Reviewer's report

Title: Standard percentages and psychometric properties of the Questionnaire for the Assessment of Disgust Sensitivity (FEE) in a representative German survey

Version: 1 Date: 26 September 2009

Reviewer: Craig Sawchuk

Reviewer's report:

The primary aim of this study was to use community epidemiologic data to conduct a factor analysis on a German version of a disgust sensitivity questionnaire (FEE). A total of 5 subscales were found with adequate internal consistency. The main strengths of this paper are the overall size of the community sample (N = 2473) and the assessment of the disgust sensitivity construct in a non-English speaking culture.

Several limitations of the current manuscript seriously weaken its suitability for publication in BMC.

1) Major Compulsory Revisions

a) The manuscript in its current form will require a significant revision in grammatical structure, and to a lesser extent, punctuation. A consistent flow in reading the article was hard to establish due to difficulties with ambiguous language (e.g., p3: "...disgust sensitivity is associated to individual proneness or a clinical diagnosis report."; p. 9: "... area-unspecific self-report instrument of the individual disposition disgust sensitivity.") and periodic sentence fragments (e.g., p.8: "The level of education was dichotomized as."). It was difficult to follow coherently how the existing study represents a unique extension to the current literature on the assessment of disgust sensitivity given the ambiguous language used to summarize the empirical and theoretical work in this area. I understand that English may be a second language for the primary authors, but a significant re-write will be needed if this work is to be published in an English-speaking journal outlet.

b) I would suggest that the analyses be reviewed by an expert in the statistical analyses used in the present study. In the methods section, it would have been helpful to include a sub-section describing the purpose and rationale for their chosen statistical analyses.

2) Minor Essential Revisions

a) If the FEE is to be considered along side existing measures of disgust sensitivity, then it would be helpful for the authors to specifically name the alternate disgust scales in the Introduction. Only two of the four referenced scales were actually named in the text. The authors should also consider the
Disgust Emotions Scale (Kleinknechet et al., 1997) which is also a commonly used measure of disgust in the literature. The discussion could use additional work and refinement in comparing and contrasting the findings of the FEE relative to the other existing disgust scales. This will certainly help the argument as to why the FEE represents an improvement beyond existing measures of disgust. I would suggest that the authors review the following articles: A taxometric study of the latent structure of disgust sensitivity: converging evidence for dimensionality (Olatunji & Broman-Fulks, 2007); and, The Disgust Scale: item analysis, factor structure, and suggestions for refinement (Olatunji et al., 2007). Both of these articles would provide a good summary of existing disgust scales which may help the authors in further articulating the value of the FEE relative to these other scales.

b) There were several places in the manuscript in which incorrect terms were used (e.g., p.11: "special phobias" = specific phobias), and certain interpretations seemed overstated and not particularly relevant (e.g., p.10: "...implies on the one hand, that most participants did not suffer from either body image disturbances as anorectic patients or problems...". Please correct.

c) The discussion also seemed to get off topic with including content explaining sex and educational differences in disgust sensitivity. I believe that these comments take away from the primary scope of this paper as a psychometric/methods report. I would suggest eliminating these comments.

**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.