Reviewer's report

Title: Standard values and relationship specific validity of the Bielefeld Relationship Expectations Questionnaire (BFPE)

Version: 2 Date: 22 January 2010

Reviewer: frank D fincham

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This manuscript reports data from a large sample pertaining to the Bielefeld Partnership Expectations Questionnaire. The attempt to provide such psychometric information is laudable. Nonetheless there are serious problems with the manuscript.

Major Compulsory Revisions

First, it was difficult to evaluate this manuscript as it communicates so poorly that, at times, it is virtually impossible to follow. This is important as few readers will bother to read it once they encounter such difficulties. This could merely be an issue of writing in a second language but it is one that urgently needs to be addressed. The authors would be well advised to recruit a native English speaker to help them craft a better manuscript.

Once this is done, there are substantive issues that need to be addressed. The most obvious concerns potential overlap between assessments, a problem that is rife in the relationship literature (see Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1987, 49, 797-809). In addition, there is the issue of sentiment override (Weiss, 1980, Advances in family intervention, assessment and theory (Vol.1, pp. 229-271). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press), whereby spouses respond to questionnaire items about the partner and marriage, not so much in terms of their manifest content, but in terms of their sentiment towards the partner.

Another concern is the nature of the sample. Are we really to believe that every person approached agreed to participate? But this is implied by the lack of data to the contrary.

Finally, the authors seem to make inferences that exceed their data. For example, they purports to assess behavior (cf. “examines the behavior as well as the experience” when in fact there is no solid data on behavior. Self report =/= behaviour, it only equals self reports of behavior which may or may not reflect behaviour in reality.

In short, the manuscript communicates poorly and is limited to answers from questionnaires the very structure of which may have the relationships reported “built in.”
**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests' below