennari et al., 2025).

The majority of family dysfunctions were linked to difficulties/ challenges in communication, problem-solving, norms and values, role-playing, and affective involvement (Souza et al., 2011). As a result, family life and the evaluation of relationships within it typically fall within six dimensions. The ability of a family to successfully address an issue without interfering with its normal operations is known as problem-solving. The family's method of exchanging information, especially verbally, is called communication. The behavioral patterns that each family member adopts define their role functioning. The term "affective responsiveness" describes a family's capacity to react to a variety of stimuli with suitable emotions and sentiments. The family's ability and the extent to which it values each member are referred to as affective involvement. The family's strategy for controlling its members' conduct in three domains—physically hazardous circumstances, attending to psychological needs, and interpersonal socializing behaviors—is known as behavior control (Hamilton & Carr, 2016).

A nurturing, supportive, and peaceful home environment is built on strong family ties. These bonds promote resilience, personal development, and emotional health among family members, making them vital to both individual and group happiness. Healthy family relationships require mutual respect, good communication, and deliberate effort. Dimensions of family relations assessment might include effective communication, quality time together, establishing boundaries and roles, encouraging mutual respect, conflict resolution, supporting emotional and mental well-being, creating a positive home environment, and teaching and modeling (Guin, 2024).

METHOD

The systematic review procedure adhered to the "Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) and the JBI methodology for systematic reviews of qualitative evidence. An initial limited search was carried out in Scopus and APA PsycInfo databases using the following search string:

("Family Relationship" OR "Family Relations" OR "blood Relations") AND ("measurement" OR "assessment") AND ("tool" OR "instrument" OR "scale" OR "survey" OR "questionnaire") AND ("quantitative" OR "mixed" OR "cross-sectional" OR "descriptive" OR "analytic")

I obtained around 1,242 documents from Scopus and 264 results from APA PsycInfo. After obtaining the initial results using the search string, I applied the inclusion and exclusion criteria as follows:

TABLE 1 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion	Exclusion
2010-2025	Before 2010
English	Other languages
Articles – Conference papers	Books, reviews, chapters, data papers
Open access	Restricted access
Quantitative or mixed method studies	Longitudinal studies, systematic reviews, randomized trials, meta-analyses, and qualitative methods.

After applying these criteria, we have obtained (533) studies from Scopus and only five studies from APA PsycInfo. No duplicates have been found. Accordingly, the final number reached 538 studies. Following the search, we exported all citations to Zotero using the RIS format, a standardized text-based format for exchanging bibliographic citation data between reference management software and online databases. Then, we connected Zotero to Rayyan Software using the four-step process. Titles and abstracts were independently reviewed by the researcher and one reviewer to complete the first step on Rayyan. The full texts of the studies were then assessed against the inclusion criteria. Full-text studies that did not meet the inclusion criteria were excluded for ineligibility. The final number of papers for analysis is (52) studies.
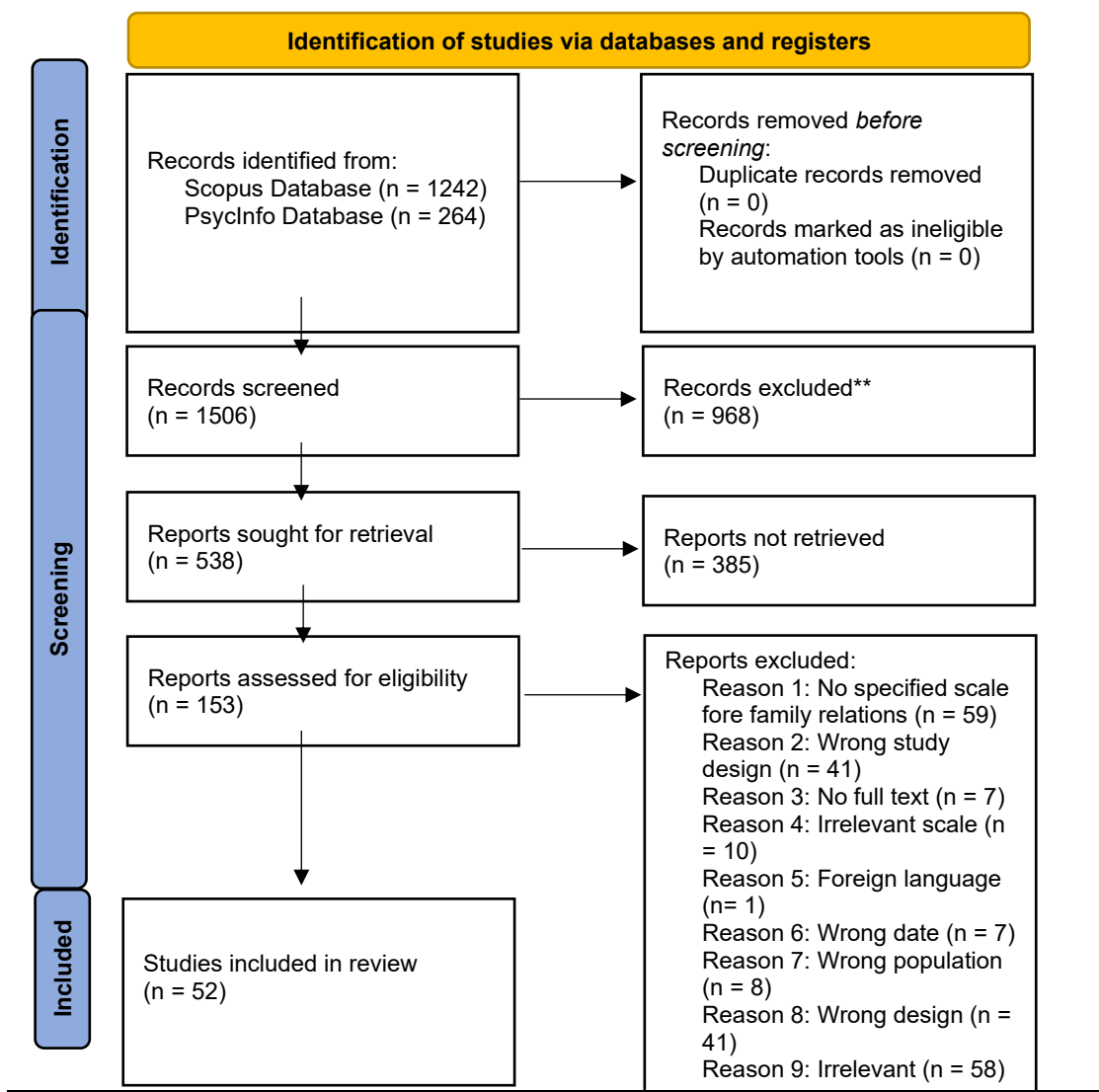
FIGURE 1 PRISMA Flowchart

All included studies were critically assessed using "the qualitative standardized critical appraisal tool from the JBI System for the Unified Management, Assessment and Review of Information". Each of the ten criteria on the JBI Critical Appraisal Checklist for Qualitative Research was scored as either met (Yes), not met (No), unclear (U), or not applicable (N/A). Because both high- and low-quality studies can yield valuable insights by providing a richer understanding of the research phenomenon, data extraction and synthesis were carried out for all studies that met the inclusion criteria, regardless of their methodological quality. Some quotes from the scales detailing the statements of family relations were also extracted to support the findings. The meta-aggregation approach was used to combine the qualitative study results from each study. This required gathering information and classifying it according to meaning similarity. To create a single, comprehensive set of synthesized findings, these categories were subsequently synthesized.

RESULTS

Adaptability and Cohesion are essential while discussing family relations. **The Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale-II (FACES-II)** was developed by Olson et al. (1982). The FACES-II is a self-report survey that gauges how cohesive and flexible a person feels in the family system. There are 16 cohesion items and 14 adaptability items on this 30-item scale. Cohesion is defined as the level of emotional attachment that family members have to each other. The degree to which the family system can adjust to changing circumstances and developmental stressors is known as adaptability. Strong test-retest reliability is demonstrated by the FACES-II, with full scale scores of $r = 0.84$, cohesion scores of $r = 0.83$, and adaptability scores of $r = 0.80$ (McCorkle et al., 2025; Duan et al., 2025). This FACES subscale was developed by Ruiz et al. (2013) to measure family cohesion across dimensions of family

decision adherence, problem-solving, family closeness feelings, family shared space and activity, and enjoyment in family activities.

Another version of the scale, developed by the University of Minnesota, is called the "Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales (FACES III)" and assesses cohesion (emotional closeness) and adaptability (the family's flexibility in changing roles and rules). It comprises 20 items, each rated on a Likert scale of 1–5. Families are rated as "disconnected, "separate," "connected," or " agglutinated" on the cohesion subscale, while the adaptability subscale provides ratings as "rigid," "structured," "flexible," or " chaotic". The author reported that the scale's internal consistency reliability was .68. He also presented strong evidence for discrimination between groups, face validity, and content validity (Ramires et al., 2024; Xu et al., 2022; Kang et al., 2019; Lopes et al., 2020)

The McMaster Family Assessment Device's General Functioning Subscale is a validated instrument that evaluates how a person views their biological family in terms of social interactions and interpersonal relationships (Rolf et al., 2022; Pascal Iloh et al., 2018; Nicolais et al., 2016). The subscale comprises 12 items answered using a four-point scale (1–4). Higher scores indicate more problematic functioning in behavioral control, roles, communication, problem-solving, and affective responsiveness and involvement. It was determined that problematic functioning was indicated by a cut-off score of ≥ 2.1. This scale's Cronbach's α of 0.90 indicated its internal consistency (Wirehag Nordh et al., 2025).

The Self-Rating Scale of Systemic Family Dynamics (SSFD) is appropriate for use with adolescents and assesses how people perceive family dynamics. There are 23 items in the SSFD (second edition) that are scored on a five-point rating system. Family atmosphere (FA), individuation (IN), system logic (SL), and illness concepts (IC) are its four components. The emotional components of communication within the family system are referred to as family atmosphere. Comfort and pleasantness are reflected in a higher score. The distinction between feelings and actions is known as individuation. A higher score in this dimension indicates less direct parental control over children, greater emotional differentiation among family members, and greater allowance of children's autonomy in their own development. Family members are more likely to view family rules and procedures with logical judgment and a diverse thought process if they score higher in this dimension. Lastly, illness concepts assess the extent to which members feel they should be accountable for managing illness. Family members who score higher on this dimension are more likely to believe that they are responsible for the psychosomatic state of the entire family. For the SSFD, the split-half and Cronbach's correlation coefficients were 0.84 and 0.79, respectively (Shi et al., 2023).

McMaster Family Assessment Device (FAD) was developed by Epstein, Baldwin and Bishop (1983), aiming at collecting information on various structural and organizational dimensions of the family system (Bahremand et al., 2015). This questionnaire is a self-administered measure that assesses family functioning and quality of interaction among family members (Kukihara et al., 2020; Fan et al., 2020; MacPherson et al., 2018). This instrument comprises seven subscales and 60 items (Ma et al., 2013). The subscales are role, problem solving, behavior control, communication, emotional intervention, emotional response, and overall function. The questionnaire is used straightforwardly and efficiently to identify issues with home systems. A family relationship is better if each item has a lower score. It has high validity and reliability ratings (W. Wang et al., 2022).

Feinberg developed **the Coparenting Relationship Scale (CRS)**. A 7-point Likert scale is used to evaluate 35 items that either measure the frequency (from 0 = never to 6 = very often – several times a day) or the likelihood (from 0 = not true of us to 6 = very true of us) of particular behaviors, thoughts, and feelings of the subject and his or her partner. The corresponding items are averaged to determine the scores for each subscale. Thirteen negatively worded items receive a reverse score. A better coparenting relationship is indicated by a higher score. The seven subscales are: Coparenting Agreement (four items; α = .706); Coparenting Closeness (five items; α = .738); Exposure to Conflict (five items; α = .891); Coparenting Support (six items; α = .898); Coparenting Undermining (six items; α = .805); Endorsement of Partner's Parenting (seven items; α = .824); Division of Labor (two items; r = .218, p < .001)" (Tissot et al., 2024).

Family cohesion and family conflict were measured using the Family Environment Scale (FES), which was completed by adolescents in the study by Su et al. (2015). The FES is a 90-item true-false scale. It focused on cohesion and conflict. Each of these factors contains nine items. Adolescents with and without parents who were physically ill had Cronbach's alphas of 0.74 and 0.78 for family cohesion, respectively, and 0.63 and 0.72 for household conflict.

A self-reported scale called the **Family Assessment Device (FAD)** is used to gauge how well family members believe their families are functioning. There are seven dimensions in the Family Assessment Device. Based on 27 items, the FAD global scale score assessed family functioning. Greater communication and problem-solving dysfunction is reflected in higher scores. The total score showed α = 0.93 (Algorta et al., 2011). The MMFF's first dimension, problem solving, describes how well a family handles problems—that is, problems that jeopardize the family's integrity and functioning—while preserving efficient family operations. There are seven recognized steps for solving problems effectively. Communication is the second dimension of the model. The main emphasis is on whether spoken

communication is direct. In this case, the MMFF assesses whether the family has developed behavioral patterns for managing a range of family tasks, such as supplying resources, offering care and support, fostering personal growth, and upholding and overseeing family systems. In addition, examining whether family members are given tasks clearly and equitably. Two aspects of the Roles dimension assessment. Behavior control (BC) measures whether a family has distinct behavioral control modes in various situations; affective responsiveness measures how strongly family members react emotionally to stimuli; affective involvement (AI) measures how much family members value and care for one another's activities and belongings; and general functioning is a summary of how well a family functions as a whole (L. Wang et al., 2020).

To evaluate family functioning, cohesion, and adaptability scores of the **Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale at Kwansei Gakuin IV (FACESKG IV)** were adopted. The Circumplex model, a two-dimensional family function model that depends on maintaining equilibrium between the two dimensions and avoiding extremes, serves as the foundation for the FACESKG IV. Cohesion and adaptability are its two facets. Cohesion is a sign of the emotional ties within the family. There are four levels: "connected" denotes moderate to high closeness, "separated" denotes low to moderate closeness, "disengaged" denotes too little closeness, and "enmeshed" denotes the most extreme level (too much closeness). It is believed that the "connected" and "separated" levels of cohesion are in balance, while the "enmeshed" and "disengaged" levels are extreme. Adaptability is the capacity of a family to adjust to different types of stress (Takenaka et al., 2013).

The General Functioning Scale of the Family Assessment Device (GF-FAD) is a 12-item self-report subscale of the 60-item McMaster Family Assessment Device (FAD), which was used to gauge how well a family was perceived to be functioning. The purpose of each item is to ask about general functioning at the moment. Six items were positively worded and the other six items were negatively worded. A 4-point Likert-type scale was used to rate the items." Items with negative wording were given a reverse score. A cut-off score of 2 mean score was applied, with a score of less than 2 (<2) denoting healthy family functioning and a score of 2 and above (≥ 2) denoting unhealthy family functioning. The GF-FAD exhibits satisfactory internal consistency and strong psychometric qualities. It has been demonstrated to be a reliable single measure of family functioning overall (SRMR = 0.03; RMSEA = 0.05). It has also demonstrated strong intercorrelations with the FAD's six dimensions and the other 48 items (Lochner et al., 2024; Potter et al., 2011).

Marital Quality Scale is used to measure the quality of partners' life through estimating enjoyment of shared activities ranging from 1 (a great deal), 2 (quite a lot), to 3 (some). Confidence ranged from 1 (all important matters discussed adequately), 2 (the majority of important matters discussed adequately), to 3 (some/a minority of important matters adequately discussed). Quality of marriage was rated on a 3-point scale, ranging from 1 (marriage/cohabitation positive source of support and enjoyment), 2 (good marital/cohabitation history), to 3 (overall satisfactory history but some problems, or worse). At each time point, these three variables yielded a single factor, and all factor loadings were moderate to substantial (ranging from 0.68 to 0.91). The scores from these three variables were combined to create an index of marital quality (Blake et al., 2012).

The 17 items on the **Iceland-Expressive Family Functioning Questionnaire (ICE-EFFQ)** assess family functioning (Sveinbjarnardottir et al.,2012a). It has four multidimensional subscales: behavior (four items), communication (four items), teamwork and problem-solving (five items), and expressive emotions (four items). A 5-point Likert-type response scale was employed. Although there is no precise cut-off score to differentiate between optimal and suboptimal family functioning, higher scores indicate better family functioning. ICE-EFFQ has a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.91, indicating good internal consistency (Sveinbjarnardottir et al.,2012; Dieperink et al., 2018).

The Family Relationship Quality Scale is a self-perceived quality-of-relationship scale for family members, such as a spouse or partner, parents, or parents-in-law. It is assessed through a 3-point scale from 0 = "poor" to 2 = "very good" with higher scores indicating a more satisfactory relationship. It focuses on asking family members about, "How would you rate your relationship with your family members who provide most care or support to you during the time you were pregnant?". The score was coded as 0 or 1 and further divided into poor and good categories. The issue is that, as a single-item assessment of family relationship quality, it may lack adequate psychometric properties, such as reliability. Finding meaningful results may be more difficult if relationships between variables are attenuated by low reliability (Zeng et al., 2022).

The Family Environment Scale (FES-R form) is a self-report test developed by Moos and Moos in 1994 to depict family relations and functioning. The questionnaire assesses 10 facets of everyday life across three conceptual domains. It includes 90 items answered by true-false responses, concerning 10 dimensions of familiar life (achievement orientation, organization, cohesion, independence, expressiveness, conflict, intellectual cultural orientation, active recreational orientation, emphasis on religion and ethics, and control). Each category has a score ranging from 0 to 9, with the higher the score, the more fully that aspect captures family life. Internal consistency, or Cronbach's α, ranged from 0.67 to 0.78 (Amaslidou et al., 2023; Crerand et al., 2015)

Mishra et al. (2024) used the Brief Family Relationship Scale (BFRS), a modified version of the 27-item Relationship dimension of the Family Environment Scale (FES), to gauge the degree of family functioning. It includes subscales for conflict, expressiveness, and cohesion. There are 19 items on the BFRS scale. In order to answer these questions. Every item uses a three-point rating scale, with some items reverse-scored. The range is 0 (not at all) to 2 (a lot). A higher score meant that the family was functioning better. The computed Cronbach's α of 0.92 indicates excellent consistency.

In 2002, Shek and associates developed the Chinese Family Assessment Instrument (C-FAI) to evaluate family functioning within the context of Chinese culture. Mutuality, Communication, Conflict and Harmony, Parental Concern, and Parental Control are the five subscales that make up the 33-item C-FAI. A 5-point Likert scale is used for scoring, with 1 denoting "very similar" and 5 denoting "very dissimilar." Higher scores indicate worse family environmental function. With a Cronbach's α of 0.936, the C-FAI demonstrated strong internal consistency and reliability (Zhang et al., 2024).

Assessment Strategies In Families-Effectiveness (ASF-E)/Brazil was created by Marie-Luise Friedemann, using the systemic organization framework (Lise et al., 2022). It assesses the effectiveness of family functioning or family health on a nominal scale of 20 items. There are three possible scores for each item: 1, 2, or 3. When option 3 is selected, family functioning effectiveness is deemed high; alternative 2 is deemed medium; and alternative 1 is deemed low. A score of 48 to 60 indicates high effectiveness of family functioning, 34 to 47 indicates intermediate effectiveness, and 20 to 33 indicates low effectiveness. Given the high degree of effectiveness with which the families demonstrated their functioning, it can be said that when the environment provides them with the resources they need, they find congruence and manage imposed situations more skillfully.

University students' lifestyles may be positively impacted by protective factors such as family dynamics and social support. In Da-Silva-Domingues et al. (2024), family dynamics are assessed through the **"Family APGAR questionnaire"**. It consists of 5 questions, a three-point Likert scale. The score value ranged from 0 to 10; it is considered a dichotomous variable: "Apgar > 6 functional and Apgar < 6 dysfunctional". This instrument's test-retest reliability in the Spanish validation was 0.86, and its Cronbach's alpha value was 0.84.

The Family Relationships Index (FRI) was developed by Moos & Moos in 2002. The 12-item true-false response scale is based on the abbreviated version of the Family Environment Scale (FES), a validated measure of how well a person perceives his family's functioning, including concepts such as organizational structure and interpersonal relationships. Along with the subscales of family cohesion, family expressiveness, and lack of conflict, the team also included the overall family function scale. The overall Cronbach alpha for the FRI was 0.86. The global score ranges from 0 to 12, while the individual scores range from 0 (low) to 4 (high). (Torres-Blasco et al., 2023; Hiratsuka et al., 2021; Schuler et al., 2017)

A Korean adaptation of the FRI was utilized by Lee et al. (2024) for assessing the quality of familial relationships and family members' perceptions of internal family dynamics. The FRI, created primarily for nuclear and conjugal families, evaluates how well families adapt to crises and life changes. The instrument includes cohesion and expression-conflict subscales, each consisting of 10 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale. While the expression-conflict subscale evaluates the degree to which family members express disagreement and anger, the cohesion subscale evaluates the levels of support, commitment, help, and open communication among family members. Cronbach's alpha for the Korean version of the FRI was 0.93, indicating excellent reliability.

The family APGAR instrument was used to identify the type of family function (Zheng et al., 2020; Silva et al., 2020). Dr. Gabriel Smilkstein created this test in 1978. Drawing on his clinical background as a family physician, he suggested using it as a tool to help primary healthcare professionals analyze the family's role. Family members' perceptions of how the family functions and their ability to communicate their level of satisfaction with the achievement of its fundamental goals form the basis of this test. This test is called family APGAR because it is a familiar name for health professionals. After all, it is similar to the nearly universal test in newborn screening proposed by Dr. Virginia Apgar. This tool measures five basic family functions: adaptation, participation, gain, affection, and resources. The scores for each of the responses range from 0 to 4 points. Adding the five parameters, the score ranges from 0 to 20, indicating good family function, moderate family dysfunction, mild family dysfunction, and severe family dysfunction. In its original version, it showed internal consistency of (Cronbach's Alpha=0.86). In the Spanish validation, it showed a Cronbach's Alpha of (α=0.84). There are other versions in Portuguese that show adequate internal consistency (0.80) (Rojas-Torres et al., 2022).

The respondents' degree of satisfaction with family functionality was gauged using the 5-item modified family APGAR score. Smilkstein created the family APGAR score so that participants could express how satisfied they were with their family's assistance in the areas of adaptation, partnership, growth, affection, and resolve. Respondents with an APGAR score less than seven were considered to have no family functionality. Internal consistency, as indicated by Cronbach's alpha, was 0.85, and item-to-total correlations ranged from 0.50 to 0.65 (Wu et al., 2016).

The purpose of the **Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale-IV (FACES-IV)** was to assess family functioning both qualitatively and quantitatively to evaluate:

(i) Balanced scales: these are called "balanced" because they have a positive correlation and are directly proportional to the family's wellness. The concepts of "cohesion" and "flexibility" represent a balanced scale.

(ii) On the contrary, "unbalanced" scales reflect aspects of family functioning that are deemed extreme (specifically, extreme areas of cohesion and flexibility). Since they are extreme characteristics, they are viewed negatively and are thus inversely correlated with family well-being. "Disengagement," "Enmeshment," "Rigidity," and "Chaos" are the symbols for these functions.

(iii) The ability of family members to identify the degree of communication and satisfaction within their own family is represented by the "communication" and "satisfaction" scales.

(iv) Ratios, which represent a global family functioning, measure between balanced and unbalanced scales.

Every measure has a level of functioning based on the FACES IV score: ratio measures have two levels of functioning (dysfunctional and functional), the communication and satisfaction scale has four levels of functioning (low, intermediate, good, and verygood), and both balanced and unbalanced scales have three levels of functioning (dysfunctional, intermediate, and functional) (Iorio et al., 2022).

Based on Bowlby's attachment theory, the **Parental Bonding Instrument** (PBI) scale was created to assess the attachment style between parents and children. It addresses the aspects of overprotection and care that Bowlby suggests for parent-child attachment bonds. For these two dimensions, the perceived parent behaviors are scored independently. The care sub-dimension has a 25-item scale. Whereas a low score denotes a cold and rejecting perception, a high score denotes a warm, understanding, and accepting perception. A parent with high score is seen as overprotective or does not object to autonomy (positive); a parent with a low score does not permit autonomy. The protection sub-dimension has seven items. The purpose of this scale was to find out how people felt about their parents. Test-retest reliability was 0.76 for the care dimension and 0.63 for the overprotection dimension, split-half reliability was 0.88 and 0.74, and interrater reliability coefficients were 0.85 and 0.69, respectively, according to several reliability studies done for the PBI (Şimşek et al., 2021).

The Family Assessment Measure (FAM) evaluates how well a family functions among its members. It consists of three parts: the Dyadic Relationship Scale (DR), which looks at how a family member perceives their relationship with another family member; the Self-Estimating Questionnaire (SE), which focuses on how an individual member functions in the family; and the Family Questionnaire (FQ), which describes how a family functions overall. Task accomplishment, role performance, communication, emotionality, affective involvement, control, and values and norms are the seven dimensions that are evaluated in each of the three versions. The worse the family's functioning in a particular area, the higher the scores. Depending on the sample, researchers reported wildly different Cronbach alphas for the FAM, ranging from .36 to .81. The FAM's validity met expectations (Guzy et al., 2016).

The Reasons for Living Scale–Older Adult version (RFL-OA), is a 69-item questionnaire that evaluates older adults' reasons for living (RFL) when they are thinking about suicide, was used to create four of the items used in the **Family Connectedness Scale**. The internal consistency of the RFL-OA has proven to be strong (Cronbach's α=.98) (Purcell et al., 2012). Doan et al. (2022) measured functional social support using the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS scale). This instrument measured the emotional and instrumental support from three sources, including friends, family, and "special person". A higher score indicated a higher level of social support. The questionnaire consisted of 12 questions with a 7-point Likert scale. In this study, the Cronbach's alpha value was 0.976. **The Family Resilience Assessment Scale (FRAS) questionnaire** was developed by Walsh (2002) to measure family resilience. Its Cronbach's alpha is 0.871. The online questionnaire includes demographic data questions, 32 FRAS questions with Likert scale answer choices (Pakpahan et al., 2022).

TABLE 2   SLR Research Matrix

Researcher/s	Questionnaire/Scale	Dimensions	Psychometric Properties	Number of statements	Score
Doan et al. (2022)	"Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS scale) to measure functional social support	"The emotional and instrumental support	"Cronbach's alpha value was 0.976	"The questionnaire consisted of 12 questions with a 7-point Likert scale	"1 denotes very strongly disagree, and 7 denotes very strongly agree"

Researcher/s	Questionnaire/Scale	Dimensions	Psychometric Properties	Number of statements	Score
(Purcell et al., 2012)	"The Reasons for Living Scale–Older Adult version (RFL-OA), a 69-item questionnaire that evaluates older adults' reasons for living (RFL) when they are thinking about suicide, was used to create this instrument"	Not defined	"The internal consistency of the RFL-OA has proven to be strong (Cronbach's α=.98)"	"Four items used in the assessment"	Not defined
(Guzy et al., 2016)	"The Family Assessment Measure (FAM) to evaluate how well a family functions among its members"	"Seven dimensions: Task accomplishment, role performance, communication, emotionality, affective involvement, control, and values"	"Different Cronbach alphas for the FAM, ranging from .36 to .81. The FAM's validity met expectations"	Not defined	"The worse the family's functioning in a particular area, the higher the scores. Two more control scales measuring social expectations and defense are also included in the Family Questionnaire; the higher the scores, the better the functioning is"
(Şimşek et al., 2021)	"The Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI) scale was created to assess the attachment style between parents and children"	"Two dimensions: The care sub-dimension and the protection sub-dimension"	"Test-retest reliability was 0.76 for the care dimension and 0.63 for the overprotection dimension, split-half reliability was 0.88 and 0.74, and interrater reliability coefficients were 0.85 and 0.69, respectively"	"The care sub-dimension has a 25-item scale and the protection sub-dimension has seven items"	"Whereas a low score denotes a cold and rejecting perception, a high score denotes a warm, understanding, and accepting perception"
(Iorio et al., 2022)	"Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation	"Balanced scales (cohesion and flexibility),	Not defined	Not defined	"Every measure has a level of functioning based on the

Researcher/s	Questionnaire/Scale	Dimensions	Psychometric Properties	Number of statements	Score
	Scale-IV (FACES-IV) to assess family functioning both qualitatively and quantitatively"	unbalanced scales (Disengagement, Enmeshment, rigidity, and Chaos), and communication and satisfaction" scales"			FACES IV score: ratio measures have two levels of functioning (dysfunctional and functional), the communication and satisfaction scale has four levels of functioning (low, intermediate, good, and verygood), and both balanced and unbalanced scales have three levels of functioning (dysfunctional, intermediate, and functional)"
(Zheng et al., 2020; Silva et al., 2020; Rojas-Torres et al., 2022)	"APGAR instrument to measure five basic functions of the family"	"The dimensions are adaptation, participation, gain, affection, and resources"	"It showed internal consistency of (Cronbach's Alpha=0.86). In the Spanish validation, it showed a Cronbach's Alpha of (α=0.84). There are other versions in Portuguese, which show adequate internal consistency (0.80) for the Portuguese version"	Not defined	"The scores for each of the responses range from 0 to 4 points. Adding the five parameters, the score ranges from 0 to 20, indicating good family function, moderate family dysfunction, mild family dysfunction, and severe family dysfunction"
Da-Silva-Domingues et al. (2024)	"Family APGAR questionnaire to assess family dynamics and social support"	Not defined	"This instrument's test-retest reliability in the Spanish validation was 0.86, and its	"It consists of 5 questions, a three-point Likert scale"	"The score value ranged from 0 to 10; it is considered a dichotomous variable: "Apgar > 6 functional and

Researcher/s	Questionnaire/Scale	Dimensions	Psychometric Properties	Number of statements	Score
			Cronbach's alpha value was 0.84"		Apgar < 6 dysfunctional"
Wu et al., 2016	"Modified family APGAR so that participants could express how satisfied they were with their family's assistance"	"Dimensions of adaptation, partnership, growth, affection, and resolve"	"The scale, as dictated by Cronbach's alpha, was 0.85, and item-to-total correlations ranged from .50 to .65"	"5 items"	"The 3-point Likert scale ranged from 0 (hardly ever) to 2 (almost always)"
(Shi et al., 2023)	"Scale of Systemic Family Dynamics (SSFD) to assess how people perceive family dynamics"	"Family atmosphere (FA), individuation (IN), system logic (SL), and illness concepts (IC)"	"For the SSFD, the split-half and Cronbach's correlation coefficients were 0.84 and 0.79, respectively"	"There are 23 items in the SSFD (second edition) that are scored on a five-point rating system"	"Family members who score higher on this dimension are more likely to believe that their own psychological factors and efforts are responsible for the psychosomatic state of the entire family"
(Pakpahan et al., 2022)	"Family Resilience Assessment Scale (FRAS) questionnaire to measure family resilience"	Not defined	"Cronbach's alpha is 0.871"	"32 FRAS questions with Likert scale answer choices"	Not defined
(Lise et al., 2022)	"Assessment Strategies In Families-Effectiveness (ASF-E)/Brazil to assess the effectiveness of family functioning or family health"	Not defined	Not defined	"Nominal scale of 20 items"	"There are three possible scores for each item: 1, 2, or 3. When option 3 is selected, family functioning effectiveness is deemed high; alternative 2 is deemed medium; and alternative 1 is deemed low. A score of 48 to 60 indicates high effectiveness of family functioning, 34 to 47 indicates intermediate

Researcher/s	Questionnaire/ Scale	Dimensions	Psychometric Properties	Number of statements	Score
					effectiveness, and 20 to 33 indicates low effectiveness. The instrument's total score is 60"
(Zhang et al., 2024)	"Chinese Family Assessment Instrument (C-FAI) to evaluate family functioning in the context of Chinese culture"	"Mutuality, Communication, Conflict and Harmony, Parental Concern, and Parental Control"	"With a Cronbach's α coefficient of 0.936, the C-FAI showed outstanding internal consistency and reliability"	"33-item C-FAI. A 5-point Likert scale is used for scoring, with 1 denoting "very similar" and 5 denoting "very dissimilar""	"Higher scores indicate worse family environmental function"
Mishra et al. (2024)	"Brief Family Relationship Scale (BFRS), a modified version of the 27-item Relationship dimension of the Family Environment Scale (FES), to gauge the degree of family functioning"	"Conflict, expressiveness, and cohesion"	"The computed Cronbach α=0.92 indicates excellent consistency"	"19 items on the BFRS scale. Every item has a three-point rating system, with some items being reverse-scored. The range is 0 (not at all) to 2 (a lot)"	"A higher score meant that the family was functioning better"
(Tissot et al., 2024)	"Coparenting Relationship Scale (CRS) to evaluate relations"	"The seven subscales are: Coparenting Agreement, Coparenting Closeness, Exposure to Conflict, Coparenting Support, Coparenting Undermining, Endorsement of Partner's Parenting, and Division of Labor"	"The seven subscales are: Coparenting Agreement (four items; α = .706); Coparenting Closeness (five items; α = .738); Exposure to Conflict (five items; α = .891); Coparenting Support (six items; α = .898); Coparenting Undermining (six items; α = .805); Endorsement of Partner's	"A 7-point Likert scale is used to evaluate 35 items that either measure the frequency (from 0 = never to 6 = very often – several times a day) or the likelihood (from 0 = not true of us to 6 = very true of us)"	"Thirteen negatively worded items receive a reverse score. A better coparenting relationship is indicated by a higher score"

Researcher/s	Questionnaire/ Scale	Dimensions	Psychometric Properties	Number of statements	Score
			Parenting (seven items; α = .824); Division of Labor (two items; r = .218, p < .001)"		
(Bahremand et al., 2015; (Kukihara et al., 2020; Fan et al., 2020; MacPherson et al., 2018; Ma et al., 2013	"McMaster Family Assessment Device (FAD) to collect information on various structural and organizational dimensions of the family system"	"Role, problem solving, behavior control, communication, emotional intervention, emotional response, and overall function"	"It has high validity and reliability ratings"	"Total of 60 items"	"A family relationship is better if each item has a lower score"
(Torres-Blasco et al., 2023; Hiratsuka et al., 2021; Schuler et al., 2017; (W. Wang et al., 2022)	"Family Relationships Index to measure relations"	"Dimensions of family cohesion, family expressiveness, and lack of conflict"	"The overall Cronbach alpha scale for the FRI was 0–0. 86"	"The 12-item true-false response scale is based on the abbreviated version of the Family Environment Scale (FES)"	"The global score ranges from 0 to 12, while the individual scores range from 0 (low) to 4 (high). Good historical family relationships are indicated by higher scores"
Su et al. (2015)	"Family Environment Scale (FES) to measure cohesion and conflict"	"Family cohesion and family conflict"	"Cronbach's alphas of 0.74 and 0.78 for family cohesion, respectively, and 0.63 and 0.72 for household conflict"	"The FES is a 90-item true-false scale. It focused on cohesion and conflict. Each of these factors contains nine items"	Not defined
(L. Wang et al., 2020)	"Family Assessment Device (FAD) to evaluate families' functioning"	"There are seven dimensions: problem solving, Communication, roles, behavior control, general functioning, affective involvement, and affective	"The total score showed α = 0.93"	"27 items"	"Greater communication and problem-solving dysfunction is reflected in higher scores"

Researcher/s	Questionnaire/ Scale	Dimensions	Psychometric Properties	Number of statements	Score
		responsiveness"			
Lee et al. (2024)	"Korean adaptation of the FRI for assessing the quality of familial relationships and family members' perceptions of internal family dynamics"	"The instrument includes cohesion and expression-conflict subscales"	"Cronbach's alpha values for the Korean version of the FRI showed an excellent Cronbach's a coefficient of 0.93"	"A total of 20 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from 1=not at all true to 5=very true"	"While the expression-conflict subscale evaluates the degree to which family members express disagreement and anger, the cohesion subscale evaluates the levels of support, commitment, help, and open communication among family members. Total scores range from 20 to 100. A family with higher scores is more cohesive, expressive, and less conflictual, all of which are signs of a supportive family environment"
(Sveinbjarnardottir et al.,2012a; Dieperink et al., 2018)	"The Iceland-Expressive Family Functioning Questionnaire (ICE-EFFQ) to assess family functioning"	"Four multidimensional subscales: behavior, communication, teamwork and problem-solving, and expressive emotions"	"ICE-EFFQ has a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.91"	"17 items were included. A Likert-type response scale with five points was employed, with 1 denoting almost never and 5 denoting always."	"Scores can be as low as 17 or as high as 85. Higher scores indicate better family functioning"
(Takenaka et al., 2013)	"Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale at Kwansei Gakuin IV (FACESKG IV) to evaluate	"Cohesion and adaptability"	Not defined	Not defined	"It is believed that the "connected" and "separated" levels of cohesion are in balance, while the "enmeshed" and

Researcher/s	Questionnaire/Scale	Dimensions	Psychometric Properties	Number of statements	Score
	family functioning"				"disengaged" levels are extreme. The "chaotic" and "rigid" levels of adaptability are viewed as extreme, while the "flexible" and "structured" levels are seen as balanced"
(Lochner et al., 2024); (Potter et al., 2011)	"The General Functioning Scale of the Family Assessment Device (GF-FAD) to determine how well a family was perceived to be functioning"	Not defined	"It has demonstrated strong intercorrelations with the FAD's six dimensions and other 48 items"	"12-item self-report tool. 4-point Likert-type scale was used to rate the items, with 1 denoting "strongly agree" and 4 denoting "strongly disagree."	"Items with negative wording were given a reverse score. Responses were summed and divided by 12 (the number of test items) to produce a mean score ranging between 1 and 4. A cut-off score of 2 was applied, with a score of less than 2 (<2) denoting healthy family functioning and a score of 2 and above (≥2) denoting unhealthy family functioning"
(Blake et al., 2012)	"Marital quality index to measure quality of marital relations"	"Enjoyment of shared activities, Confidence, and quality of marriage"	"All factor loadings were moderate to substantial (ranging from 0.68 to 0.91)"	"3 questions based on 3-point scale"	Not defined
(Zeng et al., 2022)	"Family relationship quality to measure quality of relationship with family members"	Not defined	Not defined	"It is assessed through a 3-point scale from 0 = "poor" to 2 = "very good"	"Higher scores indicate a more satisfactory relationship. The score was coded as 0 or 1 and further divided into poor and good categories"

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Researcher/s	Questionnaire/ Scale	Dimensions	Psychometric Properties	Number of statements	Score
Cox et al. (2021)	"PROMIS Pediatric Short Form v1.0 - Family Relationships 8a to discuss family relationship topics	"Communication, enjoyment, value and acceptance, love and caring, trust, sense of family, dependability, and support"	Not defined	"8 items on a 1 to 5-point response scale from never to always"	Not defined
(Amaslidou et al., 2023; Crerand et al., 2015)	"Family Environment Scale (FES-R form) to depict family relations and way of functioning"	"Achievement orientation, organization, cohesion, independence, expressiveness, conflict, intellectual cultural orientation, active recreational orientation, emphasis on religion and ethics, and control"	"Internal consistency, or Cronbach's α, ranged from 0.67 to 0.78"	"90 items answered by true-false responses"	"Each category has a score ranging from 0 to 9, with the higher the score, the more fully that aspect captures family life"
Beek et al. (2015)	"Dutch version of the Family Environment Scale (FES)"	"Cohesion; expressiveness; conflict; organization; control; family values; and social orientation"	"Cronbach's alpha as a measure of internal reliability varied between 0.63 and 0.82 for the subscales"	"77 true-false questions"	"Extreme scores on both the high and low end of these subscales are considered maladaptive."
(Rolf et al., 2022; Pascal Iloh et al., 2018; Nicolais et al., 2016; Wirehag Nordh et al., 2025)	"The General Functioning Subscale of the Family Assessment Device (FAD-GF) to evaluate how a person views their biological family function in terms of social interactions and interpersonal relationships"	"Behavioral control, roles, communication, problem solving, and affective responsiveness and involvement"	"The subscale's psychometric qualities have been determined to be sufficient. It was determined that problematic functioning was indicated by a cut-off score of ≥ 2.1. This scale's Cronbach's α of 0.90 indicated its	"The subscale comprises 12 items answered by using a four-point scale (1–4)"	"Higher scores indicate more problematic functioning"

Researcher/s	Questionnaire/ Scale	Dimensions	Psychometric Properties	Number of statements	Score
			internal consistency"		
(McCorkle et al., 2025; Duan et al., 2025)	"Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale-II (FACES-II) was developed to gauge how cohesive and flexible a person feels in the family system"	"Cohesion and flexibility are the main two dimensions "	"Strong test-retest reliability is demonstrated by the FACES-II, with full scale scores of r = 0.84, cohesion scores of r = 0.83, and adaptability scores of r = 0.80"	"There are 16 cohesion items and 14 adaptability items on this 30-item scale"	"Greater cohesiveness and flexibility are indicated by high scores"
Ruiz et al. (2013)	"Developed version of FACES to measure family cohesion"	"Family decision adherence, problem solving, family closeness feelings, family shared space and activity, and enjoyment in family activities"	Not defined	Not defined	Not defined
(Ramires et al., 2024; Xu et al., 2022; Kang et al., 2019; Lopes et al., 2020)	"Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales (FACES III)" to assess family functions"	"Cohesion and adaptability"	"The scale's internal consistency reliability was .68"	"20 items responded on a Likert scale of 1–5 points"	"Families are rated as "disconnected," "separate," "connected," or " agglutinated" on the cohesion subscale, while the adaptability subscale provides ratings as "rigid," "structured," "flexible," or " chaotic"

DISCUSSION

In both research and practice, family assessment instruments—whether scales or questionnaires—are essential because they provide standardized and structured methods for assessing the intricate dynamics of family functioning. A set of fundamental dimensions that represent universal aspects of family functioning are shared by the majority of family assessment instruments, including adaptability or flexibility in response to stress, communication, cohesion, and problem-solving or coping. Numerous tools also evaluate role functioning and responsibilities, emotional support and affection, behavioral control, and general family life satisfaction.

Family relations in the current SLR are estimated using many scales. Mishra et al. (2024) used BFRS to measure cohesion, expressiveness, and conflict subscales. Family relationship quality measures the quality of relationships with family members (Zeng et al., 2022). The Family Environment Scale (FES)

was used to depict family relations depending on ten dimensions: cohesion, control, expressiveness, conflict, achievement orientation, active recreational orientation, independence, intellectual cultural orientation, organization, and emphasis on religion and ethics (Amaslidou et al., 2023; Crerand et al., 2015). BFRS is used to assess relations using conflict, expressiveness, and cohesion. CRS is used to measure the quality of partners' relations using seven subscales: coparenting agreement, coparenting closeness, exposure to conflict, coparenting support, coparenting undermining, endorsement of partner's parenting, and division of labor (Tissot et al., 2024).

FAD collects information on various structural and organizational dimensions of the family system function. This instrument includes seven subscales. The subscales are problem solving, communication, role, emotional response, emotional intervention, behavior control, and overall function. The FAD-GF subscale also assesses functioning through problem-solving, communication, roles, affective responsiveness and involvement, and behavioural control (Wirehag Nordh et al., 2025). FACES-II and FACES-III assess two dimensions of family functioning: cohesion and adaptability (McCorkle et al., 2025; Duan et al., 2025; Ramires et al., 2024; Xu et al., 2022; Kang et al., 2019; Lopes et al., 2020). C-FAI was also used to assess family functioning across five subscales (Zhang et al., 2024). Iorio et al. (2022) assess family functioning qualitatively and quantitatively.

Cohesion was compared to conflict to measure healthy family functioning. A Korean adaptation of the FRI, which relies on the cohesion and expression-conflict subscales, was used by Lee et al. (2024). While the expression-conflict subscale evaluates the degree to which family members express disagreement and anger, the cohesion subscale evaluates the levels of support, commitment, help, and open communication among family members. The family APGAR instrument also assesses family functioning using varied criteria, including adaptation, participation, gain, affection, and resources (Rojas-Torres et al., 2022).

Other scales used different dimensions to assess family relations. For example, the PBI scale was used to measure two main dimensions: care and protection (Şimşek et al., 2021). Cox et al. (2021) address a variety of family relationship topics, including communication, enjoyment, value and acceptance, love and caring, trust, sense of family, dependability, and support. Furthermore, adolescents' perceptions of family dynamics are measured through the "Scale of Systemic Family Dynamics (SSFD)", which includes four dimensions: family atmosphere, individuation, system logic, and illness concepts. Family health or effectiveness-family functioning is measured through (ASF-E)/Brazil.

The family APGAR instrument was translated into many languages, including Spanish and Portuguese, and the results showed it has high internal consistency across all versions. Its psychometric robustness is strengthened by this cross-cultural stability, indicating that the instrument provides universally relevant insights into the fundamental aspects of family functioning. In societies that value collectivism (e.g., Latin America), loyalty, mutual support, and family unity are essential. Autonomy and personal fulfillment in family responsibilities may be more important in more individualist environments. Family functioning is a major predictor of well-being in both the Spanish and Portuguese cultures, which have strong family-centered traditions.

The psychometric values for the Korean version of the FRI showed an excellent Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.93, indicating the instrument's strong internal coherence in a family-centered, collectivist society. This implies possible relevance in other collectivist settings, like Arab societies, where family unity and interdependence are equally important. Such transferability cannot be taken for granted, though, as cultural variations in kinship responsibilities, gender roles, and hierarchy may change what "family relationships" mean. Therefore, before the FRI can be confidently applied in Arab populations, thorough cross-cultural validation, including translation, expert review, and invariance testing, is necessary, even though the Korean findings offer encouraging evidence.

CONCLUSION

Single-item measures have limited value for research that aims to unravel complex dynamics or establish strong predictive relationships, even though they might be helpful for quick screening or large-scale surveys where respondent burden is an issue. Their application risks oversimplifying intricate family dynamics and underestimating the strength of associations. Some scales exhibit high internal consistency despite being translated into diverse languages across different cultural contexts. The literature is less clear on whether construct validity and cultural sensitivity were equally maintained during translation, even though internal consistency is still high across versions. Item redundancy or differential item functioning across cultural groups may be hidden if Cronbach's alpha is the only metric used to demonstrate reliability. Therefore, although the internal consistency of the Family APGAR appears robust, future studies should incorporate complementary validation techniques (e.g., invariance testing or confirmatory factor analysis) to ensure its conceptual equivalence across languages.

The lack of clearly defined cut-off scores to distinguish between optimal and suboptimal functioning is a recurrent limitation in several family functioning scales in the current SLR. The instruments' suitability for screening or intervention planning is limited in the absence of these thresholds, making it challenging

to interpret scores in a clinically meaningful manner. Furthermore, a lot of tools are released without thorough psychometric analyses, such as measurement invariance across cultural groups, test-retest reliability, or factorial validity. Findings from these measures lose their interpretive strength and generalizability when such underlying evidence is absent. This can actually result in two families with very different relational dynamics receiving comparable scores, masking differences that could be important for policy development, diagnosis, or prevention. Therefore, in addition to being a methodological flaw, the lack of cut-off criteria and a necessary psychometric evaluation also impedes the use of family assessment tools to generate useful information.

Based on the data extraction characteristics, it was evident that the methodology was adequately reported in more than half of the studies. Some of the psychometric characteristics were not reported, and others were not reported in detail. It is recommended that researchers ensure that their methodology is thorough and includes all the necessary information. Although a few qualitative studies were identified, there should be more qualitative studies on investigating the viewpoints of family members regarding the main dimensions of quality of relations in the home. Future studies can apply these scales across different Arab Countries to determine their suitability and relevance to the Arab collective context. Future research should establish evidence-based benchmarks for screening and intervention, as many tools lack clear thresholds to distinguish dysfunctional from healthy family functioning. Future studies should examine how these tools can be used to track results and guide interventions in social work, counseling, and healthcare settings.

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