

Multi-center cross-cultural adaptation of the Addiction Severity Index, Sixth Edition (ASI6) for Brazil

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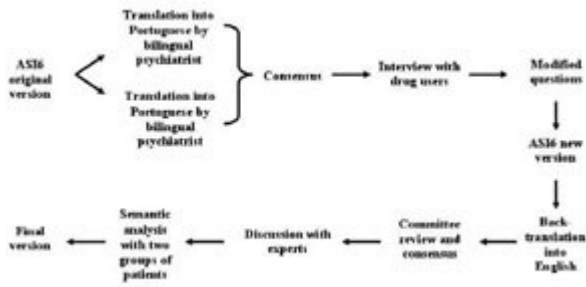
The first step in the assessment of alcohol and drug users is obtaining a detailed and reliable biopsychosocial diagnostic assessment, providing proper development of a therapeutic plan. Although such concept is clear for Brazilian professionals working with chemical dependence, there is a lack of research and clinical instruments approaching the wide range of problems found in alcohol and drug users.¹

In this context, the sixth version of the Addiction Severity Index (ASI6) was chosen to be adapted and validated in Brazil in a multi-center study. ASI has been translated into more than 20 languages,² showing total evidence of its reliability and validity.³⁻⁵ It is a semi-structured interview, designed to obtain information about the profile of substance abuse and aspects of life related to use of alcohol and drugs in the following areas: medical, employment, legal aspects, social and family, and psychiatric. Interviewers usually take 45-90 minutes to apply the instrument.

The last version of the instrument (ASI6) was developed to enhance the content about problems related to substance abuse and to approach the main limitations present in its previous version (ASI5).²

Studies are being conducted in the USA to validate the sixth version of ASI, and the authors of the original scale participated actively in the development and adaptation of the Brazilian instrument for 2 years, through meetings in both countries and electronic mail. The translation and adaptation method consisted of the stages shown in [Figure 1](#).

Figure 1 - Presentation of methodological stages for the cross-cultural translation and adaptation of the Addiction Severity Index, sixth edition (ASI6) in Brazil.



* All psychiatrists involved were also addiction specialists.

Figure 1 - Click to enlarge

Since ASI is a complex questionnaire requiring specific training, a training video and a manual for ASI6 were developed concomitantly with the process of instrument adaptation, in which guidance was provided about all items, besides detailed descriptions and explanations. The first Brazilian version of the ASI6, with manual and video, is available at the websites of the Brazilian Observatory of Information on Drugs (OBID, www.obid.senad.gov.br) and of the Research Center on Alcohol and Drugs (CPAD, www.cpad.org.br). Download is offered for free.

This is the first study conducted in Latin America with the aim of adapting and validating ASI6. It involved efforts by researchers from many Brazilian regions (South, Southeast and Northeast), also originating a partnership for other studies in this important area of public health. Adaptation of ASI6 will allow training of health professionals to obtain a better panorama of problems faced by drug users, aiming at therapeutic planning, as well as for follow-up of each case. In addition, it makes room for the development of other versions of that instrument in Brazil, such as ASI Lite, ASI follow-up and a computer version. There is an ongoing important initiative to test ASI6 in Brazil, in order to validate the instrument in a multi-center study in which the psychometric properties of this instrument (in samples of patients and outpatients users of alcohol and/or drugs in four Brazilian states) are being investigated.

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